

# Reining in explosive atmospheres

IECEX promotes safety and awareness

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**IECEX, the IEC System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres, looks at equipment in areas where flammable gases, liquids and combustible dusts may be present. This System provides the assurance that equipment is manufactured to meet international safety standards, that services such as installation, repair and overhaul also comply with IEC International Standards on safety and that persons working in Ex areas are competent to do so. The UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) recommends IECEX as the world's best practice model for the verification of conformity in International Standards.**

## IECEX certificates go mobile

IECEX launched the first mobile application to show international certificates for equipment used in explosive atmospheres. Now the person in the field can look at a piece of installed equipment and the app provides them with the ability to confirm that there is a valid certificate for the apparatus on the IECEX online Certificate System.

This free application of the IECEX online Certificate System, for iOS, Android tablets and smart phones, can be found at the Apple App Store and Google Play. It installs a simplified version of the main IECEX online Certificate System covering Certified Ex Equipment and allows the user to synchronize the Ex Mobile App with the IECEX online Certificate System, as required. The offline mode provides advanced search capability and CoC (Certificates of Conformity) abstracts (simplified details), while the online version gives the full details of CoC.

## Encouraging the Ex sector to be safe

IECEX and UNECE presented a joint paper at the PCIC (Petroleum and Chemical Industry Committee) Middle East Conference in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Co-authored by Chris Agius, IECEX Executive Secretary, and Lorenza Jachia, Head of Unit, Regulatory Cooperation, UNECE, the paper, entitled *IECEX System – Evolution and role of the United Nations, UNECE*, provides an in-depth analysis of the IECEX System and the rationale behind its endorsement by UNECE as the internationally recognized certification system for promoting the safety of equipment, services and personnel associated with devices, systems and installations used in explosive areas.

IECEX and UNECE have worked closely for several years to develop a model for legislation in the Ex (explosive) sector. Any Member State that has no regulatory framework in the explosive equipment sector can use the model as a blueprint for legislation. If countries already have such a framework, they can consider gradually centralizing the approach with this international model. Once the model has been adopted as national legislation, it will enable the sector to operate under a single common regulatory framework in all participating countries.

## Conference on safety in the Ex field

Safety is paramount in Ex areas. If equipment is not manufactured, installed, maintained, inspected or repaired by competent persons and according to strict Ex standards, the results can be devastating.

As part of the 2013 series of annual IECEX meetings in Fortaleza, Brazil, IECEX hosted a special one day workshop/conference, a joint venture between IECEX, UNECE and the Brazil National Committee. The event provided

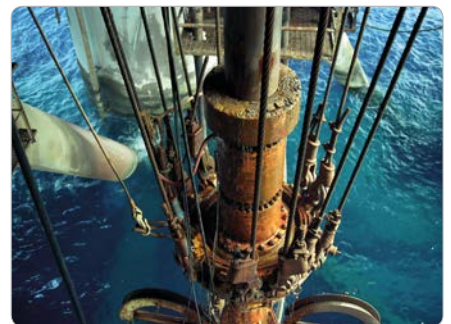


*Mine workers used to send canaries to see if there was going to be an explosion. Today IECEX can help keep people in mines safe*

a unique opportunity for industries throughout South America 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. These cover Ex equipment and systems, repair and overhaul facilities, and certification of personnel competence.

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

Mark Amos and Wal Robson represented IECEX at the Conference in Perth, Australia. As Australia's largest annual oil and gas event, it covers all aspects of their exploration and production, including subsea and offshore technology, pipelines, engineering, procurement, personnel, design and construction. The Conference programme included



*Oil rigs and other Ex sectors need to provide the required levels of safety in equipment and personnel*

sessions that discussed health, safety, the environment, education, training and skills.

Exhibitors were interested to hear about the IECEx Service Facilities and IECEx Certification of Personnel Competence



*Explosive atmospheres can be caused by flammable gases, mists, vapours or by combustible dusts*

Schemes. Many of them confirmed that they felt it provided credible recognition of their experience. They said it was an invaluable credential that assisted their business operations.

Amos and Robson were delighted to discover that the level of awareness of IECEx's work was high. They were also pleased to see the prominence given to its logo on many exhibitor stands.

### **IECEx-AFSEC seminar raises awareness in the Ex sector**

The first international seminar for the Ex sector, jointly organized by IECEx and AFSEC, took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The seminar brought together 40 delegates from nine African countries who represented the oil, gas

and electricity industry sectors, hospitals, NSBs (National Standardization Bodies), telecommunications organizations, ministries and industry.

Participants were able to familiarize themselves with the structure and content of the IEC International Standards prepared by IEC TC 31: Equipment for explosive atmospheres. These publications are essential for anyone using equipment and installations in a potentially hazardous environment. They also had onsite sessions where participants had to use and apply the knowledge acquired previously to do a series of practical exercises prepared by the course instructors. This gave the delegates the opportunity to go through the steps involved in Ex site inspections.