



*** IECEX Press Release ***

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The IECEx Scheme - the global certification scheme for explosion-protected products – has now moved to its final stage of implementation with the introduction of the IECEx Certificate of Conformity, as from 1 July, 2003.

From this date, manufacturers worldwide can apply to any official IECEx Certification Body, listed on the IECEx web site at www.iecex.com for either the traditional IECEx Test Report or the new IECEx Certificate of Conformity. This new IECEx Certificate of Conformity provides manufacturers with direct access to global markets or a “fast-track” process for those countries still requiring national certification.

The massive savings for Ex manufactures selling into multiple markets, in both certification costs and time-to-market, are obvious. Government Regulators, users and stakeholders also benefit through the provision of a single testing and certification program, applied in the same manner by all IECEx Certification Bodies using the same IEC International Ex Standards. This provides Governments and industry with the confidence that IECEx certified products meet the recognised IEC TC31 Standards and are manufactured under a quality system complying with both ISO 9001 and additional quality system requirements of the IECEx Scheme, regardless of which IECEx body conducts the testing and assessment.

On-going surveillance of manufactures, by the IECEx Certification Body, provides further confidence that manufacture's quality systems are geared to ensuring on-going compliance of Ex products with the nominated IEC Standards.

This new phase of the IECEx Certification Scheme will provide for “on-line” certificates via the Internet which will significantly reduce paperwork and result in real savings in time and costs for both the certification bodies and the manufacturers. A further benefit to manufacturers will be immediate access to certificates to show their customers thereby enabling them to react more quickly to orders and sales opportunities. The on-line system will also provide industry and Government with a ready reference to issued certificates as well as a “purchaser's guide” for design engineers, equipment specifiers and end users.

The IECEx Scheme currently boasts a membership of 22 participating countries and 17 IECEx Certification Bodies. Requests from additional Ex Certification and Testing Bodies, to join IECEx, are currently being progressed through the IECEx assessment program to ensure they have the facilities, systems and competence necessary to operate within this highly specialised field.

Dr Uwe Klausmeyer of PTB, Germany and Chairman of the IECEx Management Committee comments *“The availability of a single International IECEx Certificate is a logical and necessary supplement to the solid International Standards base, established by IEC Technical Committee TC 31 and provides the Global Ex field with true international standardisation”*.

Right now, IECEx Certificates of Conformity can be issued for products complying with the following series of IEC Standards:

IEC 60079 series
IEC 61779 series

IEC 61241 series
Others, into the future

For more details of the IECEx Scheme, including free copies of the Scheme Rules, visit the Scheme's website www.iecex.com

Editor's note:

The IECEx Scheme is operated under the direction of the International Electrotechnical Commission, IEC based in Geneva.