



5TH NCCCO FOUNDATION Industry Forum

Riggers and Signalpersons: *Why you should be certified and stay certified*

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October 29, 2020

Topics I will cover

- Qualification vs Certification, what is the difference?
- What exactly does the OSHA rule require concerning signalpersons and riggers?
- So, why should I be “certified” rather than “qualified”?

and

- Is it important to maintain your Signalperson and/or Rigger Certification.

Qualification vs Certification

- The main difference between qualification and certification is the level of testing, or whether there is testing.
- You might say, what is the importance of testing? Well, proper testing provides a consistent and accurate means to determine a person's technical knowledge and hands on skill related to the task.
 - E.g. Why take a technical knowledge and skills driving exam? To test both a driver's technical knowledge and driving hands-on skill.
- The Qualification level for Signalpersons and/or Riggers is required by Federal OSHA and generally only requires signalpersons to pass a basic exam and riggers do not need to pass an exam at all.
- The Certification level requires Signalperson and/or Riggers to pass both an accredited technical knowledge written exam and a hands-on practical exam. To attain the knowledge and skill to pass these exams generally requires that the signalperson and/or rigger complete some type of pre-exam training.

What does the OSHA rule require?

- Signalperson 1926.1428(c):
 - Know and understand basic hand signals,
 - Be competent in the application of the type of signals used, e.g. hands, radio,
 - Have a basic understanding of the crane's operation and limitations,
 - Understand when it is appropriate to use hand, radio or special signals,
 - Demonstrate qualification through an oral or written exam and a through a practical exam.
 - All of the above are evaluated by either a third-party qualified evaluator or the employer's qualified evaluator.
- Rigger: Qualified Rigger definition - is a rigger who meets the criteria for a qualified person.
 - So, a qualified rigger would be: Someone who has a rigger certification **OR** has extensive knowledge, training and experience in the type of rigging they are doing.
 - No testing is required for riggers.

So, Why Certify rather than just Qualify?

- The process to qualify signalpersons and/or riggers can be done with less preparation. The issue is, many times there is no, or minimal training involved, which means, many times the qualification process does not provide the means to really evaluate whether a signalperson and/or rigger truly retained the technical knowledge and has the hands-on skills to fully understand crane signaling or rigging.
- On the other hand, for a signalperson and/or rigger to gain the technical knowledge and hands-on skill required to pass the certification exams, this generally requires a more comprehensive training process prior to taking the certification exams. Also, the certification exams are very comprehensive, so the testing process really does evaluate a signalperson and/or riggers retention of technical knowledge and their hands-on skills.
- In summary,
 - the requirement to pass certification exams are what drives a more comprehensive training program, and the comprehensive training program is what gives the signalperson and/or rigger, the technical knowledge and hands-on skills to be competent to pass the certification exams.
 - Certified Signalpersons and/or Riggers most assuredly are going to go through a more comprehensive training process which is going to provide them much more technical knowledge along with hands-on skills training. Signalperson and/or riggers that have achieved certification, because of the training and testing process, will have the perform their job tasks safer.

So, How are Signalpersons and/or Riggers Prepared for the Certification Exams?

- A quality training program will provide a good combination of technical knowledge training along with many hands-on examples to show application.
- The training will provide ample opportunity for hands-on instruction using pre-made scenarios.
- The hands-on scenarios must be developed in a way that they require the candidates to apply the technical knowledge they learned in the classroom. The hands-on scenarios must be accessed, and proper feed back given to the candidates during the training.
- The training should also include a pre-certification written exam so the candidate, and the trainer, can assess comprehension.
- Training should not just be about “teaching to the test”. Training should really follow a well thought through comprehensive process that teaches technical and hands-on principles along with examples of application.

Is it Important to *Maintain* your Signalperson and/or Rigger Certification?

- As in any accredited certification program, there is a re-certification requirement to maintain the Certificant's certification credential.
- So, is it important to maintain your certification? Yes!! But why?? You might ask, isn't it true that signaling a crane, or the process of rigging never changes? Well, not necessarily.
- Considering that some cranes accidents are really rigging accidents, there is a real need to maintain knowledge and skills.
- Crane technology is ever changing. Types of rigging and associated rigging techniques can change due to new technologies.
- Also, knowing that I am going to recertify causes people to be more motivated to "stay sharp" in their skills and to not get complacent....
- And, ANY CREDENTIAL THAT IS WORTH HAVING IS WORTH KEEPING!!



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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