



CICA – Vic / Tas Branch Crane Safety Bulletin #355 February 2025



Greetings all. Today's Bulletin is about ensuring safety in articulated mobile crane operations and why every operator must complete this training.

Do you know if your crane operator truly understands articulated cranes? Do you fully appreciate how they handle different surfaces?

The Unique Risks of Articulated Mobile Cranes

Articulated mobile cranes play a crucial role in Australian worksites, but their unique handling characteristics make them significantly different from other heavy vehicles.

Unlike trucks, which use Ackermann steering to turn front wheels independently, articulated cranes pivot at the centre, causing the front section and cabin to rotate with the turn. This introduces a range of challenges, including:

- **Minimal Steering Feedback:** Articulated cranes rely on hydraulic steering, which lacks the natural resistance found in trucks, increasing the risk of oversteering.
- **No Self-Centering Effect:** Unlike trucks, where the front wheels naturally return to alignment after a turn, articulated crane operators must actively realign the wheels.
- **Stiff Suspension for Heavy Lifting:** The suspension, designed to support extreme loads, reduces ride plushness on the road and makes the vehicle more sensitive to uneven terrain.
- **Tight Turning Radius:** While articulation allows for tight turns, it also increases the risk of over-rotation and difficulty correcting.

These characteristics mean that a rigid truck licence alone is insufficient preparation for operating an articulated mobile crane safely.

Without specialised training, operators may not fully understand the nuances of control, leading to increased risks of accidents, injuries, and fatalities.

Meeting Chain of Responsibility (CoR) Obligations

Under Australia's Chain of Responsibility (CoR) laws, all parties in the supply chain—including business owners, site managers, and employers—have a legal obligation to ensure the safe operation of heavy vehicles.

Failing to provide adequate training for crane operators exposes businesses to significant legal and financial risks.

By requiring operators to complete the **CICA On-Road Articulated Steering Mobile Crane Training Course**, workplaces can:

- **Improve Safety Outcomes:** Reduce workplace injuries, equipment damage, and operational disruptions.
- **Enhance Workforce Competency:** Ensure that all crane operators are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills to safely control articulated cranes.
- **Reduce Liability:** Minimise the risk of accidents that could lead to legal action or insurance claims.
- **Demonstrate Compliance:** Proactively address safety risks and meet industry best practices.

How the Training Makes a Difference

Funded by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator's (NHVR's) Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative (HVSII) and supported by the Australian Government, CICA has developed a comprehensive training initiative aimed at ensuring every articulated mobile crane driver is properly educated on the distinct handling characteristics of these machines.

This industry-leading course provides both **theoretical knowledge and practical assessments** to ensure operators can safely navigate real-world challenges.

Key features of the training include:

- **Online Adaptive Learning:** Tailored training based on an operator's experience level.
- **Practical Assessments:** Real-world application of skills using the CrewSafe competency framework.

The Industry's Commitment to Safety

CICA strongly encourages all workplaces to take responsibility for ensuring their operators receive this training.

The training is free to CICA Members and Non-members. No external providers are required to complete the training.



CICA – Vic / Tas Branch Crane Safety Bulletin #355 February 2025



Owners, operators and site supervisors to take advantage of the free and comprehensive resources on offer. These tools are designed to elevate safety standards, ensure best practices, and protect not only operators but everyone sharing the road.

For information on how to complete the course, go to <https://www.cica.com.au/The-CICA-On-Road-Course> or reach out to Sharon Pearce, CICA Crane Crew Competency Officer: sharon@cica.com.au

CICA is also developing the curriculum for a 'Train the Trainer' Course to equip you to effectively help your team complete the course and achieve their intended outcomes.

Industry Commitment to Safety

This project will be a major focus for CICA in 2025 and is funded by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator's *Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative* supported by the Australian Government.

If you would like to subscribe to these safety bulletins please send an email [here](#).

To become a CICA Member, click [here](#).

Stay Safe - CICA