



CICA – Vic / Tas Branch Crane Safety Bulletin #346 October 2024



Greetings all. Today's Bulletin is about Crane Licensing Updates.

[SafeWork Australia is currently exploring some important updates](#) to the crane licensing regulations.

There's a possibility that new types of licenses will be introduced specifically for operators of maritime cranes, aiming to address gaps in the current system.

Here's a breakdown of what you need to know about these potential changes and what they could mean.

Proposed New Maritime Licenses

At the heart of these discussions is the idea of creating specialised high-risk work licenses for certain types of maritime equipment.

This means that operators of machinery like **straddle carriers, mobile harbour cranes, and vessel-mounted cranes** could soon need to obtain a specific high risk work license tailored to these maritime cranes.

This is significant because these machines operate in unique environments—ports, shipyards, and other maritime workplaces—and the risks and operational requirements are different from those in land-based crane operations.

The proposed new licenses would aim to ensure that workers are properly trained to handle the particular demands of these specialised cranes.

Why New Licenses?

SafeWork Australia has identified several key reasons why these new licenses are being considered:

- **Safety First:** The primary driver behind these potential changes is safety. Current high-risk work licenses may not fully cover the specialised skills required to safely operate maritime equipment. Introducing new license categories would help make sure that operators are better prepared to manage the unique risks posed by cranes in maritime environments, where factors like water, wind, and vessel movement come into play. [The ICSA has produced a guidance document](#) for use of land-based cranes on vessels that shows how working on a floating platform can change how the crane behaves when lifting and landing loads.
- **Consistency Across the Board:** Right now, licensing requirements for maritime crane

operators can vary from state to state and internationally. This lack of consistency makes it difficult for businesses operating across different jurisdictions to comply with regulations. Creating new maritime-specific licenses would streamline these rules, making it easier for operators and companies to understand and meet their regulatory obligations, no matter where they're working.

- **Keeping Pace with Technology:** Crane technology is advancing rapidly, especially in the maritime sector. Modern cranes are more powerful and complex, and operators need to stay up-to-date with the latest innovations. By introducing new license types, SafeWork Australia aims to make sure the licensing system keeps up with these technological advancements, ensuring operators are properly trained to work with the latest equipment.

What Could This Mean for You?

The potential introduction of new maritime-specific licenses could have significant implications for the workforce. For operators, it could mean the need for additional training and certification to continue working with certain types of cranes. For businesses, it could bring new compliance requirements, especially if you're operating across multiple states with differing regulations.

These changes could lead to improved safety standards and a more skilled workforce, with operators better equipped to handle the unique challenges of maritime crane operations. Companies might also find it easier to comply with consistent regulations across Australia, reducing administrative headaches and improving overall operational efficiency.

Wrapping Up

New maritime crane licenses could represent a major shift in the way high-risk work is regulated in Australia. While these changes are still in the consultation phase, they could have far-reaching implications for safety standards, regulatory compliance, and workforce qualifications in maritime industries.

If you're working in ports, shipyards, or other maritime workplaces, it's worth keeping a close eye



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on these discussions—and, even better, getting involved to make sure your voice is heard. Whether it's through formal feedback or participating in industry discussions, now's the time to help shape the future of crane licensing in Australia.

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