

United Nations endorses IEC

New UNECE publication offers regulatory framework for Ex areas

In January 2011 the United Nations, via UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe), recommended the IEC and IECEx, one of the three IEC Conformity Assessment Systems, as the world's best practice model for the verification of conformity to International Standards.

for their legislation, and also for aligning existing national regulations with internationally harmonized best practice.

International Ex certification facilitates access to markets

“Ex-equipment” for use in such hazardous environments needs to be specially designed, installed, maintained and repaired to eliminate potential sparks and

will remain unavailable, which means reduced safety levels both for local industry and for the populations that live around the sites that harbour potential explosion risks.

Common language through IEC and IECEx

Up until now, because of the lack of harmonized legislation for equipment for use in hazardous areas, countries that have not represented a sufficient market opportunity have been unable to access state-of-the-art equipment for use in explosive environments.

The UNECE common regulatory framework is based on and encompasses international best practice and International Standards, and in particular standards from IEC TC (Technical Committee) 31: Equipment for explosive atmospheres. It also formally endorses IECEx as the recommended global best practice model for verifying conformity to International Standards.

Uwe Klausmeyer of Germany, winner of the prestigious IEC Lord Kelvin Award for his exceptional work in the field of standardization, said, “the UNECE framework regulation builds on the positive experience of multilateral schemes for assessing conformity to standards, such as the IECEx. Under these schemes, testing and certification are carried out through agreed procedures and by peer assessment. These systems are transparent, fully democratic and self-financing.”

Mutual recognition – broad acceptance

Members of the IECEx Certification System mutually recognize certificates and associated testing/assessment by other members of the System. Due to its broad global acceptance and recognition, this System helps eliminate duplicate testing and reduces assessment costs.

It also forms a clear basis for risk management and promotes free trade in



Explosive areas include pipelines...

UNECE recently published a “Common Regulatory Framework” that encompasses the use of IEC International Standards, with proof of compliance demonstrated by IECEx, the IEC’s System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres.

The UNECE publication, *Common Regulatory Framework for Equipment Used in Environments with an Explosive Atmosphere*, addresses the hazards in environments with a high risk of explosion such as mines, refineries, chemical plants and mills. It can be used by countries that lack regulation in this sector as a blueprint

open flames. This heterogeneous sector plays an important part in many areas of economic activity and represents an important component of international trade.

This equipment undergoes severe testing and certification, which is very costly. Because differing legislation often does not allow countries to accept the testing and certification done in another country, manufacturers generally must have devices re-tested and re-certified whenever they want to enter a new market. For some companies, this investment simply may not be worthwhile for entering the smaller markets. Without certification, state-of-the-art equipment

Ex equipment and services, considerably reducing cost.

The System follows a “life cycle” approach, which covers installation, production, verification, inspection, maintenance and repair. It also provides a single international system to assess and certify the competence of personnel carrying out work or repairs in highly specialized industries where a risk of fire or explosion exists.



...and grain storage...



...and mines among others