



Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon

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Prevailing Wage Rate Coordinator
Bureau of Labor and Industries
800 NE Oregon Street, Suite 1045
Portland, Oregon 97232

Dear Coordinator:

The Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon (PLSO), a not-for-profit statewide professional organization representing over 500 surveying professionals, is writing in opposition of a recent request to revise the Power Equipment Operator's definition. Submitted by International Union of Operating Engineers/Local 70, the letter requests that Land Surveyor Party Chief subclassification be moved to Power Equipment Operator Group 2 as covered by prevailing wage classification under ORS 279C.

As the only organization that unites land surveyors in the state of Oregon, PLSO strives to represent the interests of our members. Our mission is to improve the professional status of Oregon Land Surveyors through promoting legislation and educational programs and advance the profession of Land Surveying by promoting high standards of practice and ethical conduct, holding paramount the interests of the public.

PLSO's opposition to the proposed revision is based on the facts that land surveying is a profession; that land surveyors do not use power equipment; that party chiefs are in a supervisory position; and that the request by International Union of Operating Engineer contains factual errors as to the fundamental nature of the duties of a surveying party chief. Finally, this was not initiated for the benefit of the surveying profession or in consultation with PLSO – the only professional association in Oregon that represents the interests of its land surveyors.

Surveying is a profession as defined by ORS 672.002(4) and OAR 820-010. Land surveyors are required to obtain a professional license and bound by rules of professional conduct (OAR 820-020). Land surveyors are regulated as a profession by the Oregon State Board of Examiners for Engineering and Land Surveying (OSBEELS). Survey Party Chiefs are often licensed and, regardless of license status, are bound by the same rules of professional conduct that a licensed surveyor must follow.

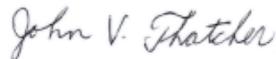
Party Chiefs in survey crews are supervisors and therefore should not be classified as Power Equipment Operators. Survey Party Chiefs are constantly required to make independent and autonomous decisions. They are expected to understand legal principles, geomatics, cadastral surveying principles, construction principles and the Public Land Survey System. Furthermore, Party Chiefs are expected to train their charges in these subjects. The need for constant training demonstrates that they are operating in a supervisory capacity.

Land surveying Party Chiefs rarely, if ever, use power equipment and therefore should not be classified as Power Equipment Operators. Many Party Chiefs do not run total stations because it is easier to control and supervise the job while using a prism pole. Furthermore, it is inaccurate to consider total stations or GPS units power equipment when they are instruments of the profession.

In summary, Land Surveying Party Chiefs are professionals, act in a supervisory capacity, and do not use power equipment. They should not be included in Power Equipment Operator Group 2. I ask you to reject the International Union of Operating Engineers/Local 701 request based on statutes, administrative rules, and because facts stated in their request do not reflect the reality of the duties and responsibilities of a Survey Party Chief. Finally, reject their petition as it doesn't reflect the will or best interest of professional land surveyors in Oregon.

PLSO reserves the right to further participate in this process under the law including but not limited to the Administrative Procedures Act. We appreciate the consideration of the PWR Committee in evaluating this issue and considering our perspective as an organization that represents Oregon surveyors.

Sincerely,



John V. Thatcher

PLSO Board Chairman