



BC Crane Safety signs Mutual Recognition Agreement with European Crane Operator License Foundation (ECOL)

On July 8, 2020 BC Crane Safety reached a ground-breaking Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with the European Crane Operator License Foundation (ECOL) recognizing that the certifications issued by the two organizations are equivalent and interchangeable.

The agreement is based on a detailed comparison and alignment of standards governing the safe and effective operation of mobile cranes.

“What this means,” says Fraser Cocks, Executive Director of BC Crane Safety, “is that mobile crane operators who are certified by BC Crane Safety are now eligible to work in parts of the EU without undertaking additional training or testing. It also means the same for EU operators who want to work here to help meet temporary surges in demand for operators to support major projects when we can’t find qualified operators in Canada.”

ECOL currently licenses operators in the Netherlands and Belgium but is working toward the inclusion of all EU states.

The crane operator profession impacts a wide range of sectors – from utilities to resource development and major construction projects. Canadian companies with global interests will have the ability to employ their Canadian operators on overseas projects, while providing assurance that they meet the highest standards of professionalism in the world.

“Agreements like this will enhance crane operator training on a worldwide level,” says Ton Klijn, Director of ESTA, the organization that established ECOL. “ECOL can improve both safety and employment flexibility, allowing good operators to work wherever they are needed – something that will be a significant plus, especially for the big international operating companies.”

The ECOL MRA is the first MRA that BC Crane Safety has agreed but the organization hopes to have further MRAs in place in the near future.

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About BC Crane Safety

BC Crane Safety is the crane certification and licensing authority for BC and was established by WorkSafeBC in 2005 to design, administer and maintain the certification system for safe, professional crane operations as required by provincial law. BC Crane Safety provides leadership for health and safety development within the crane hoisting industry; serves as an advisory body on regulatory and safety matters; works closely with industry, labour and government to develop and implement new standards of assessment and certification; and provides leadership in the establishment, maintenance and support of industry-specific assessment tools (theory and practical) which result in a BC Crane Operator designation.

About ECOL

The European Crane Operators Licence (ECOL) is a non-profit organisation, structured as a foundation under Dutch law and governed by a supervisory board with representatives from the crane users, crane manufacturers and crane operator labour unions. ECOL was created by ESTA - the European association of abnormal road transport and mobile cranes – which was founded in 1976. ESTA represents national trade associations whose members are mobile crane and access platform, rental and abnormal road transport companies. Today, ESTA has active members in 21 countries.

The ECOL system sets a standard for the training and examination of operators; it also sets a standard for the content and quality of the training and examination administered. The training itself, as well as examinations, is done by local, ECOL-accredited training institutes. ECOL is committed to developing a system for the optimum distribution of safe and qualified crane operators within Europe.