

STANDARDIZATION FOR THE OVERHEAD CRANE INDUSTRY

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) recently formed a Technical Support committee to review and revise the existing CSA-B167 Overhead Crane Standard to comply with the ISO International Standards for Cranes. The new standard will be applicable across Canada and address, manufacturing, preventative maintenance, service personnel and operator training requirements for overhead lifting equipment. The expected completion of the revision is in the spring of 2006.

Standardization is happening throughout the world, as the cost of living and population increases, and resources decrease, governments and industries are realizing the need to find a more cost effective and efficient way of doing business. This practice is already evident, as world leaders are developing international environmental standards to save the world's natural resources from pollution and destruction. One by one countries are beginning to accept and implement these standards.

Presently the majority of industries who use overhead lifting equipment as part of their production or operation have made each individual location responsible for all their overhead lifting equipment maintenance and operations. This is a result of the Health & Safety Regulations and Standards throughout Canada and the United States differing from province to province and state to state. This makes it near impossible for a multi-site company or organization to develop standardized procedures for maintenance or training requirements. The direct consequence is the continuous escalating cost of product to the customer.

The United States has documented and implemented a Federal OSHA Regulation that is a nationally applicable health and safety regulation, which is recognized and implemented by most states. The National Commission for Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO) has recently successfully completed a national certification exam process for "Operators of Overhead Cranes Five Ton and over" which is recognized and supported by Federal OSHA. The standards committee for ASME B30 series in conjunction with the ISO International Standard for Cranes have formed a Task Force to review and revise the existing standards to comply with the ISO crane standards.

This will enable companies and organizations to document and implement standardized procedures for their crane maintenance and operator training that would be applicable to all of their locations. Each location would only need to document and implement instructions to the procedures that are unique to their site. As a result, the corporate office would have total traceability of all preventative maintenance requirements and operator training taking place at each location. In the future standardization for the crane industry will mean there is one international standard that is applicable to all lifting equipment.