

RON SINCLAIR, Baseefa's managing director, made a keynote speech including material developed with **CHRIS AGIUS**, of the IECEx Secretariat, at HazardEx 2008 in Peterborough in February. This is an edited summary.

TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

Developments in the IECEx Scheme and Standardisation

Certification and Standardisation are two sides of the same coin, very different from each other but difficult to separate.

A few years ago, the IECEx International Certification Scheme for Electrical Equipment for installation in Explosive Atmospheres was brand new, and everyone was watching to see where it was going. Now we can state confidently that it has truly arrived and is beginning to dominate much of the certification process. In respect of Equipment, if you are not with IECEx, you are limiting your market place.

I have previously compared IECEx with ATEX and concluded that, although you currently need ATEX for meeting the mandatory requirements in Europe, IECEx gives a far greater degree of confidence in purchased product, as it is a true 'Type 5' Product Certification Scheme, applied equally to all products.

This is in contrast to ATEX which is not a true product certification scheme and does not even approach 'certification' for some equipment where the 'Internal Control of Production' module is mandated. Even the high inertia European Commission has been persuaded to make the first move towards accepting an IECEx Certificate as having at least equal status to an ATEX EC-Type Examination Certificate. It will be a year or so yet, but discussions are under way in the UN ECE in Geneva towards achieving that goal.

At the IECEx Management Committee Meetings in Denver last autumn, we heard how much of the oil and gas industry is

gearing up to make an IECEx Certificate a condition of purchase, even if other certificates (such as ATEX for Europe) are additionally required for local reasons.

The acceptability of the installation and subsequent inspection is down to the competence of the individuals involved. IECEx is now at an advanced stage in preparing a scheme for the certification of individual engineers and practitioners. Modules will be based on specific types of competence covering the full range from

plant design, through zoning to inspection and installation. The first modules will be for those involved at different levels in the repair of equipment and will directly support the Service Facility Scheme.

In Europe, we are fortunate that technical adoption of the IECEx Scheme is so simple. Our Cenelec standards, mandated under the ATEX Directive, are largely identical to the IEC standards used by IECEx. Normally, only the labelling requirements differ and, since the IEC standards don't prevent the use of the ATEX marking, it is a simple matter to have a single marking plate which covers both schemes.



*Ron Sinclair (top) and Chris Agius
– joint authors of the paper.*

ADVANTAGES OF IECEx

IECEx gives added confidence in the product for many reasons, including:

- **A clear single scheme backed up by total visibility of certification on the web site**
- **Real time change in status of certificates if there is a problem**
- **Acceptance into the scheme only following peer assessment by current practitioners**
- **Regular reviews of the output from certification bodies.**

BASEEFA INCREASES Ex REPAIR INDUSTRY SERVICE

As part of its plans for expansion of its Service Facility Certification portfolio, Baseefa has bought out the Ex Repair Licence Business of former HSE colleague Roger Turton.

Among Baseefa's new customers are such large concerns as Dowding and Mills, and ERIKS (formerly Wyko).

Baseefa's managing director Ron Sinclair said: "Acquiring this existing customer base makes good sense both for Baseefa and for the customers. The volume of customers will enable us to contain costs and avoid any price implications for the customers, while being able to offer them a move up to the international IECEX Service Facility Certification Scheme with minimum hassle once they are ready to demonstrate compliance with the newly issued edition of IEC 60079-19.

"The repair companies perform a vital function in keeping hazardous area plants running, but the consequences of a mistake by a company that is not up to scratch, or does not understand the limitations of its competence, can be horrendous. It is very important that users of such companies have confidence in the capability of the company, and having independent certification, with monitoring on a regular basis, is a major plank in providing that confidence".

Allan Ogden, manager of the scheme for Baseefa,



Roger Turton (seated left) and Ron Sinclair (right) sign the agreement, while Allan Ogden, Service Facility Manager looks on.

added: "We are delighted to welcome so many prestigious customers and we look forward to serving them. During the initial phase, Roger Turton will be working with me to ensure the smooth handover".

Useful H&S contacts

Baseefa attended the health and safety industry's major conference and exhibition in March – and found that it was one of only two exhibitors offering specialist DSEAR compliance services.

The Institute of Occupational Safety and Health's (IOSH's) exhibition at the Telford Exhibition Centre on 18-19 March was supported by about 100 exhibitors from the industry, representing every sector. Last year's event attracted a record attendance, with over 2,000 key health and safety professionals spending two full days at the event, and that figure was expected to be exceeded this year.

Representing Baseefa were Ian Harrison, User Services Manager, and Louise Jones, certification engineer. Louise commented: "Ian and I made some excellent contacts in the aerospace, medical, defence and petrochemical industries. We both felt it was certainly worthwhile attending."

IOSH is Europe's largest body for health and safety professionals, representing more than 31,000 members and including 11,500 Chartered Safety and Health practitioners in over 50 countries.

CHRIS RETURNS TO THE FOLD

Baseefa welcomed back one of the most experienced certification engineers in the country in April, when Chris Spicer returned to the Rockhead fold.



Returning to the fold: Chris Spicer.

Chris was one of the founding members of Baseefa when it was set up when the former HSE flammable atmospheres certification unit closed six years ago, and he was with the company when it moved to its new premises at the Rockhead Business Park in 2005. After two years away working for a leading competitor, Chris says he is delighted to be back.

"I am really looking forward to rejoining my old friends and colleagues at Baseefa," he told the *Standard*. "The company still operates under the highest standards in the world, and I am delighted to be back as part of it."

Chris lives in Macclesfield and when not at work, he enjoys gardening with his partner, Auriel.



Baseefa IOSH delegate, Louise Jones.

COME AND JOIN US

Baseefa is always keen to hear from people who believe that they may have something to offer and are interested in joining our Buxton-based team, whose ethos is based on 'helping to make the world safer'.

Although qualifications are relevant (an ideal candidate will have, or be aspiring to attain, Chartered Engineer or Incorporated Engineer status), we are also interested to hear from people with relevant experience. Most of our engineers visit customers' sites within the UK and often overseas, and they must have the knowledge and confidence to be self-reliant when away from Buxton.

We rarely advertise specific vacancies but prefer to see where people might fit best within the organisation in a way which benefits both Baseefa and the individual. If you think you have something to offer, please email a brief CV, concentrating particularly on relevant experience, to: peter.dickie@baseefa.com