

Institutes Offer Reliable Certification

by Craig A. Shutt



Available certification programs have increased, as owners and designers seek to qualify individuals, suppliers, and contractors. But not all “certification” programs offer the same value. There are many reasons. Some lack experience or depth in the research and documentation to support their standards and procedures. Some auditors have limited experience and insufficient background with the industry. Specifying and adopting certification programs that are well tested and long used in the field provide the best results for owners, designers, contractors, and users.

The following certifying organizations provide consensus standards and procedures that have been tested over time and proven to provide owners and designers with the consistent results they desire:

American Concrete Institute

ACI offers 17 certification programs that create minimum competency standards for personnel in various areas of concrete production and application.

The programs focus on seven key areas: Aggregate Technician, Craftsman, Field Technician, Inspector, Laboratory Technician, Shotcrete Nozzleman, and Tilt-Up Supervisor and Technician. To learn more, visit www.concrete.org/certification.

American Segmental Bridge Institute

ASBI provides Grouting Certification training for supervisors and inspectors of grouting operations for post-tensioned structures. The training consists of a 2-day program generally conducted in Austin, Tex. ASBI certifies personnel for a period of 5 years before recertification is required.

A growing number of states require construction managers and contractors to employ an ASBI-qualified grouting technician to perform or inspect grouting procedures. The course also provides 12 hours of professional

development hours for professional engineering registration requirements. For details, visit www.asbi-assoc.org/grouting.

Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute

CRSI through its Epoxy Interest Group offers voluntary certification for plants producing fusion-bonded, epoxy-coated reinforcement, dowels, and accessories for the fabrication of these products. The program’s goals are to ensure that the certified plant and its employees are trained, equipped, and capable of producing high-quality, epoxy-coated products for use in concrete.

Inspections are performed unannounced at least once each year by a third-party testing agency. In addition, plants are selected at random to receive a second unannounced inspection. For details, visit www.crsi.org.

National Ready Mixed Concrete Association

NRMCA offers certifications for both ready mixed concrete industry facilities and personnel. Certifications provide customers and regulatory agencies that certified producers have an understanding of and support measures to provide the highest quality ready mixed concrete in the safest and most efficient ways possible.

In addition to Plant, Truck, and Environmental Certifications, NRMCA offers 10 personnel training and certification programs. More information is available at <http://www.nrmca.org/certifications>.

Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute

PCI provides both Plant Certification and Personnel Certification related to prefabricated concrete components. Plant Certification ensures that fabricators have approved in-depth

documentation of their quality system. Each plant must comply with rigorous national standards for quality control and production. Every plant undergoes not less than two unannounced audits each year conducted by accredited third-party engineers.

PCI’s Plant Quality Personnel Certification Program provides instruction and evaluation for three levels of trained and certified quality-control personnel. PCI also trains Certified Field Auditors (CFAs) and Certified Company Auditors (CCAs) to inspect and certify precast concrete erectors. PCI Plant Certification requires certified personnel in each plant. For details, visit www.pci.org and click on PCI Certification.

Post-Tensioning Institute

PTI offers Plant and Field-Personnel Certification programs that ensure post-tensioning materials, products, and services meet a consensus standard of quality. PTI’s programs are recognized and required throughout North America.

The programs include certification for plants producing unbonded post-tensioning materials, which comprise unbonded single-strand tendons and prestressed concrete strands. They also certify a variety of field personnel. For details, visit www.post-tensioning.org and click on Certification.

The programs of these organizations are accompanied by state-of-the-art training. They facilitate rigorous feed-back procedures to revise and refine standards that ensure that products and procedures meet the industry’s evolving standards for quality. They complete the circle of continuous quality improvement.