

CERTIFICATION NEWS

FROM



CCO Exams Available via Computer

***NCCCO Contracts with LaserGrade
to Offer Computer-Based Testing***

March 1, 2008, Fairfax, Virginia – The National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) announced that, effective today, it would begin offering its crane operator certification exams via computer.

NCCCO has contracted with LaserGrade, a wholly-owned subsidiary of PSI Services LLC, a Burbank, CA based specialist provider of assessment solutions, for the computer delivery of CCO certification exams. Paper-and-pencil exams will continue to be offered through International Assessment Institute (IAI), Clearwater, FL.

“We’re excited that NCCCO has been able to use this technology to expand the testing options available to candidates who wish to demonstrate their knowledge through the professionally-developed and nationally accredited CCO certification program,” said Chairman of NCCCO’s Written Exam Management Committee, J.R. Williams. “As a nonprofit organization working for the benefit of the industry as well as the general public, NCCCO will continue to pursue its mission of ensuring a qualified workforce is available for the purpose of improving the safety of all those who work in and around cranes.”

Initial roll-out of the computer-based testing (CBT) program will focus on mobile crane certification, explained NCCCO’s Executive Director, Graham Brent. CBT will be available first in California, and then expanded to other states, and other programs, as demand dictates. Both the full initial mobile crane core and specialty exams will be offered, along with their corresponding recertification exams.

“NCCCO has carefully weighed the pros and cons of CBT since the late 1990s,” said Brent. “Frankly, although it is often considered ‘low-tech’, our basic paper-and-pencil model has worked well for us.” CBT can, however, offer significant advantages, he said, particularly in ease of scheduling and scoring. “Candidates will be able to schedule a test within a matter of days of their application, and they will leave the testing room with their scores in hand,” said Brent.

Candidates will apply for CBT testing through a new online application process developed by International Assessment Institute (IAI), Clearwater, FL. IAI has provided candidate processing and test development services to NCCCO since 1998. “IAI has designed the online application process to be as “user-friendly” as possible,” said IAI President, Anthony Mitchell, PhD. “Candidates are now able to apply for the exams they wish to take, and pay for them, with a few clicks of a mouse,” said Mitchell. Scheduling of tests is done with LaserGrade over the phone, he noted.

“A prime concern has been to ensure that the validity of the tests would not be compromised by delivering them in an electronic format,” said NCCCO’s Manager of Program Development, Phillip Kinser. “NCCCO has worked cooperatively with both IAI and LaserGrade to protect the integrity of the test items so that the exams continue to assess a crane operator’s knowledge effectively and accurately, regardless of the method of delivery.”

Bob Hornauer, NCCCO’s Manager of Test Integrity, pointed out that the security of the tests would in no way be compromised even though they would be delivered by computer. “LaserGrade uses a state-of-the-art encryption system,” Hornauer said, “and the test administrations will be proctored in the same manner as written tests.” The question delivery process still permits candidates to scroll back and forth to review their responses, he added.

Brent stressed that NCCCO had no intention of abandoning its traditional test delivery system. “Paper-and-pencil test administrations have worked well for us since 1996, and still have their place in all CCO certification programs,” Brent noted. “The contract with LaserGrade means we can offer the best of both worlds, since candidates can now select the delivery system—electronic or paper-and-pencil— that best meets their needs.”

For further information contact: Graham Brent, Executive Director,
National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO)
2750 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 505, Fairfax, VA 22031
Tel: 703/560-2391; Fax: 703/560-2392; info@nccco.org; www.nccco.org

BACKGROUND

The National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) is a non-profit industry organization formed in January 1995 to develop effective performance standards for safe crane operation to assist all segments of construction and general industry. Since NCCCO began testing in April 1996, more than 300,000 written and practical exams have been administered to over 60,000 crane operators in all 50 states.

CCO certification has been nationally accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) since 1998. The NCCCO crane operator certification program is also the only program to be recognized by federal OSHA as meeting OSHA and ASME (ANSI) requirements for crane operator competency. The program is unique in that it is: third-party; independent of training; developed and supported by industry; a joint labor/management initiative; psychometrically sound; validated through peer review; and administered on a standardized, secure, nationwide basis.

LaserGrade is a division of PSI Services LLC. PSI Services LLC, a leader in the assessment industry, provides various solutions through its multiple business channels including talent assessments (of job-seeking candidates as well as employee development programs), certification and licensure test development and delivery, biometric identification authentication services, and licensing and credentialing services.

Through the use of its nationwide network of testing centers and online (hosted) test administration platforms, LaserGrade and PSI offers clients various solutions to measure, assess, and identify the skills, abilities, traits and identities of individuals seeking jobs, licensure, or certification credentials. More information is available at www.lasergrade.com and www.psonline.com.
