IECEx Certificate using intrinsic safety "i" A first for Australia

The first Australian IECEx Certificate covering the repair of intrinsically safe signalling and control equipment, using the concept *Intrinsic Safety "i"*, has been awarded to Ringway Holdings Pty Ltd by TestSafe Australia. IECEx is the IEC System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres.

Equipment used in mining has to conform to very stringent standards, and the repair of such equipment brings some very special challenges.

Ringway has specialized in PLC (programmable logic controller) and proprietary control systems for conveyors and associated equipment for more than 15 years. During this time Ringway has had extensive experience with DC drives, CST and BOSS clutches, VVVF and Flux Vector drives as well as slow fill and variable scoop couplings. It has been involved in “Tripper Driving” conveyors since the inception of the technology in underground mining.

Ringway has automated many processes, including underground vehicle emission testing stations, tube bundle gas monitoring, high pressure pump regulation systems and complex air conditioning systems.

Ringway has designed and manufactured embedded microprocessor control systems for “third-party” customers and “in-house” use. Thus, it has provided customers many benefits, which include greater design input (improved vigor and performance), reliability of supply and other cost savings. Its Ex "i" certified product range includes a proprietary emergency stopping and lockout system called “Ringline”, a conveyor prestart and remote isolation indication system, a traffic control system and a portable battery powered datalogging system.

TestSafe is one of the benchmark facilities within the IECEx and has an international reputation for consistently providing quality testing and certification of equipment to both international and Australian standards.

TestSafe has mutual arrangements with a network of similar facilities around the world. It has an internationally recognized facility in Sydney, Australia, for testing, research and certification and is dedicated to the improvement of work place safety, particularly in hazardous areas.

During its 40 years of existence, TestSafe has contributed significantly to achieving safe and secure work places.

IECEx launched its Certified Service Facility Programme in 2007. In its first year of existence, the programme certified many companies specializing in the repair and overhaul of Ex equipment, mainly in Europe and in Asia.

For more information on IECEx, please visit the IECEx website at www.iecex.com

Intrinsic safety

Intrinsic safety "i" is a protection technique for safe operation of electronic equipment in explosive atmospheres, applicable, for example, to devices that are being operated in areas with flammable gases or fuels. Intrinsic safety ensures that during a fault condition, there exists insufficient energy to ignite the surrounding flammable or combustible atmosphere. Given the low energy levels involved, protection of electrical and electronic equipment by intrinsic safety is usually confined to low power devices such as communication equipment and instrumentation. By its very nature, intrinsic safety is a complex protection technique requiring specialized expertise and competence in equipment and circuit design as well as installation of Ex equipment.

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