

## Specialist Press Release

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Contact:  
Ruth Wallner  
BAUER Aktiengesellschaft  
BAUER-Strasse 1  
86529 Schrobenhausen, Germany  
Phone: +49 8252 97-1844  
[public.relations@bauer.de](mailto:public.relations@bauer.de)  
[www.bauer.de](http://www.bauer.de)

### **International equipment operator's license for drilling rigs and pile drivers: "Occupational safety needs to become a significant competitive factor"**

**Schrobenhausen, Germany** – Safety is an immensely important issue, especially on construction sites. It is of crucial importance that equipment operators are well trained and able to safely control their machines. In particular when operating drilling rigs and pile drivers, where very particular demands are placed on the equipment operator – starting with the daily inspection, through set-up and derigging, to the work process itself and the associated documentation. In addition, in recent years there have been many developments in terms of technology and functionality with regard to drilling rigs and pile drivers, so that they are now truly high-tech devices. So far, however, there is no equipment operator's license for these two equipment types that is standardized and recognized throughout Europe. It's clear that something needs to change.

Against this background, a twelve-member working group of the European Federation of Foundation Contractors (EFFC) is dealing with the issue of an international equipment operator license for drilling rigs and pile drivers. "The aim must be that anyone who operates drilling rigs or driving equipment that weighs many tons has also been properly trained to do so. Uniform standards are needed for this," says Martin Sonnberger, Head of Occupational Safety at Porr and Head of the working group, which also includes Aarsleff, ARCF, BG Bau, Bauer, Franki, Infra Suisse, Keller, NVAF, the Dutch training center Crescendo, Soetaert/ABEF and Soletanche Bachy.

From the very beginning, the working group agreed that the examination should essentially consist of a theoretical and a practical part. In order to create a concept, material was incorporated from the various national equipment operator license examinations that already exist in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark and Poland. Once the basic concept had been put down on paper, the BAUER Training Center GmbH (BTC) drew up a framework program for the first practical run. In order to simulate an examination situation that was as realistic as possible, both a training device and an experienced trainer from the BAUER Training Center GmbH were provided for the three-day test run at the beginning of July. "After all, we are an examination center that has been recognized for the last ten years by BG Bau, the Federation of the German Construction Industry (HDB) and the Central Association of the German Construction Industry (ZDB)," says Jerobeam Rueckert, Managing Director of the BAUER Training Center GmbH.

In addition to the BTC Trainers Alexander Hoeflinger and Andreas Miketta, two machine operators from Austria as well as Joop van der Wal from the Dutch training center Crescendo were in the team of active participants. Michael Stomberg, CEO of BAUER AG, and Member of the Management Board Florian Bauer also took the opportunity to visit the

site. Andreas Miketta concludes: "This test run followed by a feedback round with the safety officers provided a lot of valuable input." After the adjustments have been made in the concept for the international equipment operator's license for drilling rigs and pile drivers, the next step to be taken is submission to the European Commission.

Prof. Thomas Bauer, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of BAUER AG and President of the European Construction Industry Federation FIEC since 2020, is certain: "In the long run, everyone will benefit from an internationally recognized and standardized equipment operator license, not only the large construction companies, but also the small ones, which can use it to set themselves apart from their competitors in terms of quality and, in particular, occupational safety. Occupational safety on the site needs to become a significant competitive factor."

#### **Bild: 2021-11\_BAUER\_International equipment operator license**



In July, practical implementation of the concept for an international equipment operator license for drilling rigs and pile drivers was tested on the training course of the BAUER Training Center GmbH in Aresing near Schrobenhausen, Germany. © BAUER Group

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