

EN13000; the Way Forward

Background:

In November 2009, CICA released an open letter regarding the introduction of EN13000:2010 amendments for new European Cranes being imported into the Australian Crane Industry. The response to this letter was rather less than what CICA was expecting with many preferring to not commit themselves. So we are now faced with a more pressing issue as the introduction of EN13000:2010 commenced on May 1, 2010 for all European Manufactured Mobile Cranes.

CICA has been involved with the issue since March 2008, and has been party to all discussions with FEM since that time. The CICA position at meetings with FEM was developed after wide consultation with its own Members, State Crane Associations and their Members, and those who attend the CICA Industry Forum that is conducted each year at the CICA Conference. CICA has consistently followed the direction dictated by these groups. The immediate pressing issue facing the Mobile Crane Industry in Australia is whether to accept Cranes from Europe with the full EN13000:2010 package, or do we accept the current arrangement of having an over ride switch in close proximity to the operator?

CICA is firmly of the opinion that the Mobile Crane Industry cannot support the importation of new cranes (manufactured after May 1, 2010) that are fitted with both of these systems at the request of the purchaser. A decision must be made by the Crane Industry whether to import with one system or the other; not both.

New Plant Standards-Australia:

Safe Work Australia, who is responsible for drafting legislation that will be adopted by all States, have already released a document for public comment in May 2009. On behalf of the Mobile Crane Industry, CICA put in a submission that basically accepted the thrust of what Safe Work Australia was trying to achieve. In brief, it is promoting an Essential Safety Outcome (ESO) in line with European practices and Standards. The new Plant Regulations are due to be released by Safe Work Australia in 2012 and then each State is expected to legislate these Regulations.

The European Standards and Australian Standards are very similar, and basically are the only two Standards Worldwide that are acceptable to maintain the degree of safety that we have had in using Australian Standards. Furthermore the Load Charts are very similar (75%), thus ensuring no rerating of existing cranes in the field (approx 10,000) that have 75% load charts. If an 85% load chart regime was introduced it would be an enormous challenge, to change all of the existing cranes which would result in cranes that offer a lower level of stability than what is used today. If the new Safe Work plant regulations that were released for public comment in May 2009 come to fruition, which CICA believes will happen, then all of the mandatory components of EN13000:2010 will become applicable immediately when the regulations are bought into practice.

Current Australian Standards:

The probable situation with Australian Standards in the future is that they will become part of Codes of Practice, and not part of Regulations which is in line with Safe Work Australia's previous directives. It was recently announced that for any Industry to initiate any changes to Australian Standards, a nominal charge will need to be funded by industry. The reality is that no Industry Group will pay this amount of money when they only have 10% of vote and any single person on the Standards Committees has the right of veto for any changes proposed.

For this reason, CICA believes Australian Standards will become less relevant in time, and the Crane Industry will have to accept an alternative which CICA has already done with its support of European Standards. Over-Ride switches are not referenced at all in the current versions of the AS1418 and AS2550 standards as they relate to Mobile Cranes. The chances of this device being added into future revisions of Australian Standards are virtually zero given the difficulty in any group financing the revisions required and the possibility of it not being acceptable to all parties.

The Way Forward:

CICA is recommending that all European produced Mobile Cranes manufactured after May 1, 2010 that are imported into Australia shall fully comply with EN13000:2010. The CICA position on the over-ride switch is documented in the attached FEM presentation; however we accept that our ideal solution of having an emergency push button in the cabin will not occur until 2014 at the earliest. Our rationale for accepting the full EN13000:2010 solution follows:

1. The introduction of the new Safe Work Australia plant regulations are planned for introduction in 2012. This will mean that full compliance to EN13000:2010 may become applicable at this date. It does not make sense to have a stop gap measure in place for only 2 years with an over-ride switch in the cabin.
2. All Mobile Cranes coming out of Europe will have data loggers' fitted, regardless of whether full compliance with EN13000:2010 or over ride switch method is adopted.
3. Australian Standards do not reference any over ride switches but do have minimum levels of stability. The use of an over ride switch, in an overload situation is already a possible infringement of Australian Standards. In addition, the data logger proves that the maximum load has been exceeded. This also raises the question of whether Insurances will be affected. It certainly could be a reason for an Insurance Company to void the cover.
4. The EN13000:2010 set up button allows the crane to be recovered in an inadvertent overload situation. The reduced speeds result in a dynamic force similar to rated load at maximum speed.
5. EN13000:2010 does not reduce speeds on the hoist winch, boom up, boom retract and slew functions in an emergency situation.
6. Exporting EN13000:2010 equipped cranes back to Europe will not void CE requirements whereas non compliant cranes will have to be modified to meet the EN13000:2010 standard.
7. Hire Companies will be able to present zero over load history from the data logger to verify their conformance to safe work practices.

This recommendation does not in any way diminish our request for an emergency over ride switch in the future. CICA believes this is the safest manner to enable the operator control in unforeseen circumstances. Hence we understand the current amendment is not ideal, but is the decided way forward as a trial for safety authorities in Europe. In addition, CICA believes the rare occasions that over ride operations maybe required are far outweighed by the possibility of continual abuse from over loading resulting in accidents and damage to Mobile Cranes.

If you have any inquiries please contact the CICA National Office.

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On behalf of the CICA Board
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