



Every two months, Prof. Dr. Thorsten Arnhold, IECEx Chairman 2014-2019, provides an update on developments within the organisation.

At the time of writing this column, I have just returned from my trip to this year's IEC general meeting in San Francisco, California. After a three-year break caused by COVID-19, it was finally possible to see my many international friends and colleagues in-person again. Our American hosts provided very good facilities, which allowed us to work efficiently on our topics but also to celebrate our reunion after such a long time.

As always, my work focused on conformity assessment. As the German Representative in the Conformity Assessment Board (CAB), I attended its officers meeting and the actual board meeting. In addition to numerous administrative and organisational agenda items, the meeting was dominated by the implementation of the IEC's new strategic plan. This updated strategy of the IEC was drafted and discussed last year in the various committees of the organisation and finally published at the beginning of 2022. In the newly designed IEC homepage, the area of strategic planning occupies a large space: <https://www.iec.ch/strategic-plan>

A very important topic is the introduction of a new program for the verification of the carbon footprint of electronic and electronic products. Work that is specific to carbon footprint is now taking place in the

An encouraging restart after the pandemic

Standard Management Board, especially at TC 111: "Environmental standardization for electrical and electronic products and systems" developing horizontal standards related to environmental issues, which include waste management, greenhouse gas (GHG) measurement and environmental design. On the Conformity Assessment Board side, the IECQ system with its WG 14: "Green Approach Working Group" is active with the following scope: "To investigate and develop necessary documentation for the integration of Green Approach including Fuel Cell EPDs within the IECQ Schemes and Programmes and to act as a coordination role for IEC Conformity Assessment Matters and link with TCs related to the Green Approach".

As part of this effort, IEC is developing a new horizontal standard, IEC 63372, which will provide the principles, methodologies and guidance for the quantification and communication of GHG emissions, emission reductions and avoided emissions from Electric and Electronic products, services, and systems. The draft IEC 63372 expands the scope of two existing technical reports, IEC TR 62725, and IEC TR 62726, to include avoided emissions, which are defined as the GHG amount not to being emitted thanks to the use of digital systems.

At the San Francisco CAB meeting, the IECQ system was tasked to intensify its investigative work to prepare the basics for a Carbon Footprint verification program. In detail, the task consists of:

- Identify and investigate possible objects of conformity
- Perform standards gap analysis for this topic
- Perform a pros and cons analysis for the scope(s) of verification
- Provide a preliminary overview of how a service could be used across multiple CA systems

The results of this investigation will be reported at the next IEC CAB meeting in June 2023.

Another important topic revolved around the growing need for certification services regarding cyber security of IoT devices. An increasing number of products in daily life and work are equipped with IoT functionalities and thus become potential targets of unwanted external attacks. Since there are currently no suitable standards at either ISO or IEC that cover this particular branch of cyber security, it was decided to release the European ETSI EN standard 303645 as a certification basis.

Furthermore, CAB approved the scope extension of IECEE services into cybersecurity for IoT devices. This is a good example of the timeliness and flexibility of IEC CAB's activities in the interest of society. On the other hand, the standardisation branch of IEC is asked to accelerate and intensify the activities to create a modern standard on the topic described above.

Great efforts have been made in recent months within the CA systems to improve promotion activities and marketing. With the help of the central IEC services of the Geneva headquarters, the public image could be noticeably improved. A large number of articles have been published in professional journals on the various facets of conformity assessment. The websites of the CA systems have been newly structured and designed to become more user-friendly and informative. At IECEx, a completely new form of marketing has been successfully implemented. From the homepage, three very informative animated videos can be streamed which describe the different testing and certification systems for products, services and personal competencies for hazardous areas in a very understandable and memorable way. ■