



ExMC/1041/CD
July 2015

**INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION SYSTEM FOR
CERTIFICATION TO STANDARDS RELATING TO EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN
EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES (IECEx SYSTEM)**

Circulation: IECEx Management Committee (ExMC)

**Title: Proposal from Canada – formation of Peer Assessment Review
Group**

INTRODUCTION

Further to CA raising concerns during the 2014 ExMC Meeting over information contained in IECEx Assessment reports covering the acceptance of ExCBs and ExTLs, CA submit the attached proposal for discussion during the 2015 ExMC Christchurch meeting.

In submitting this proposal CA acknowledges the excellent work of ExMC WG4 – *Technical Reference Group for Assessment of ExCBs and ExTLs* and further suggests that ExMC WG4 should conduct a review of the current IECEx process in light of this CA proposal and provide ExMC with a report.

This CA proposal is to be considered during the 2015 ExMC Christchurch meeting.

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IECEX Peer Assessment Advisory Group (PAAG)

(Prepared by the Canadian National Committee of the IECEX)

Background and Rationale

Concern was expressed during the 2014 IECEX Management meetings in The Hague regarding the transparency of, and lack of sufficient information in ExTL and ExCB assessment / reassessment reports. Member Bodies are often expected to vote on these reports when there is not enough detail to make a fully informed decision.

Specific examples of when more explanatory content was needed to justify approval of an assessment or reassessment report include the following...

- Lack of National accreditation for one or more of the Ex standards being requested.
- Lack of any issued National certifications for one or more of the Ex standards being requested, or only a very limited number of issued National certifications.
- Expansive scope being requested with only a limited number of competent personnel.
- Incomplete subcontracting details such as regarding exactly what is being subcontracted, to whom it is being subcontracted, and how is the subcontracting activity considered acceptable.
- Use of "partner" test labs that are not actual ExTLs.

The expectation is not to have confidential information released. However, there is much more information that can be provided that would not compromise confidentiality.

Industry and other stakeholders are becoming alarmed, and have expressed concern, regarding what appears to be a lack of consistency in the assessment process.

Within the IECEE System, a peer assessment team exists to help identify and resolve most of such issues before assessment reports are issued to Member Bodies (see Clause 8 of IECEE 02-1).

It is proposed that the IECEX System form a Peer Assessment Advisory Group (PAAG) to support the Secretariat in the review of ExTL and ExCB assessment reports prior to their release to Member Bodies.

Terms of Reference

The objective of the IECEX PAAG is:

- 1) To provide advice to the IECEX System Secretariat regarding:
 - a. ExTL and ExCB assessment report summaries prior to the circulation to Member Bodies for voting.
 - b. The understanding and implementation of the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 and 17025 standards.
 - c. The consistency of the application of the IECEX rules of procedure and relevant Operating Documents relative to IECEX Assessment/Reassessment activities.
- 2) To assist the IECEX System Secretariat in the monitoring of the Peer Assessment Program by carrying out the following tasks:
 - a. Provide market and stakeholder feedback related to the assessments of ExTLs and ExCBs.
 - b. Meet with IECEX lead and technical peer assessors, as requested by these assessors, to assist as needed.

Notes:

- a) The advisory nature of the PAAG is to anticipate potential Member Body questions regarding the content of ExCB and ExTL assessment summary reports, and identify such items in the assessment report summaries that could benefit from additional detail.

- b) All such feedback is to be provided directly to the Secretariat, with the Secretariat making the final determination as to whether any modification is needed to the summary reports prior to circulation for voting.
- c) While the PAAG is not to have access to complete ExCB and ExTL assessment reports as part of their work, PAAG members agree to keep any information gathered during their advisory work strictly confidential. This commitment remains valid even after the members no longer participate on the PAAG.

Membership

The membership on the PAAG shall include a Convenor and six supporting members as follows:

- The Convenor is the Executive Secretary of the IECEx System.
- The supporting members are to be from ExCBs with an integral ExTL, both of which are approved under the IECEx Certified Equipment Scheme, and are appointed by the IECEx ExMC based on nominations by their Member Body. Individual nominees are not to be current members of the IECEx peer assessment team.

Note: ExCBs with an ExTL integral to the organization provides more in-depth expertise in testing/lab related procedures and 17025 requirements.

The term of membership for the Convenor on the PAAG is permanent.

The term of membership for the supporting members shall be for a period of three years. They are immediately eligible once for re-appointment for a further period of three years. Further re-appointments for three years are permitted, but only if there are no other nominations.

ExMC determination of ExCB appointments shall give consideration to ExCBs from Member Bodies that directly accept IECEx CoCs and ExCBs with active involvement within the IECEx System, while maintaining a global balance as much as possible.

At every re-appointment by the ExMC, the maximum number of changes allowed shall not exceed three (3) in order to maintain the necessary expertise, experience and continuity.

Upon invitation by the Convenor of the PAAG, one or more immediate past members of the PAAG may attend PAAG meetings for one more year to impart skill and knowledge to newly appointed members.

At the discretion of the Convenor of the PAAG, on a case-by-case basis depending on the topics that the PAAG is requested to consider, further invitations may be extended to allow the temporary participation of other experts/advisors as necessary.