

ASK AN RSA

With Travis Robertson, Lower Mainland

In this monthly feature, we invite readers to submit a question for a BCCSA Regional Safety Advisor (RSA) to address. This month's RSA is Travis Robertson, who serves the Lower Mainland.

Question:

How does a company demonstrate that a worker is qualified to operate mobile equipment, such as an excavator or skid steer, when no formal certification is required?

Answer:

WorkSafeBC requires that only trained and competent workers operate mobile equipment, even when no formal certification is legally required. Equipment such as excavators, loaders, and skid steers falls into this category. To meet these requirements, employers should ensure that operators have sufficient knowledge of equipment controls, safe work practices, and potential hazards, and that they can apply this knowledge safely in the field. A worker is considered qualified when they can demonstrate knowledge and skill through training, education, or experience. Employers are responsible for providing or verifying training, assessing competency, and maintaining documentation to demonstrate due diligence.

What Employers Must Do

- Provide training that covers: equipment components, controls, and functions; safe operation limits and manufacturer specifications; worksite hazards and mitigation strategies; and required PPE and safe work procedures. Training may be provided by third-party providers or competent in-house trainers.
- Verify worker competency using a system that may include a practical skills demonstration to ensure safe equipment operation and a knowledge assessment covering hazards, controls, operating procedures, and site rules and expectations. Supervisors should observe ongoing performance and monitor safe operation to confirm continued competency.
- Maintain written records, including training certificates or internal training notes, completed competency assessments, supervisor observations or field evaluation

reports, and records of refresher or remedial training. These records demonstrate due diligence and support compliance with WorkSafeBC requirements.

What Workers Should Do

Follow training and safe work procedures, operate equipment within their competency level, report hazards, defects, and unsafe conditions, and request additional training if unfamiliar with a task.

Regulatory References & Resources:

- **OHS Regulation Part 1** – Definition of "Qualified"
- **OHS Regulation Part 4.10** – Training & Competency
- **OHS Regulation Part 14** – Mobile Equipment
- **Workers Compensation Act, Part 2, Division 4, Section 21(2)(e)** – Employer Duties
- **CSA B352.0 & B352.2 – Mobile Equipment Safety:** Offers guidance on rollover protective structures (ROPS), safe operation, operator competence, inspections, and controls for self-propelled construction equipment such as excavators, loaders, and skid steers, supporting best practices for training and competency verification.

Have a question? Need help?

Your Regional Safety Advisor is available at no cost. Contact us at: rsa@bccsa.ca or Regional Safety Advisors, BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA).