



## Life Member Profile:

### Allan McPherson

What was your pathway to enter into the Crane Industry?

**My initial pathway into cranes came in early 1965 from a small opportunity to operate an overhead gantry crane at Parkeston railway transshipment yard near Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. This was my first job after four years of carpentry apprenticeship in the Australian Army. From having “a go” and showing some promise, I progressed to operating mobile Fowler Cranes transshipping cars and timber sleepers. My next career change was in mid 1965, when I rejoined the Australian Army, which I found valuable. This provided me with the skill set and work ethic that I have continued to build upon, and without knowing it at the time, my Army career also proved significant in later years. However, my first real employment in a crane hire company was for O’Connor Cranes, Kwinana in December 1969 when I stopped by during my Perth Christmas holidays from Boulder and was offered a job operating cranes. Within a week I had relocated the family and had officially joined the crane hire industry.**

What was your role in the industry?

**From 1969 until 1972 I was a full time crane operator and I was taking home \$52.00 for 44 ordinary hours per week. Importantly during late 1972, my existing branch manager decided to take leave overseas and never returned. Brian O’Connor summonsed me to a meeting and complimented me on my work ethic and noted the importance of my military background and I was then promoted to become the new Kwinana branch manager.**

How did you become involved as a volunteer with either CICA and / or a State Crane Association?

**Originally in mid 1979 my then employer was involved in the WA Road Transport Association which included a mobile crane hire division. I was elected to the inaugural committee and in time this division evolved into CAWA as a stand-alone association and I continued in an executive position. As part of the state association progress I was motivated to contribute to improve the industry, to learn from others and also acquire better understanding about the technical aspects of cranes and lifting.**

What is / was the most significant change you saw in the industry?

**Operationally some significant changes in WA which have improved the industry for the benefit of hirers and customers, includes the removal of “daylight only” travel; increased axle mass to 12000kg for All Terrain cranes; 43T for 4 axle truck cranes. Also the overall improvement to safety management and practices with devices such as Christmas tree lights (RCI). However, another significant change I have observed is the recent changes to the traditional blue collar career path into management roles. In contrast to my career path being founded on my technical expertise and then learning management skills on the job, there appears to be an increasing shift to crane company managers being founded on academic based management training learned in university and then learning the technical aspects of the crane industry on the job.**

**Of course, increased regulation, rules and red tape has been a significant burden on crane and other industries over the last forty years.**

What is / was the most rewarding achievement made by CICA and /or a State Crane Association?

**As a Life Member of CAWA and CICA, the personal rewards are many. Whilst the improvements to industry in WA were significant and promoted the growth and best practice of local industry, I do feel proud to be part of CICA that was able to formulate and implement an exemplary system of self-regulation for cranes, that we know today as CraneSafe. At a more personal level, I am proud and grateful that my small contribution to our industry is acknowledged by CAWA and CICA and the foundation that I helped to build provides a sustainable and safer industry platform for new industry entrants.**

How did participating as a volunteer with CICA and / or a State Association benefit your through your time in the industry?

**In the first instance it allowed me to meet and build friendships with some wonderful people with common interests and goals to progress and improve the things that matter in our industry. It also allowed me to gain valuable knowledge from other crane companies, manufacturers and government bodies about cranes, regulation and world best practice which I could then pass onto our local members large and small. I also identified that through good discussions and relations with regulators I could build trust and improve outcomes through better compliance from our members.**

What advice would you give to new comers to the industry?

**The most important advice that I can offer is for new entrants to our industry is to join and "PARTICIPATE" in your local association for the benefit of your business and the industry as a whole. Without active members with their opinions the local industry would not be enjoying the benefits they have today. I would also encourage new entrants to make the effort to engage with myself and other long term industry volunteers, so that new people with new ideas can gain from the industry experience we have attained and ensure this great industry in this great country achieves its best.**

Thank you to CICA.

