

Global protection for the field of Ex

IECEX conference promotes safety

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The IECEX General Meeting, held in September, created a space in which a range of topics including policy, operational, and technical matters associated with the running of the IECEX Systems and its Schemes could be covered so that global safety could be advanced.

Safety in your neighbourhood

If you are a first time home buyer your real estate agent will hammer in a few truths: you can't necessarily get what you want (the eight room mansion with swimming pool and fountains), but you can still get what you need to live comfortably. Unfortunately, the house that you can afford may come with neighbours in the shape of noisy renters who throw parties on Monday nights. In another scenario you may have to move near an industrial area where Ex risks exist. Your real estate agent assures you that you will be safe. And you are, partly because of the work of IECEX, the IEC System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres.

Key role of IECEX in safety

Ex or explosive atmospheres are not restricted to oil refineries, offshore oil rigs, gas plants or mines. Almost every industry known to mankind encompasses explosive atmospheres through the storage and/or use of flammable and combustible materials, including transportation (every airport in the world is considered an Ex installation through the storage of fuel and fuelling of aircrafts) and of course the gas station where we all fill up our cars, plus many others including sugar refineries, flour mills, grain silos and the paper and textile sectors, to name a few.



IECEX Management Committee in Fortaleza, Brazil

From the smallest to the largest piece of equipment in industries in which explosive atmospheres may be encountered, all of them can be tested and certified by IECEX. An IECEX Certificate is like a passport for manufacturers of Ex equipment. It provides clear proof of compliance with International Standards.

IECEX meets

In September, IECEX held its General Meeting in Fortaleza, Brazil. Over 100 experts from 26 countries took part during the week with 30% of attendees coming from industry (manufacturers, end users, regulators and service facilities). This level of involvement by industry in the direct management and operation of the IECEX System and its Schemes is a major element of its ongoing success. The event covered a range of topics and the Management Committee dealt with a 21 page agenda that included 71 individual

documents; it recorded 84 formal decisions.

One of the decisions announced at these meetings was that IECEX has the interest and commitment of seven countries that will be holding the IECEX General Meeting every year until 2020. The countries that have volunteered to host include the following:

- 2014: Netherlands
- 2015: Australia/New Zealand
- 2016: South Africa
- 2017: USA
- 2018: France
- 2019: United Arab Emirates
- 2020: Canada

UNECE Regulatory Workshop

As part of the 2013 IECEX meetings, the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) organized a day-long regulatory workshop with over 100 participants and



Attendees of the UNECE Regulatory Workshop at the IECEx General Meeting



IECEX Executive Secretary Chris Agius talks to attendees at the meeting

representatives from various parts of Latin America.

IEC President Dr Klaus Wucherer, who attended the General Meeting, gave a key note address at the workshop confirming the IEC's support for conformity assessment activities. Dr Wucherer said that the UNECE recommendation of the IEC and IECEx as the world's best practice model for the verification of conformity to International Standards was a positive partnership. This was achieved through the publication of the UNECE's *A Common Regulatory Framework for Equipment Used in Environments with an Explosive Atmosphere*. He also noted that the Framework was

now available in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, and French.

IECEX will continue to support UNECE's work as it relates to equipment used in explosive atmospheres. At this meeting, IECEx committed to continue cooperating with UNECE in promoting the Framework.

Training Workshop

Every year at the IECEx meetings, there is a tradition of having a dedicated training workshop to ensure that participants are kept up-to-date with developments in the IECEx Schemes and the IECEx Online Certificate System. This year's workshop covered new and updated operational documents including those being

developed to cover trade agents and local assemblers.

Safety in industry

Since its creation in 1996, IECEx has set out to create a single standardized way available internationally of conducting tests and certification for Ex areas, providing that this priority is shared by all stakeholders involved. From the neighbourhood gas station to flour refineries, IECEx provides the assurance that equipment has been manufactured to meet safety standards and that services such as installation, repair and overhaul also comply with IEC International Standards on safety. This helps to make neighbourhoods and industries safer.

Malaysia hosts a two day IECEx event in February 2014

To help educate interested parties about IECEx, the IEC National Committee of Malaysia, Department of Standards Malaysia, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), the IEC and IECEx, in conjunction with UNECE, will be organizing the 2014 IECEx International

Conference, which will take place on 19 and 20 February 2014.

The two day event will provide a unique opportunity for industries in the region to get better acquainted with IEC International Standards and Conformity Assessment Systems in general and

find out how they can derive the most benefit from the IECEx services that cover Ex equipment and systems, repair and overhaul facilities, and certification of personnel competence.

For more information, please visit <http://www.iecex.com/malaysia/>.