

Crane Operator

Kaiwhakamahi Wakaranga

Crane operators use cranes to move objects such as materials on construction sites, containers on wharves, and heavy parts in factories.

ABOUT THE JOB:

Pay

Pay for crane operators varies depending on experience, qualifications, location and the type of crane.

- Trainee crane operators, who work as dogmen, usually start on the minimum wage.
- Experienced crane operators usually earn \$20 to \$40 an hour.
- Experienced crane operators operating large cranes can earn \$40 to \$70 an hour.

(This information is a guide only).

What you will do

Crane operators may do some or all of the following:

- Check their crane's air, water, oil, fuel, tyres and lifting equipment
- Drive mobile cranes to work sites
- Set up cranes and make sure they are secure
- Organise the lift plan and allocate work to the team
- Make sure loads are not too heavy for the crane, and identify and control any hazards
- Follow directions from a team member on the ground
- Lift and move loads and place them in the required position.

Skills and knowledge

Crane operators need to have knowledge of:

- Safety rules that govern cranes, such as regulations for road operations
- Safe working load limits for various cranes
- How to prepare and rig (attach) loads for lifting
- How to maintain and operate cranes, including operating computerised controls
- Ground-to-crane hand signals.

Working conditions

Crane operators:

- Often work irregular hours, including nights and weekends

- Work in various locations outdoors or inside, including construction sites, warehouses and wharves
- Work in most weather conditions, except high winds and heavy rain
- Travel nationwide to work sites.

HOW TO ENTER THE JOB:

Entry requirements

To become a crane operator you need to complete on-the-job training and gain a New Zealand Certificate in Crane Operation (Level 3). You can also gain a New Zealand Certificate in Crane Operation (Advanced Crane Operation) (Level 4).

Personal requirements

Crane operators need to be:

- Responsible and careful
- Able to work well independently and in teams
- Patient and observant
- Good communicators
- Good at decision making
- Be willing to work away from home.

Useful experience

Useful experience for crane operators includes:

- Working as a dogman on the ground below a crane, attaching loads and communicating with the crane operator
- Building or engineering work
- Truck driving
- Operating earthmoving or other heavy machinery.

Physical requirements

Crane operators need to be reasonably fit, have good eyesight (with or without corrective lenses), and good hearing. They must also be comfortable working at heights.