

I would like to make comment on the **Senate Inquiry into Industry Skills Councils (ISCs)**

- **Functions and responsibilities**
- **Corporate governance arrangements** and
- **Effectiveness in the operation of the national training system**

In April 2006 the National Standard for Licensing Persons Performing High Risk Work (HRW) was declared after the previous National Occupational Health and Safety Certification Standard (NOHSC) was reviewed, and found to be inflexible and unable to accommodate emerging technologies and contemporary work practices.

The objectives of the new National Standard are:

- to ensure that persons have the *skills and knowledge to perform high risk work* in a safe manner; and
- to facilitate the operation of *a nationally uniform and efficient licensing system* for persons engaged in high risk work

What is the definition of high risk work?

We are surrounded with potential dangers and hazards from the day we are born.

We begin learning health and safety skills as a child. "It's too hot, cold, sharp, dark, heavy, small, big, wet, dry, high, steep, rough, smooth, fast, slow, loud, deep, shallow, slippery, late" etc are all risks to our generic wellbeing.

Risk assessments must be conducted as we walk, drive, work and play if we are to return home safely each day. We must obey rules on the road, at work and at play.

We autonomously conduct manual handling risk assessments before lifting, moving and placing a load (ourselves), no matter how big or small, whilst keeping in mind potential hazards, the risks we are prepared to take, and the Duty of Care to others in our surroundings.

Rigging work is the practice of safely lifting, moving, and placing a load, using ropes, chains, slings, attachments, clamps, trolleys, jacks, levers, hoists, pulleys, winches or cranes. The range of styles and functions of these types of equipment is immense.

The load size, shape and material/s, the lifting method and equipment, and the manner of movement and placement will differ greatly between each industry.

The national high risk work training (packages) and licencing (assessment) system is based on skills and tasks required to be performed by persons (riggers) working predominantly in the Construction industry.

Licensed (ticketed) riggers perform work in high risk industries including, but not limited to Construction, Mining, Communication, Offshore, Entertainment, Crane, Manufacturing, Transport, Marine, and Defense.

Riggers working in the Mining, Communication, Offshore, Entertainment, Crane, Manufacturing, Transport, Marine, or Defense industries would rarely perform Construction-based tasks such as installing personnel hoists, mast climbers, crane loading platforms or concrete panels, or perform tower crane or demolition work, but must still complete these tasks, according to the licensing system.

A full (Advanced) Rigging licence comprises 4 separate licences; Dogging (DG); Basic Rigging (RB); Intermediate Rigging (RI); Advanced Rigging (RA).

The first Licence to Perform Dogging (Unit CPCCLDG3001A) specifies the outcomes required to perform slinging techniques, including the selection and inspection of lifting gear, and the directing of the crane operator in the movement of the load when the load is out of view of the crane operator.

The (non-licenced) Certificate 111 Perform Dogging (Unit CPCDDO3001A) specifies the outcomes required to undertake basic dogging work, both in or out of sight of the crane operator, for the purposes of shifting the load mechanically, including selecting sling types and sizes, and maintaining the stability of the load.

Why are they different?

The minimum licencing requirement for a stage hand (rigger) at the Sydney Opera House is the second Basic Rigging licence (RB), which legally enables (set) loads to be slung and lifted, and (set) structures to be bolted together, but will rarely perform work with mobile cranes (DG), or other Basic Rigging tasks such as erecting steel structures, installing cantilevered crane loading platforms, materials hoists and mast climbers, or working with tower cranes.

Basic Riggers are permitted to install (and operate) wire rope operated cantilevered platform materials hoists and rack and pinion mast climbers without having to hold a (Materials) Hoist operators licence. When the hoist is handed over to the (hoist) operator, the (non licenced) rigger is then not legally permitted to operate the hoist.

Mast climber operators are not required to be licenced.

Basic Scaffolders are permitted to install cantilevered platform materials hoists, but not mast climbers.

The July edition of www.licencinglinenews.com.au states that 'the regulator is not concerned with whether the applicant (to be assessed) can meet the industry determined competency levels'. The primary criteria the licencing/regulatory body will follow is whether the applicant can perform the task (for which training was conducted) in a safe and effective manner.

The assessment process does not require the applicant to operate all types of (class) related machinery.

An on-site 'job specific induction' including information, instruction, training and supervision is to be delivered by a representative or supervisor on all new, or different equipment or technology.

The pre-requisite of high risk work and training is to hold a construction induction OH&S card, the colour of which (green, white, yellow, blue or red) depending under which State or Territory regulatory bodies one works, including Workcover NSW, Work Cover Tas, Worksafe Vic, Worksafe ACT, Worksafe WA, Worksafe NT, Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Safework SA. Safework Australia is the national regulatory body.

An OH&S card is not a requirement in all high risk industries.

How many high risk industries are there? Sandwich making is one.

The idea of a National ID card could stem from the installation of a national 'work card'.

This could begin with a generic (OH&S) manual handling, safety in the workplace and first aid competency for all (manual/manu et mental/mente) workers, through to workers using generic 'high risk' (manual lifting and moving) equipment including ropes, chains, slings and attachments, through to using and operating plant and equipment to perform specific tasks required in, and by each high risk industry.

Only when a worker is assessed and deemed competent in an industry (leading hand, foreman or supervisor) should they then achieve that specific industry classification, along the lines of Certificate 111 in Rigging, Scaffolding, Carpentry, Building, etc.

Beginning in 2006, a review of the 29 National Licencing System Units of Competency and Assessment Instruments for High Risk Work (the Delphi Conference) includes State and Territory stakeholders, OH&S regulators, VET sector contacts and Industry Skills Councils.

As a full time TAFE rigging teacher, a registered national assessor for 17 of the 29 high risk competencies, I have been a participant in the (still) ongoing Delphi Conference since 2006.

As the holder of a Diploma of Teaching (Tech) and a Certificate 1V Training and Assessment I am

taught that training and assessment must be valid to the industry, and to the participant wishing to enter that industry.

As previously mentioned, the broad range of high risk industry skills requirements, and the existing national licencing requirements, including training package elements and performance criteria do not correctly align, nor are valid to many of these industries.

As a taxpayer, I am concerned as to how much has been, and has yet to be spent on the Delphi Conference.

The review has a long way to go to facilitate the operation of a *nationally uniform and efficient* high risk licensing system.

I await with interest any action the Industry Skills Councils can take on this matter.

Regards

Jeff Norton

Teacher Rigging and Scaffolding

Sydney Institute, Annandale TAFE

National Assessor 12653