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## **Compulsory licensing needed to prevent future tragedies: Dillon**

(Toronto, ON) – “Today’s court decision to fine the company responsible for the death of a young Operating Engineer in October 2011, in the amount of \$400,000, offers little in the way of solace to workers in the construction industry,” said Patrick Dillon, Business Manager of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario.

Kyle Knox, 24, was operating a backhoe at a TTC construction site at York University when a drill rig, operated by a non-licensed worker, toppled and fell on the backhoe, killing the young operator instantly. The programs branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) decided that drill rigs like the one involved in the incident, did not meet the definition of a ‘crane’ and therefore did not require the worker to hold a 339A or 339C crane licence.

The MTCU came to this conclusion without consulting the Building Trades or the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 793 which represents workers who operate heavy equipment.

“Despite subsequent consultations with industry, MTCU has still not taken any substantial steps towards requiring that workers be licensed when operating drill rigs,” observed Dillon, adding that “today’s ruling will hopefully bring enough attention to the issue to get the government to make the necessary changes in order to prevent similar tragedies in the future.”

“With compulsory certification of the equipment operator comes the requirement to have *bona fide* training under one’s belt,” explained Dillon, noting that “workers in close proximity to drill rigs should have the confidence that the person operating such heavy equipment is trained and licensed to perform his or her job safely.”

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