



PERSONNEL CERTIFICATION SERVICES
Program Development • Individual Assessment

Recognizing *Individual* Excellence

The complex block features a blue background with a pattern of white silhouettes of people wearing hard hats. In the center, a man with short brown hair, wearing a black polo shirt, is smiling and looking towards the camera. The text is positioned above and below the man.

Report of CSA Occupational Health and Safety Special Forum on
Personnel Competency and Certification



Date of Forum – November 24, 2009

CSA Occupational Health and Safety Forum on Personnel Competency and Certification

November 24, 2009
Mississauga, Canada

12:00 – 4:00 pm
Room 8

Report of Forum Discussions

Introduction

This document summarizes discussions held during a special forum sponsored by CSA Standards in Mississauga on November 24, 2009. It covers key themes and input provided by participants. It also includes background information provided prior to the forum and copies of the presentation material provided at the forum. This summary report is not a transcript or complete record of the meeting. The meeting was facilitated by Miles Murphy, Product Development Manager, CSA Standards.

Origins of the Forum

In today's economy new technology is introduced at a rapid rate, quite often resulting in inconsistency in education and training. In response to this marketplace need, CSA has been investigating and developing Personnel Certification Programs. The goal of our personnel certification programs is to improve public safety and the environment through the development and application of specific worker competency criteria that address the needs of workers, industry, regulators, and the general public. Unlike qualification based programs that consider an individual's education and general qualifications, CSA's programs examine an individual's measurable competency.

These programs certify an individual's knowledge within a specific subject area, by conducting an assessment against objectively identified criteria and then providing formal recognition. CSA manages the development of competency criteria, written and practical examinations validated for effectiveness using standard psychometrics, program administration and maintenance. Its processes can scale from the development of less rigorous programs to address immediate market needs to more robust programs designed to support third party ISO 17024, *General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons accreditation*.

Objectives of the forum

1. To raise awareness with participants about CSA's services in the area of personnel competency and certification and to provide general background information to participants on personnel competency and certification.
2. To provide an opportunity where participants can dialogue about potential barriers and opportunities related to personnel competency and certification programs in occupational health and safety in Canada and current initiatives taking place.
3. To provide input on market opportunities and strategic priorities related to this service offering. This will include identification of specific occupations and sectors for further assessment.

Forum Participants

Norma McCormick – Corporate Health Works, SSC

Peter Gilmour – Worksafe BC, SSC

Daryl Gibson – Canadian Tire, CME, SSC

Bernard Dufour – CSST, SSC

Ray Mullin – Honeywell

Michelle Morrissey-O’Ryan – Hydro One Networks, CEA, SSC

Thomas Eastwood – IAPA

Louis Lazure – IRSST, SSC

Scott McKay – IAPA, SCC

Kevin A. Maynard – Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council

Lloyd Harman – Enform Canada

Don McDonough – Sperian Protection

Gabriel Mansour – OML

Ron O’Neil – Fall Protection Group

Dave Geddes – Seneca College

Bob Landry – Canadian Workplace Safety Inc.

CSA Staff: Miles Murphy, Mike Dickerson, Jeanne Bank, Dave Shanahan, Walter Dick, Elizabeth Rankin, Tatiana Khayrullina

Breakout Session # 1

Discussion Questions

1. Having heard about the work currently underway at CSA in the area of personnel competency and certification, in your opinion what are the barriers or issues to launching personnel certification programs in the OHS area?
2. Are there opportunities in the area of occupational health and safety for CSA to play a greater role in personnel competency and certification? How would this fit with other initiatives taking place?

Summary of Feedback

Question # 1 – Barriers and Issues

- Acceptance by users is a key barrier – the launch and marketing of any program will be critical to success
- Costs of programs may pose a barrier in today's economic climate – can CSA compete on price point?
- It will be important to engage all stakeholders: regulators, associations, industry (both enemies and friends). Consultation with provincial regulators will be critical prior to introducing any programs in the OHS area
- Existing training programs will be barrier to introduction of these programs, as well as competition from other standards bodies
- Members had some concern about the erosion of the CSA brand
- Market assessments must include employer's perception of competency and their responsibility in this area (due diligence)
- Opportunities exist as training is presently done by manufacturers and a wide range of trainers – this leads to inconsistency in quality of training and result
- While there are many potential opportunities, the landscape is very crowded and the breadth is broad in terms of occupations – it will be challenging to identify opportunities and to prioritize
- Interprovincial recognition is important
- Personnel Certification programs in OHS areas could add value for large employers
- Would CSA Programs align with programs from US or international?
- Research is needed to develop a better understanding of what is required for key functions/professions. It will be important to assess those high risk/high liability areas and to develop sound business case
- There may be a lack of demand for many areas
- At present there are many poorly qualified people offering services
- A competency standard is required first before a PC program can be launched
- Best opportunity is for Certification/accreditation of training programs and trainers
- There is a need for common terminology and building understanding of what the following terms mean : "Qualified", "Competent", "Certified", "Accredited"
- CSA's experience with the Diving Certification Program showed that you need champions such as the Technical Committee, combined with a compelling need in the marketplace such as injuries and fatalities
- The impact of these programs on SME's needs to be considered
- There is a proliferation of training on OHS and everyone claims they are certified – hard to cut through this noise and offer something rigorous and credible - however, there are opportunities as employers are looking for some form of assurance of quality

- A PC program for OHS trainers would help to balance the field between in house and external trainers
- It is important that trainers are audited to ensure quality of programs
- Big challenge will be to establish competency and very specific to task
- Organization may not really value certification(e.g. certification for Joint Health and Safety Committee members) – certification needs to be regarded as more than just completing course
- More important for individual rather than organization to have PC programs in place
- Recertification (maintenance) – need 3rd party and auditing

Question # 2 – Role for CSA

- CSA's national scope provides a natural opportunity for national programs
- CSA will need to identify where assess the training needs in current OHS standards and then research the marketplace to identify gaps and opportunities
- Need to identify who the customer for Personnel Certification in OSH
- Work on establishing performance standards for trade schools
- Work with customers to gain equivalencies
- Interprovincial recognition (training delivery and certification)
- Develop programs that add value for large employers
- Be opportunistic and ensure timing is right – e.g. there is a big concern at present about live working electricians
- Is PC a liability risk for CSA? – how can this be minimized
- Build on existing programs

Breakout Session # 2

Discussion Question

What are some of the specific occupational areas or strategic business opportunities that could be assessed for business potential?

Summary of Feedback

In looking at potential areas for personnel certification programs, the participants indicated that this could be assessed in a number of ways. It could take a sector based approach or it could be identified on the basis of specific hazards or job functions. There is probably more opportunity in fields of growth (e.g. new " green technology fields") and areas where legislation is changing or new legislation is being introduced for occupations (e.g. confined spaces) . Overall, the participants felt that opportunities for personnel certification were more

likely in those areas where standards are more prescriptive. Participants suggested that CSA should review all its OHS standards and identify all of those which have competency requirements – this would form the basis of a short list.

Some of the opportunities identified included:

- Performance/ competency standard for Trade schools
- Worker and Instructor certification for fall protection
- Supervisor competency (e.g. Oil and Gas industry)
- Manufacturing and OHS
- Confined Space Entry
- OHS trainers (specialized training – not generic)
- Risk Assessors
- Asbestos removal
- Respirator fit training & Management of Respiratory Protection (health care and industry)
- Personal Protective Equipment (comprehensive)
- Compressed breathing air tester technician
- Transport truck drivers/inspectors (areas not covered by regulation) – fleet safety management
- Z1000 auditors
- Trainers for operators of specific equipment (lift trucks)
- Wind power – this area has a number of OHS hazards (fall protection, maintenance)
- Trainers for workers for power equipment
- Trainers of lifting equipment (aerial lifts, scissor lifts)
- Accident Investigation
- Noise protection/noise conservation (more is being done in US – investigate for application in Canada)

Annex A – Forum Agenda**Moderator:****Miles Murphy, Product Manager, Personnel Certification
Product Development, CSA Standards**

- 12:00 Registration and Lunch
- 12:45 Introductions/ Objectives for the Workshop
Housekeeping announcements
Participant Introductions
- 1:00 **Plenary Session: *Overview of CSA's Role in Personnel Certification***
- General overview of personnel certification (relevant standards and processes)
 - Description of CSA activities in the area of personnel competency and certification
 - CSA methodology for evaluating potential personnel competency programs
 - Q & A
- 1:30 **Dialogue session # 1**
Discussion Questions:
- 1) Having heard about the work currently underway at CSA in the area of personnel competency and certification, in your opinion what are the barriers or issues associated with personnel certification programs in the OHS area?
 - 2) How could CSA play a greater role in personnel competency and certification in the area of OHS? How would this fit with other initiatives taking place?
- 2:30 Feedback session
- 2:45 Refreshment Break
- 3:00 **Dialogue session # 2**
Discussion Question:
- 1) What are some of the specific occupational areas and opportunities that could be assessed for business potential?
- 3:45 Feedback Session
- 4:00 Wrap up & next steps

Annex B – Background Information

What is Personnel Certification?

Personnel certification is a way to validate an individual's competency (knowledge, skills, expertise) in carrying out a specific scope of activity or performing a job. Some common examples of personnel certifications are chartered and public accountants, oil and gas fitters and registered nurses. A certificate (often accompanied by a designation) is awarded in recognition of meeting the certification requirements and successful completion of a competency examination.

Why does Certification Matter?

In many areas, particularly those in which safety, health, and consumer confidence are critical, user and public confidence in the competence of individuals performing these tasks is extremely important.

What are the Benefits of Personnel Certification?

In addition to the obvious benefits to public safety, health and consumer protection, personnel certification can promote consistency of practice, enhance labour mobility and provide for professional recognition of new or existing occupations, skills or knowledge.

How does Personnel Certification Differ from Licensing? Is Certification Mandatory?

Licensure is a regulatory activity of government, taken on behalf of the public to protect the public from harm. While both licensing and personnel certification is concerned with competency, personnel certification is a private sector activity and may or may not be mandated by legislation. Some jurisdictions may require both certification and a license before an individual is entitled to perform services or duties, but often certification is voluntary.

What about Qualification?

Qualification is a credential that is generally earned through the completion of a course or program of study. Personnel certification is concerned with measuring specific, demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities.

What about Training?

Training is concerned with the transfer of knowledge and skills; personnel certification is concerned with their measurement. We often think of training and certification together, but in order for personnel certification to be valid, it must be measured independently of the training function. Training may influence learning in ways that can negatively impact the validity of the outcome, e.g., grading may be subjective. CSA's personnel certification programs are developed according to the ISO 17024 standard – the international benchmark

for personnel certification – requiring that the certification is independent, third-party and neutral – free of any potential conflicts that might influence the award of the credential. The rigorous measurement, documented procedures and transparent process provide confidence to both end-users and consumers that the certificate-holder possesses the requisite knowledge and skills to perform his or her duties safely and effectively.

How does Personnel Certification Relate to Standards?

Standards set out the rules or guidelines for safe, effective and high-quality products or services, but standards alone may not represent a complete solution to safety or customer satisfaction. Personnel certification is a tool that can be applied to ensure (and provide assurance) that individuals are effectively incorporating standards and best practices into the products and services they deliver.

How does Personnel Certification Work?

The first step after identifying a demonstrated need and market for a personnel certification solution is the identification of stakeholders and subject matter experts to define the scope, the requirements and the target audience of the personnel certification (the certification scheme committee). Next, subject matter experts describe and/or document the specific tasks, duties, knowledge and skills to be tested and certified. An examination is developed by subject matter experts and test development specialists to fairly measure an individual's competency. Once an examination has been thoroughly tested and finalized, the administrative supports are put in place to manage the application process, the examination delivery, the certification award, re-certification, certificate maintenance and otherwise manage customers, technologies and processes. The scheme committee continues to meet on a periodic basis to ensure that the certification scheme continues to adapt and meet the evolving needs of certificate-holders and other stakeholders.

How much does Certification Cost?

Pricing of certifications may range from several hundred to several thousand dollars, depending on market size, market demand, degree of complexity, development costs, maintenance costs and potential liability.

How do I Know if Personnel Certification is the Right Solution for Me?

In addition to Personnel Certification, CSA offers standards, education and training, application tools and advisory services to meet the needs of members, end-users and other stakeholders. In addition, competency requirements may also be addressed through training, occupational standards, curriculum development, accreditation of training providers, best practices

requirements, or regulation. Personnel certification is the ideal tool, in a mature market, where training has been defined, to measure and validate individual competency. CSA can help you to decide which tools are right for you and provide the most effective solution to meet your needs.

Annex C – Assessment Methodology

CSA recognizes the significance of OHS training in reducing workplace injury rates and offers training programs to support its OHS portfolio of standards. Existing OHS competencies could be verified via a personnel certification (PC) program, which would enhance employers' confidence in qualifications of individuals that may be responsible for the safety of others as well as their own. To help meet industry's need for professionals with demonstrated OHS competencies, CSA has been assessing opportunities to develop a personnel certification program with a focus on OHS, based on the existing portfolio of standards, evaluation of potential markets and stakeholder feedback.

One of the recent assessments focused on opportunities for personnel certification programs in high risk occupations. As a result recommendations were made to proceed with stakeholder consultations to validate the need for an OHS PC program targeting supervisors and in house trainers in the material handling industry. The current document provides a brief overview of the methodology applied by CSA to evaluate such opportunities, using the OHS PC for high risk occupations as an example.

PC programs may be horizontal, i.e. applicable across industries, or industry specific. An OHS PC for high risk occupations may be used in addition to occupation specific certification programs and OHS professional designations.

The 5 step assessment methodology included:

1. A scan of the existing portfolio of OHS standards for standards containing comprehensive training requirements with the goal of identifying opportunities for a horizontal or industry specific PC program
2. Verification of market data for five selected standards against a proprietary analytical tool listing success factors for a PC program
3. An in depth study for an industry related to an identified standard with the most potential for a PC program
4. Financial modeling to ensure sustainability of the proposed program
5. Stakeholder consultations (in progress)

In step one, out of 39 standards submitted for assessment, five were selected for further analysis as containing sufficiently comprehensive OHS training requirements. It was determined that while many standards have common OHS competency requirements, a corresponding horizontal OHS personnel certification (PC) program would be too generic in scope and face a direct competition from the established OHS PC programs targeting generalist OHS professionals. Consequently, the assessment focused on opportunities for an industry specific OHS program.

In step two, based on CSA's institutional experience to date in analyzing, developing and

operating PC programs, CSA project team have identified the following four groups of factors as potentially critical for the success of a PC program: occupation specific factors, training market specific factors, factors pertaining to the competitive position of CSA, and finally market factors, such as the size of potential audience. The analytical tool which can be found at the end of this document helps identify standards with the most market potential for a PC program, and set priorities for further analysis of such opportunities.

While the factors comprising the tool are not weighted, they appear in priority order, with occupation specific factors taking precedence over market size. As a result of this exercise, B 335 Safety Standard for Lift Trucks emerges as the most promising of the five standards with the majority of the factors present.

Step three of the methodology provides an insight into the environmental factors outlined in the analytical tool, which leads to the conclusion that a PC program would be applicable to the material handling industry as a whole, based on the OHS hazards characteristic of the industry and typical career paths, maturity of the related training market, existing CSA involvement with the industry, and finally size of the potential market which determines sustainability of the program. The latter is further explored in step four and the conclusions are currently undergoing internal revisions.

Validation of conclusions of background research via stakeholder consultations is a vital step in opportunity assessments. CSA has received positive feedback from OHS experts upon presentation of the preliminary results of the study at a recent workshop. Further stakeholder consultations are pending.

PC opportunities assessment tool

Legend:

	Confirmed
	Tentative
	Negative
	No information

	W117.2	B167	Z797	B335	Z91
1 Occupation specific factors					
1.2 Typically an occupation that requires extensive regular training. PC program would focus on occupation and not a particular skill.					
1.3 The occupation involves operating machinery or using equipment, likely increasingly complex or has other requirements that warrant training.					

1.4 Mistakes linked to lack of training can cause significant health risks and may lead to fatalities in employees and /or customers¹					
1.5 It is the responsibility of the employer to verify that all employees have received adequate training and retraining as needed either on the job or prior to employment.					
1.6 Personnel certification is being discussed in the industry (supported by professional associations and /or trade unions), recommended in literature, training is being endorsed by regulators.					
1.7 The industry recognizes the value of trained supervisors/ in house instructors					
1.8 The occupation offers a structured career path					
1.9 Personnel certification is likely to be regulated					
1.10 PC program may bring economic advantages to employers as competitiveness is linked to the level of education of labor force					
1.11 PC program is likely to increase inter jurisdictional labor mobility					
1.12 PC program is likely to raise prestige of the occupation and therefore likely to be supported by trade unions					
2 Training specific factors					
2.2 Training is mandatory for employment					
2.3 The training market is approaching maturity: training is available through multiple competitors, with inconsistencies in curriculum, delivery, method of testing, etc.					
2.4 Accreditation of training programs with a relevant accrediting body is not required to be in the training business					
2.5 Training calls for a hands - on component, not offered by the absolute majority of training providers					
2.6 Credibility of training providers may be compromised by the prevalence of online courses with no practicum.					
2.7 There is at least one training provider that is able to train to the requirements of the PC program					
3 Factors related to the competitive position of CSA					
3.3 CSA has a standard, product or advisory services on the subject matter					
3.4 CSA is a brand name in the industry (CSA Group)					
3.5 CSA can reference several CSA standards in the program					
3.6 CSA is able to offer a national program					
4 Market related factors					
4.2 Growing market. Labour shortages are current and /or forecast in the near future, employers are forced to hire candidates with sub standard credentials					
4.3 Large stable market, contracting pool of qualified labour					

¹ Bolded factors are recognized as being critical for the success of a PC program

Benefits of a Personnel Certification Program

- Provides industry assurances of individual competence
- Assists in risk mitigation
- Enhances an individual's professional credibility
- Addresses labor market gaps and increases job mobility
- Aids transfer of best practices across jurisdictions
- Helps regulators in demonstration of compliance



Personnel Certification Programs December 14, 2009

Personnel Certification Programs

- Medical Device Reprocessing Technician
- Greenhouse Gas Verifier
- Greenhouse Gas Inventory Quantifier
- Compressed Natural Gas Fuel System Inspector
- Gas Laboratory Technician



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Stakeholder Supported

Personnel Certification Programs are made possible by our members and stakeholders contributions through

- External Funding
- Program Committee Support
- Assessment Development Workgroups
- Public Review
- Beta Testing



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Confined Space Trainer Certification

- Provide a personnel certification program for professionals providing technical training services for personnel managing, supervising and entering confined spaces.
- Identified during development of Z1006 Standard for Management of Confined Space Entry
- Currently in initial phase of development – identifying stakeholders and funding support
- Expected to provide consistency of application and ensure the transfer of knowledge and skills in confined space education and training



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OHS Program Approach

- Participation in Market Assessment research
- Exploring opportunities with Committees and stakeholders
- Legal research project (law students)
- Member Forum



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A better, safer, more

sustainable world

where standards work

for people and business



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