

BCA ID 93.1.1

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23 May 2007

By fax and post

(See Distribution List)

TEMPORARY RELAXATION OF LICENCE REGISTRATION FOR FOREIGN CRANE OPERATORS

Since 1 July 2005, new crane operator licence registrations have been limited to Singaporeans and Permanent Residents. Existing foreign crane operators may continue working until they leave Singapore. The long-term intention is to build and maintain a core of experienced local crane operators, to anchor the trade and enhance professionalism, productivity and site safety. With the upturn in construction volume and mega projects in the pipeline, the construction industry has been facing increased pressure to hire additional crane operators to work on-site.

2 From 24 May 2007, BCA will temporarily relax the licence registration to foreign crane operators for employers that meet certain conditions. This is to ease the current shortage of qualified crane operators. The long-term policy to build up and maintain a core group of local crane operators will remain. The temporary relaxation and conditions are as follows:

- a) Employers can apply for up to **two** new foreign crane operators (Employment Pass, S-Pass, or Traditional Source (TS)/North Asian Source (NAS) Work Permit holders, only) for every **one** new local crane operator that they employ. The foreign crane operators will be subject to the prevailing criteria for work pass and crane operator licence registration.
- b) New work passes issued under this relaxation will be non-renewable and subject to a maximum validity duration of 24 months.

The above conditions will not apply for the continual employment of **existing** foreign crane operators working in the construction industry before 24 May 2007.

3 Employers seeking to employ new foreign crane operators under this temporary relaxation will have to first apply to BCA for approval **before** applying to MOM for the work pass and licence registration. Until further notice, online application for work permits under

this relaxation will not be available. Applications for Employment Pass and S Pass may be submitted via EP Online system. Employers may refer to the FAQs in the attached Annex A for details on the application procedure to employ new foreign crane operators.

4 BCA will check on the employment of the local crane operators to ensure compliance. Employers must continue to employ a new local crane operator for every two new foreign crane operators as long as the work passes of the new foreign crane operators remain valid. If the new local crane operators leave their employment, employers must inform BCA within 7 working days and are required to find replacements to comply with the condition on employing local crane operators.

5 Employers could tap on the Place & Train programme for crane operators through BCA for help on recruiting the new local crane operators. For questions concerning this circular, please refer to the FAQs in the attached Annex A. If you require further clarifications, please call or email the contact listed at the end of this circular.



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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Temporary Relaxation of Licence Registration for Foreign Crane Operators

General application issues

Q1: What is the temporary relaxation on the employment of foreign crane operators?

A1: From 24 May 2007, employers can employ up to **two** new foreign crane operators (Employment Pass, S-Pass or TS/NAS Work Permit holders) for every **one** new local crane operator that they employ.

Q2: What is the duration of the work pass (EP, S-Pass or TS/NAS WP) issued under this relaxation?

A2: New work passes issued under this relaxation shall be non-renewable and valid for a maximum duration of 24 months only.

Q3: Where can employers submit the application for recruiting new foreign crane operators?

A3: Applications to BCA for approval to employ new foreign crane operators may be submitted via one of the following ways:

(i) Drop box at:

MND Complex Tower Block Level 2,
BCA Service Centre, Contractors' Registry Counter

(ii) Post to (please specify "Crane Operator Temporary Scheme" on top left corner of the envelope):

Officer-in-charge (Manpower Planning)
5 Maxwell Road #17-00
MND Complex Tower Block
Singapore 069110

Q4: What are the requirements that employers have to meet in order to employ new foreign crane operators?

A4: To qualify for BCA's approval, an employer must employ 1 new local crane operator for every 2 new foreign crane operators allowed. To qualify to work in Singapore after obtaining BCA's approval, the foreigners must meet the prevailing criteria for the respective work pass and crane operator licence registration. Employers may refer to MOM's website <http://www.mom.gov.sg> for details on the prevailing work pass criteria.

Q5: How long will this temporary relaxation last?

A5: BCA will continue to monitor the industry manpower situation to ascertain if there is a need to adjust the requirements. The industry will be given notice when BCA decide to review or terminate the temporary relaxation.

Q6: What is the procedure for recruiting new foreign crane operators through this temporary relaxation?

A6: Employers will need to obtain the application form (Form C) from the BCA Service Centre, Contractors Registry counter at MND Tower Block Level 2 or MOM counter. Alternatively, the form can be downloaded from BCA's website: http://www.bca.gov.sg/TrainingCareer/crane_operator_scheme_applnforms.html. All duly completed forms and enclosed documents should be submitted to BCA by mail or through the drop box at the Contractors' Registry. BCA will assess each application and communicate to the employer on the application result by email or fax.

For Work Permit application:

The employer shall submit a fax or email copy of Form C endorsed by BCA, together with the completed work permit application form, to MOM via any SingPost office (MOM-appointed collecting agent). An administrative fee of S\$10 will be charged for each application submitted. Until further notice, online application for new work permits under this relaxation will not be available.

For Employment Pass and S-Pass application:

Employer may submit Employment Pass and S-Pass applications via EP Online System or manually via any SingPost office. An administrative fee of S\$10 will be charged for each application submitted.

Recruitment of operators

Q7: I have difficulties recruiting local crane operators. Will BCA help?

A7: BCA, WDA and NTUC can assist employers who have difficulties hiring local crane operators to meet the requirements through the Place and Train programme. The Place & Train programme provides placement of suitable candidates and WDA subsidises the training fees and absentee payroll for the employer. For further details, employers may contact BCA directly at: Tel: 6325 5100 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) or Email: bca_crane@bca.gov.sg

Q8: If my newly deployed local crane operators resign and the work passes of my new foreign crane operators are still valid, do I have to top up the shortfall in meeting the requirement on local recruitment?

A8: Employers should inform BCA within 7 days from the date of resignation of the local crane operator/s. Employers must recruit new local crane operators to replace those who have resigned. The ratio of local crane operators to foreign crane operators employed under this relaxation must be maintained for the entire duration of the work passes.

Q9: What can happen to employers who repeatedly refuse to comply with the requirements under this relaxation?

A9: If an employer repeatedly does not comply with the condition, BCA will not approve applications for the employer to apply for new work passes for foreign crane operators. The work passes of their existing foreign crane operators who were employed prior to this relaxation will also not be renewed by MOM.

Skills Certification, Training and Registration for Crane Operators

Q10: How can my foreign worker register with MOM as a crane operator?

A10: A new foreign crane operator must attend a prescribed course to be certified in crane operation by BCA to be eligible for registration with MOM as a crane operator. Those who were previously registered with MOM could re-register with MOM subject to the following requirements:

S/n	Time lapsed from the expiry date of crane operator licence registration	Types of training or test required for re-registration
1	Less than 6 months	None
2	Between 6 months to 3 years	Direct test required
3	Between 3 years to 5 years	Refresher course and test required
4	More than 5 years	Full course and test required

Q11: If my foreign worker has a foreign crane operator qualification and/or has many years of experience in crane operation, is it possible for the foreign worker to register with MOM as a crane operator without having to go through any training and/or certification in Singapore?

A11: From a safety view point, licence registration without crane operation skills training and/or certification is not allowed. However, an employer may apply to BCA on the behalf of its foreign employees to have their skills assessed instead of having to go through a prescribed course. BCA will consider such applications on a case-by-case basis.

Q12: What arrangement must an employer make to enable his foreign worker to attend the necessary training and/or have his skills certified in crane operation in Singapore?

A12: The foreigner can come to Singapore on a Social Visit Pass for skills training and/or skills certification by BCA. Once the foreigner is certified in crane operation, the employer can proceed to MOM to apply for a work pass and subsequently register the worker as a crane operator. For WP applicants from North Asian Sources (NAS), they cannot be in Singapore when their WP applications are being submitted. Employers can only bring the NAS WP holders into Singapore after (a) obtaining the In-Principle Approval (IPA) and (b) providing a security deposit of S\$5000 per worker.

Q13: What is the Place & Train Programme for Crane Operators and how can it help employers?

A13: The Place and Train programmes offer an arrangement whereby jobseekers are first selected by potential employers before they undergo training. This allows jobseekers, who may not have prior working experience in a particular industry, to receive training and be assured of a job before training begins.

Under the Place and Train programme for crane operators, BCA and NTUC will assist companies to first recruit suitable jobseekers as crane operators before sending them for the required crane training course at BCA Academy (formerly CITI). WDA will provide funding support for training and absentee payroll. Employers may refer to WDA's website as listed below for details on the funding support available under the CORE Plus Programme:

http://www.wda.gov.sg/Programmes/Place_and_Train_Programmes/Industries/CORE+Plus.htm