

International Professional Certifications

**Thomas S. Butler, Jr., Ph.D., CSP, CHMM
Butler Health & Safety, Inc.
San Pedro, CA**

Introduction

There are hundreds of Health, Safety, and/or Environmental Certifications potentially available to ASSE members throughout the world. These credentials have been created by organizations including public agencies, private entities, and professional societies. The purpose of this session is to provide information on a variety of International Professional Certifications. Due to time and space limitations this session is not meant to present an exhaustive list of International Professional Certifications.

The primary focus of this paper is on Safety Professional Certifications. Safety, Health, and/or Environmental practitioners who are considering pursuing one or more Professional Certifications are advised to carefully examine the scope, recognition, and acceptance of the respective certifications. Information on specific certifications in this session has been obtained primarily from publicly available sources primarily from the respective certifying organization's web site. The reader should verify the specific information before committing extensive time and resources to the pursuit of a particular certification. First it may be helpful to consider the difference between a license and a certification and accreditation. Then we will discuss certification evaluation criteria, and finally present the information on specific certifications by locality.

License vs. Certification, Accreditation

A license is a government authorization given as official permission to do something, either from a government or under a law or regulation. A certification is a voluntary measure of capability to perform a function. Accreditation has been defined as official recognition of a person or organization as having met a standard or criterion.

Professional Certifications by Location

Europe

In Europe, the development of a Europe-wide recognition of qualifications and competence levels for safety professionals is one of the goals of the European Network of Safety and Health Professional Organizations (ENSHPO). Members of the ENSHPO steering committee include:

- Verband Deutscher Sicherheitsingenieure (VDSI) www.vdsi.de
- Cyprus Safety and Health Association (CySHA) www.cysha.org.cy
- Associazione Italiana fra Addetti alla Sicurezza (AIAS) www.aias-sicurezza.it
- BST Foreningen www.bstforeningen.dk Denmark
- Verband Österreichischer Sicherheits-Ingenieure (VÖSI) www.voesi.at Austria
- Institute for Occupational Safety and Health www.prevent.be Belgium
- Sociedad Española de Medicina y Seguridad del Trabajo (SEMST) www.semst.org Spain
- Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH/IOSHRL) www.iosh.co.uk Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland
- Nederlandse Vereniging voor Veiligheidskunde (NVVK) www.veiligheidskunde.nl Netherlands
- Työturvallisuuskeskus (TTK) Centre for Occupational Safety www.tyoturva.fi Finland
- Occupational Safety and Health and Fire Prevention Chamber of the Czech Republic (OSHFP Ch-CZ) www.civop.cz
- Sociedade Portuguesa de Segurança e Higiene Ocupacionais www.sposho.no.sapo.pt Portugal.¹

Further details on the European Network of Safety and Health Professional Organization's current activities can be found at www.enshpo.org.

United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland

Institution of Occupational safety and Health

In the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) has a range of memberships available for the pursuit of professional certifications in Occupational safety and Health. The Membership Categories offers a range of opportunities for those working or qualifying in health and safety. Categories of membership depend on a combination of academic qualifications, experience and achievement. The applicant's current role, qualifications and experience will determine their membership on joining. Categories include:

Chartered Fellow (CFIOSH)

As a Chartered Fellow of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, you are entitled to use the designation Chartered Safety and Health Practitioner and the

designatory letters, CFIOSH. Along with Chartered Member status, this category of membership is the most prestigious and can be attained by progressing through the IOSH membership categories. All Chartered Fellows will need to maintain a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) record.

Chartered Member (CMIOSH)

Chartered Members of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health are entitled to use the designation Chartered Safety and Health Practitioner and the designatory letters CMIOSH. All members should be working towards this prestigious category by progressing through the IOSH membership categories. Chartered Member status reflects the competence demanded of professionals in health and safety management or leadership positions. All Chartered Members are required to maintain a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) record.

Graduate Member (Grad IOSH)

Graduates of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health can use the designatory letters Grad IOSH. The category denotes those who are academically qualified to become Chartered Members, but are currently completing a mandatory IPD / CPD cycle. To qualify for this level of membership, you will need to have completed an IOSH accredited qualification.

Technician Member (Tech IOSH)

As a Technician Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, you are entitled to use the designatory letters Tech IOSH. This category recognizes the competence needed by professionals engaged in crucial operational health and safety roles. A version of CPD specifically tailored to this category is mandatory for Technician Members to maintain their status.

Affiliate

Affiliate level is designed for those who have an interest in, or are employed in occupational safety and health, but are not eligible to join at other categories of membership.

All applications for membership are subject to ratification by the Institution's Council of Management.²

IOSH has developed and is implementing a new Career Professional Development (CPD) scheme. The new CPD program allows IOSH members to “create a structured career path as well as safeguard professional status”. The My CPD scheme is available to all members of IOSH. Additional information on the CPD may be found at:

<http://www.iosh.co.uk/files/professional/CPDWhatsitalabout.pdf>

Australia

Safety Institute of Australia

Member: A member is a person who can demonstrate a satisfactory standard of general education and who has an interest in the delivery of safety and or health programs. Membership of the Institute is available to any person who has an interest in health and safety and who has sufficient experience in these fields to meet the requirements of the membership gradings.

Current members are employed in a diverse range of occupations including safety, occupational health, occupational hygiene, ergonomics and management.

Chartered Professional Member (CPMSIA): To be graded as a 'Chartered Professional Member', a person shall meet one of the following conditions:

Have been awarded an approved diploma in a safety-discipline and have completed five (5) years full-time experience (or equivalent) in safety and health.

Have been awarded an approved degree or post-graduate diploma or above in a safety discipline area (or have completed the SIA Challenge Examination) and have completed three (3) years full time experience (or equivalent) in safety and health.

Have been awarded a degree or post graduate diploma or above in a safety-related area such as fire technology, risk management, ergonomics hygiene, occupational medicine, occupational nursing or other related qualification that has a significant component of safety and health, plus has completed 5 years full time experience (or equivalent) in safety and health may be admitted as Chartered Professional Member. Applicants for Chartered Professional Member via this clause shall provide evidence of the safety and health components of their course.

To maintain their grading all Chartered Professional Members are required to achieve 30 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points over a 5 year period with no more than 10 points in any one year.

Fellow (FSIA): A Fellow is a Chartered Professional Member who has had at least 10 years membership with the SIA along with 10 years professional experience and who has performed outstanding service to the SIA and also to the safety profession. The member may nominate his/her self as may other members. The nomination goes before a membership grading committee, if approved the nomination is passed for consideration by a full Executive Board meeting. A 100% vote of the Board is required to award a fellow designation.

Chartered Fellow (Chartered FSIA): An applicant must be either a Chartered Professional Member or a Fellow to apply for Chartered Fellow. Applicants without approved tertiary qualifications in safety and health must initially complete an extensive challenge examination. All applicants must complete the competency assessment.

The charter is current for 5 years.

During this period the Chartered Fellow must undertake activities to maintain competency, demonstrate professional development and contribution to the profession. These activities shall be summarised in the log book and assessed on a points scale requiring 50 points accrued over 5 years with a maximum of 15 points in any one year.

If accreditation is not maintained or the member retires they automatically revert to their original membership status.

The three allied grades are:

Honorary Fellow: An Honorary Fellowship may be granted by the Federal Committee of Management for life, or for a period or terminable with an office or event, to a person who is not a member of the Institute, who is eminent in safety and health or a person who has rendered conspicuous service to safety and health. Honorary fellowship does not carry the right to vote or to hold office.

Retired Member (Ret.): A person who has been a member of the Institute for a minimum of 5 years and who is not in regular employment may, on application and with the approval of the Federal Membership Committee, become a Retired Member. A Retired Member shall have the same rights as those which applied before the granting of Retired Member status

Life Member : A Federal Committee of Management may, either on its own initiative, or on the recommendation of a Divisional (State) Committee grant the status of Life Member to a member who has rendered outstanding service over a long period of years in furthering the aims and objectives of the Institute. A Life Member shall have the same rights as other members. A Life Member shall not be required to pay any fees.

Three of the working grades can also use the designation RSP(Aust); these are, CPMSIA, FSIA & Chartered FSIA.

An RSP (Aust) is

- A person who has met the academic qualifications and necessary experience requirements for professional level of membership of the Safety Institute of Australia or one of Australia's other recognised OHS professional bodies;
- A person with in-depth knowledge of health and safety principles and practices who uses this knowledge to develop systems in your workplace to achieve optimum control over hazards detrimental to people, equipment and material;
- A person committed to the principles of risk management, injury and illness prevention, minimisation of asset damage and helping you to achieve legislative compliance;
- A person whose knowledge and skills are continually upgraded through a continuing professional development program to ensure you always have a qualified, up-to-date professional helping you manage your health and safety interests;
- A person who is bound by a code of practice and ethics as part of their membership of a professional body.³

Canada

There are several professional safety certifications available in Canada. Among them is the Registered Safety Professionals (CRSP) who are registered by the Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP). "Applicants for the CRSP must register through a six step process: 1.Application; 2.Evaluation; 3.Interview 4.Examination; 5. Approval; & 6.Confirmation".⁴

Information on the BCRSP, which was granted accreditation in 2005 to ISO/IEC 17024:2003 by the Standards Council of Canada, may be found at <http://www.acrsp.ca/default.html>

Another certification is the Certified Health & Safety Consultant (CHSC) Designation by the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering (CSSE). Members of the CSSE may qualify for the CHSC by meeting the following criteria:

- Currently be an internal or external health and safety consultant and have a minimum of three years work experience in occupational health and safety.
- Submit the completed application form
- Possess an acceptable prior academic or professional qualification in health and safety
- Maintain a current membership with the CSSE upon completion of the courses
- Complete courses and examinations in Obligations and Liabilities of the OH&S Professional, Consulting Skills and Applied Risk Communication Skills for the OH&S Professional
- Achieve 75% (minimum) on each of the three examinations
- Go through Qualification Review by the CSSE Education Committee
- Supply proof of current professional liability insurance (minimum \$1,000,000) to the CSSE, initially and then annually.⁵

Additional information on the CHSC may be found at:

<http://www.csse.org/content/certification/index.asp>

Hong Kong

There are four types of occupational safety and health professionals in Hong Kong, being safety supervisor, safety officer, safety review officer and safety auditor. The safety officer and safety auditor are registered, and hence their performances monitored per se, by the Labour Department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (which is the equivalent of HSE in UK, & OSHA in the States). The safety supervisor and the safety review officer can be designated by the proprietor / contractor.

The requirements for registration are spelled out in the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Safety Officers and Safety Supervisors) Regulations which deal with safety supervisor and safety officer, and the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Safety Management) Regulations which deal with safety review officer and safety auditor.⁶

Additional information on the Hong Kong Registered Safety Officers may be found on the Hong Kong Labour Department's FAQ at http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/faq/oshq8_whole.html#top

United States of America

In the United States, third party accreditation of professional certifications has been the subject of extensive ongoing discussions. One approach that has been used is the standard for assessment of certification developed by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) E -1929 - 98 *Standard Practice for Assessment of Certification Programs for Environmental Professionals: Accreditation Criteria*. The standard was developed under the jurisdiction of the ASTM

Committee on Environmental Assessment, and is the direct responsibility of the ASTM Subcommittee on Commercial Real Estate Transactions.

A more recent development in accreditation has been by the International Organization for Standardization; Conformity Assessment Subcommittee (ISO/CASCO) which initiated the development of ISO/IEC 17024, *General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons*. This new standard provides a benchmark for certification bodies offering certification of persons in any occupation and facilitates accreditation by national bodies. In the United States, the ISO/IEC 17024 standard is administered by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Programs in the United States accredited under the ANSI ISO 17024 standard include:

- The Board of Certified Safety Professionals

Third Party accreditations in the United States have previously and continue to be administered by the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB). Programs accredited by CESB are:

- Professional Engineering Programs
American Academy of Environmental Engineers
Diplomate Environmental Engineer
National Academy of Forensic Engineers
Diplomate Forensic Engineer
- Graduate Engineer Programs
AACE International
Certified Cost Engineer
- Engineering Technician Programs
Council on Certification of Health, Environmental, and Safety Technologists (CCHEST)
Occupational Health & Safety Technologist
Construction Health & Safety Technician
Safety Trained Supervisor in Construction
- Engineering Related Programs
AACE International
Certified Cost Consultant
Academy of Board Certified Environmental Professionals
Certified Environmental Professional
American Indoor Air Quality Council
Council-certified Indoor Environmental Consultant
American Board of Health Physics
Comprehensive Health Physics

American Board of Industrial Hygiene
Certified Industrial Hygienist
Occupational Health and Safety Technologist

Board of Environmental, Health & Safety Auditor Certification
Certified Professional Environmental Auditor

Certified Environmental, Safety and Health Trainer Board of Certification
Certified Environmental, Safety and Health Trainer

Institute of Hazardous Materials Management
Certified Hazardous Materials Manager

Institute of Professional Environmental Practice
*Qualified Environmental Professional*⁷

Conclusions

There are a significant number of Safety Health and Environmental Professional Certifications available throughout the world. The safety health and environmental practitioner who plans to pursue one or more certifications should carefully examine the third party accreditation and recognition of a particular credential. This paper has provided a number of web sites for additional investigation. There are several initiatives underway to expand the relationships between respective certifications such as Board of Certified Safety Professionals discussions with Australia, Canada, Singapore, and the United Kingdom.

¹ European Network of Safety and Health Professional Organisations (ENSHPO)
<http://www.enshpo.org/p/62ND7A-01>

² Institute of Occupational Safety and Health <http://www.iosh.co.uk/index.cfm?go=membership.grades>

³ Safety Institute of Australia <http://www.sia.org.au/>

⁴ Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals, <http://www.acrsp.ca/Designation/designation.html>

⁵ Canadian Society of Safety Engineering, <http://www.csse.org/content/certification/index.asp>

⁶ Michael Leung, President, Society of Registered Safety Officers, Hong Kong srso@srso.org.hk

⁷ The Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards. <http://www.cesb.org/>