

# Competitive advantages

## IECEX present at Australasian Oil and Gas Exhibition and Conference

### Claire Marchand

**We all know and accept that safety in the workplace is a must for everyone everywhere in the world. The safety issue becomes crucial in potentially explosive atmospheres, where explosions can be fatal or cause serious injuries as well as significant damages. There, safety becomes a non-negotiable factor. Explosive atmospheres can be caused by flammable gases, mists or vapours or by combustible dusts. If there is enough of the substance mixed with air, then all it needs is a source of ignition to cause an explosion.**

### Personnel and equipment protection

The Ex sector encompasses more than just the most obvious oil and gas or petrochemical industries. The risk of fire or explosion exists in a variety of sectors, such as transportation – including aerospace – furniture manufacturing, automotive manufacturing and repair, pharmaceuticals, food processing, grain handling and storage, sugar refineries and coal mining.

### Focus on Australia

The oil, gas and mining industries are major contributors to Australia's economy. The country's abundant and diverse natural resources attract high levels of foreign investment. They include extensive reserves of coal, iron ore, copper, gold, natural gas, uranium, and renewable energy sources. In 2011, Australia was the world's largest coal exporter and in 2012, the oil and gas industry represented around 2.0% of Australian gross domestic product.

### Annual exhibition and conference

Bringing together major players in the Ex sector, the AOG (Australasian Oil and Gas) Exhibition and Conference, which

took place on 20-22 February 2013 in Perth, is Australia's largest oil and gas industry annual event. It covers all aspects of the sector, from exploration and production to subsea and offshore technology, pipelines, engineering, procurement, personnel, design and construction. The 2013 Conference programme included sessions that featured presentations and discussion on health, safety and the environment, and on education, training and skills.

### IECEX present at AOG event

Two representatives of the IECEX Secretariat, Mark Amos and Wal Robson, attended the AOG Exhibition and Conference. Both were delighted to see the high levels of awareness of IECEX and the prominence of its logo on many exhibitor stands. It clearly showed that, whilst IECEX Certification is one means of satisfying the regulatory requirements in Australia for industries and businesses associated with hazardous areas and explosive atmospheres, it is certainly the most attractive to suppliers. The unanimously positive feedback and

constructive suggestions provided by the oil and gas professionals they contacted over two days of discussions were gratefully received.

### Positive and constructive feedback

The most memorable comments from delegates and exhibitors included:

*"IECEX certification is critical to our business and provides many competitive advantages. We made the decision to go down the IECEX path several years ago – it gave us a head start on our competitors and they are still trying to catch-up!"*

*"IECEX provides for the needs of suppliers and customers – it's a win-win for everyone!"*

*"IECEX makes business much easier – it's the one to have and it's the first thing Australian customers ask for."*

*"IECEX Certification is the most onerous and stringent scheme... that's what makes it the best... you can be sure IECEX-certified equipment is as safe as you need it to be!"*



Joe Venuti with his IECEX CoPC badge and four IECEX Certificates



Example of use of IECEX Mark on Flameproof Engineering product



IECEX logo was displayed on many of the exhibitors' stands (here Andrew Robson of Mechtronic (left) and Wal Robson of IECEX Secretariat)

Many exhibitors were interested to hear about the IECEX Service Facilities and IECEX CoPC (Certification of Personnel Competence) Schemes and requested

more information. In particular, many had a personal interest in the CoPC Scheme as providing credible recognition of their experience as a credential to assist

their business operations. A number of other exhibitors in the fields of personnel recruitment, labour supply and training saw the benefit in an internationally-recognized and consistent scheme that has the potential to streamline worker mobility as well as to provide a path for ongoing skills development.

### Pride and support

While at the AOG event, Amos and Robson had the opportunity to meet with Joe Venuti, Manager, Design and Engineering of Flameproof Engineering Pty Ltd in Australia, and thank him for his ongoing support for IECEX and the Australian EX sector. Venuti was proud to display his own Certificate of Personnel Competence as well as the certificates granted his company: Flameproof Engineering's IECEX Equipment Certificate, IECEX Service Facility Certificate and IECEX Conformity Mark License.

## IECEX Certified Service Facilities and CoPC Schemes

### The IECEX Certified Service Facilities Scheme

This IECEX Certified Service Facilities Scheme is an International Certification Scheme that covers the assessment and the on-site audit of organizations that provide services such as repair and overhaul service to the Ex industry.

Due to the very high capital investment made by industry in most Ex equipment, it is much more economical to repair and overhaul equipment rather than to replace it with new. This also has obvious environmental benefits.

The challenge for industry is to ensure that all the very unique Ex safety features, included in the design and manufacturing of Ex equipment, are not compromised during the repair process.

Ex repair and overhaul facilities and workshops, certified under the IECEX Certified Service Facilities Scheme, provide

industry with the assurance that repairs and overhaul to Ex equipment will be undertaken according to the strict requirements of IECEX Scheme and in compliance with International Standard IEC 60079-19, *Explosive atmospheres - Part 19: Equipment repair, overhaul and reclamation*.

### IECEX CoPC (Certification of Personnel Competence)

The IECEX CoPC Scheme is an International Conformity Scheme that provides the global Ex industries with a single system for the assessment and qualification of persons meeting the competence prerequisites needed to properly implement the safety requirements based on the suite of IEC International Standards covering explosive atmospheres, e.g. the IEC 60079 and IEC 61241 series of standards.

The CoPC Scheme provides the international Ex industries with a qualification system that is transportable across borders.