

A first for Dubai and the Middle East

IECEX international conference addresses overall safety in Ex field



The oil and gas industry makes a large contribution to the financial well-being of middle-eastern economies. All countries in the region have huge oil and gas resources. Oil producing and processing operations are well established, and the gas industry sector is expanding rapidly. This also means that a great number of people are employed by oil and gas companies, either directly on the production and processing side of the business or in repair and maintenance.

Because it is governments' role and duty to protect their people, authorities in the region have looked at ways of ensuring the highest levels of safety for workers, installations and equipment. This led them to express a keen interest in IECEX, the IEC System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres.

ESMA, the Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology, took the initiative and approached IECEX with a view to organizing an event that would help educate interested parties about the System and learn how the region can benefit from it.

The conference

Organized by the IEC and IECEX, together with ESMA, and in conjunction with UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe), the 2012 IECEX International Conference will take place in Dubai on 20-21 March 2012.

World experts share experience and knowledge

The conference will bring together experts from all over the world, involved in the international standardization, equipment manufacture, inspection, repair and overhaul of Ex equipment and systems, and the assessment and certification of personnel competence. Issues concerning requirements and regulations in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) region will also be covered.

Through their presentations and direct contact with participants, these experts will be able to share their experience and detailed knowledge of all matters pertaining to the Ex field, such as plant design, principles and practical applications of area classification, installation and repair in compliance with IEC International Standards. They will answer questions,

provide advice and give valuable information to anyone involved in the Ex sector.

In addition to His Excellency Rashid Ahmed Bin Fahad, Minister of UAE Environment and Water, and Mohammed Saleh Badri, Acting Director General of ESMA and President of the IEC National Committee of the UAE, the speakers include world-renowned officers and experts of IECEX and IEC TC (Technical Committee) 31: Equipment for explosive atmospheres.

For the complete list of speakers and their biographies, please go to the dedicated conference section on the IECEX website: <http://www.iecex.com/dubai/speakers.html>

Highlights of the programme

As the date of the conference approaches fast, the programme is taking form and the speakers have been announced.



Dubai hosts the 2012 IECEX international conference

The programme includes presentations on the IECEx System and its three schemes covering:

- IECEx Certified Equipment
- IECEx Certified Service Facilities (Ex Repair Workshops)
- IECEx Certification of Personnel Competence (CoPC)

as well as a user's perspective on the system and why it is useful for the oil and gas industry. In addition, several technical presentations will be given aimed at providing practical advice on the day to day issues surrounding:

- Area Classification
- Installation and Inspection
- Ex Repair practices

Another address will focus on national or regional Ex verification or approval systems, e.g. ATEX, and how the use of IECEx facilitates such approvals in addition to providing international certification.

Current regulations and requirements governing equipment and service providers to Ex areas, such as oil and gas installations in the GCC region, will be outlined.

The UNECE will present the conclusions of its global study into regulations for the Ex field and their findings and publication of the new "Common Regulatory Framework for Equipment used in Environments with an Explosive Atmosphere".

An update concerning IEC International Standards covering explosive atmospheres and a detailed explanation of area classification are also on the agenda. An open forum will offer all attendees the opportunity to raise questions concerning Ex aspects and IECEx and to consider an industry position concerning Ex and IEC TC 31 Standards and IECEx.

High profile

Given the high profile and importance of the theme and the involvement of the United

Nations through UNECE, this International Conference is a sponsored event with free-of-charge attendance for registered delegates. The two-day event includes a hosted dinner for all delegates on the evening of the first day.

Get involved

For more information on the IECEx international conference, including registration, go to: www.iecex.com or send an email to: info@iecex.com

Participate in the IEC group on LinkedIn:

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2725372>

and join the IECEx subgroup:

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4241618>

Follow the IEC on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/IECStandards>

And on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalElectrotechnicalCommission>

IEC and IECEx work in the Ex field

The IEC has long been involved in developing International Standards for equipment used in hazardous areas. Set up in 1946, IEC TC 31: Equipment for explosive atmospheres, has a complete series of International Standards that cover all specific requirements for Ex equipment and systems, from general requirements to protection levels for apparatus used by all sectors that operate in hazardous environments, such as oil refineries, offshore oil rigs, gas plants, mines, sugar refineries, flour mills, grain silos and the paper and textile sectors.

Rather than a single industry, Ex is part of just about every industry sector known to man. Ex has embraced IEC International Standards. But producing equipment based on Ex standards is not enough. Most manufacturers, suppliers

and end-users trade on the global scene and have to meet the very strict requirements put in place by national regulations and legislation. Proving adherence to those requirements can be costly and time-intensive.

As a way to ensure compliance with its International Standards, the IEC established IECEx, the IEC System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres.

Since its inception in 1996, IECEx has put in place a number of Schemes that provide assurance that equipment and systems are manufactured and operated according to the highest international standards of safety:

- Equipment – the IECEx Certified Equipment Scheme

- Services – the IECEx Certified Service Facilities Scheme (e.g. repair and overhaul)
- Personnel competence – IECEx Certification of Personnel Competence Scheme (CoPC)

Through more than 50 IECEx approved ExCBs (Ex Certification Bodies) in 30 countries, IECEx certification has become the world's single best practice for demonstrating compliance with International Standards. Its credentials include acceptance by end-users and also the recent formal endorsement by the United Nations, through UNECE, as the recommended model for regulating the safety of equipment and persons working in areas where the potential for an explosive atmosphere may exist.