



INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

IEC SCHEME FOR CERTIFICATION TO STANDARDS FOR SAFETY OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT FOR EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES (IECEx SCHEME)

Ex Management Committee, ExMC and for the information of ExTAG and IECEx WG7

Report of responses to the IECEx worldwide survey concerning an International Mark of Conformity for the Ex field, re ExMC/157/Q .

Introduction

This document is a report of responses to the IECEx worldwide survey, issued to determine the level of support for introduction of an IECEx Mark of Conformity.

This survey was conducted as part of work undertaken by the IEC Conformity Assessment Board's Working Group for Marks, WG7 as a means of providing feedback from the members and users of IEC Conformity Assessment Schemes.

This report is submitted to Members of the IECEx Management Committee (ExMC), Testing and Assessment Group (ExTAG) and the Panel of IECEx Assessors for their information.

This report will also be presented at the May 2003 meetings of CAB WG7 and the CAB itself, as a preliminary report. This report along with any CAB decisions or recommendations will be further discussed during the October 2003 meeting of the IECEx Management Committee, in Budapest.

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Background

IEC Conformity Assessment Board, CAB, formed Working Group WG7 to consider the issues surrounding an IEC Mark of Conformity for use by the IEC Conformity Assessment Schemes. This followed discussion within and reporting by the IECEx Management Committee highlighting a need for an International Mark of Conformity to cover products for use in explosive atmospheres (Ex products).

During the April 2002 meeting of CAB WG7, feedback from the schemes and their industries concerning the level of demand for an IEC Mark of Conformity was requested. This request was subsequently supported during the following meeting of CAB. **CAB Decision 05/2002.**

In conjunction with other IEC schemes, IECEx sought feedback from the international Ex community by way of a worldwide survey. A copy of this survey is included as Annex A

The Survey

The survey form and process were prepared by IEC ExMC WG7 with a final form and process agreed by the IECEx Management Committee. The survey form used to conduct the IECEE survey was used as a basis for the IECEx survey form.

The survey form was circulated to IECEx Members and IEC TC 31 National Committees from non-IECEx countries as well as being placed on the IECEx website. While a number of IECEx Member Bodies coordinated the survey within their respective countries, others were sent direct from industry to the IECEx Secretariat.

The survey was conducted over the period March to end April 2003 and while a relatively short period for such a survey, the responses demonstrated a clear level of interest in the Ex field and the continuing developments of the IECEx Scheme.

Countries submitting responses

Responses to the survey were received from the following countries:

AU, BR, CA, CN, DE, GB, IN, IE, IT, JP, MY, NL, NO, RU, SE, SI, US, YU, ZA

Summary of Responses to Questions 3, 4 and 5

The following provides a consolidated summary of all responses to the key questions, from the survey, concerning demand for an IECEx Mark of Conformity. Observations of the IECEx Secretariat are included in *italics*.

Question 3 from the Survey

3. **In my country there is a compulsory testing and/or certification requirement for the admittance of Ex products in the market.** **Yes/No**
This compulsory system involves a certification mark. **Yes/No**

Observation: Ex products are the subject of heavy regulations in almost all countries surveyed, thus requiring compulsory testing, and/or certification. This was evident from the response.

Question 4 from the Survey

4. In which relationships do you consider Ex certification marks important
(please tick/circle all applicable boxes)
- ☒ Legal requirement to sell
 - ☒ Requirement of End User/customer
 - ☒ Installation requirement
 - ☒ Liability protection for suppliers
 - ☒ Assist in Marketing of products

Observation: In many instances the responses indicated that an Ex Mark would be helpful for all of the 5 options mentioned, however the first option, "Legal requirement to sell" seemed to be slightly more popular.

Question 5 from the Survey

5. Today many certification marks exist. In the field of electrical products.

- a) Do you support the availability of a single International Ex Mark?
☒ Yes ☒ No
- b) The design of such a Mark should be: (please tick/circle only one)
☒ An IECEx Mark Unique for the Ex field
☒ Same as any other IEC Mark, (i.e. a Single IEC mark for all schemes)
☒ Separate for Ex but part of a generic IEC Mark
- c) The Mark should be available to manufactures that: (please tick/circle only one)
☒ Obtain an IECEx Certificate of Conformity, in accordance with the IECEx Scheme, to demonstrate that their product comply with the IEC Standard; or
☒ Self declare compliance to IEC Standards without complying with the IECEx Scheme
- d) It is likely that an IECEx Mark would be recognised, in my country, now or in the future by: (please tick/circle all applicable boxes)
- ☐ Manufacturers ☐ Suppliers ☐ End Users ☐ Regulators ☐ Others.....
☐ None

Observations:

Item a) The response to question a) was an overwhelming support for YES from all countries that took part.



Item b) 17 Countries indicated support for a unique Mark for the Ex field while 2 Countries, (DE and US) indicated support for an individual Mark but part of a Generic IEC Mark.

Item c) it was very clear, with all countries indicating support for access to an IECEx Mark via the full IECEx Scheme, thru the issue of an IECEx Certificate of Conformity

Item d) While in many instances responses suggested that an IECEx Mark would be recognised by Manufacturers, Suppliers, End Users and Regulators a concern was expressed that acceptance by some Regulators would require significant changes to Regulations and sighted this as a possible challenge for a new Mark. However other comments expanded the scope of acceptance by suggesting that Insurers may see benefit in calling for an international Mark in the Ex field. In conclusion, there was full support that an IECEx Mark would be recognised by at least the industry.

Information concerning Question 6 – Number of Manufacturers

The inclusion of this question was intended to assist the IECEx Management Committee in determining the size of the market it serves and while responses were limited to 19 countries, these alone estimate the number of Ex manufacturers, in the 19 countries, to exceed 4900. This will be investigated further as part of the IECEx marketing strategy.

Conclusion

The IECEx worldwide survey has proved to be an excellent vehicle to quickly gauge the level of interest in an IECEx Mark by the International Ex community. From the responses we can see a clear call for the availability of an IECEx Mark as provided for in the rules and procedures, IECEx 02. This position along with the survey results will be presented at the May 2003 Geneva meetings of IEC CAB and CAB WG7, Marks and then further discussed at the 2003 Annual IECEx Meetings in Budapest.

Chris Agius
Secretary IEC ExMC
11 May 2003

Preliminary Survey into the interest for an International Mark of Conformity for the Ex Field

Introduction

Within IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission, the international standardization body in the electrotechnical sector), an initiative has been launched to investigate whether there is an interest in the market for an international certification mark for “Electrical Equipment suitable for use in Explosive atmospheres”.

Product certification marks play an important role in the electrotechnical marketplace. These marks on products show compliance to national, regional or international standards and provide, in many cases, an entrance to specific markets.

Sometimes voluntary (to be used as a marketing tool), sometimes compulsory (required by a local or national government) and sometimes simply required by the market itself. Marks are usually granted by governments or private test houses.

Many Certification Marks

In the world market there is a multitude of certification marks, each with its local meaning and importance. Manufacturers that export products to multiple countries need to obtain many of these certification marks, sometimes because it is a necessity to be able to sell in a specific country, sometimes because such a mark helps the product being accepted in the foreign market.

The idea of an internationally accepted mark might reduce the effort for manufacturers to obtain access to the various markets they wish to sell their products in. At the same time, there appears to be significant support for the availability of an International Ex Mark to compliment the IECEx Scheme.

The survey

This survey is intended to obtain a first impression on the interest for an international mark in the world market for **electrotechnical products suitable for use in explosive atmospheres**. Manufacturers, governmental bodies, retailers and consumers worldwide are being consulted.

At this stage the IECEx Management Committee believe that a proposed IECEx Mark should mean that a manufacturer maintains the capability to produce Ex products (listed on the IECEx Certificate of Conformity) in compliance with the nominated IEC Standard consistently, by virtue of complying with the requirements of the IECEx Scheme, i.e. successfully testing and evaluation of samples and the achievement of an IECEx Test Report as well as successful assessment and audit of their manufacturing facilities coupled with on-going surveillance. A similar survey has also been conducted in the area of electrical safety of non-Ex products.

It is felt that separate surveys for each of the IEC Schemes, provides for individual responses from specialised industries such as the Ex field.

This questionnaire is designed in such a way that you will be able to complete the questions in a few minutes. We would appreciate very much if you can take these few minutes to help us better understand the needs of the market.

In completing the survey, please feel free to insert or attach any specific comments that you would like to be considered. On behalf of the IECEx Chairman, Executive and Members I would thank you for your assistance and support.

March 8, 2003

Chris Agius, Secretary IECEx

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E-MAIL/FAX REPLY FORM

Please complete this form and send it to the IECEx Secretariat by **30 April 2003** at:
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Fax No. +61 2 8206 6272

1. Country:.....

2. My background is (please tick/circle the most applicable)

☐ Manufacturer ☐ Cert./Testhouse ☐ Supplier ☐ End User ☐ Government

3. In my country there is a compulsory testing and/or certification requirement for the admittance of Ex products in the market. Yes/No
This compulsory system involves a certification mark. Yes/No

4. In which relationships do you consider Ex certification marks important

(please tick/circle all applicable boxes)

☐ Legal requirement to sell
☐ Requirement of End User/customer
☐ Installation requirement
☐ Liability protection for suppliers
☐ Assist in Marketing of products

5. Today many certification marks exist. In the field of electrical products.

a) Do you support the availability of a single International Ex Mark?

☐ Yes ☐ No

b) The design of such a Mark should be: (please tick/circle only one)

☐ An IECEx Mark Unique for the Ex field
☐ Same as any other IEC Mark, (i.e. a Single IEC mark for all schemes)
☐ Separate for Ex but part of a generic IEC Mark

c) The Mark should be available to manufactures that: (please tick/circle only one)

☐ Obtain an IECEx Certificate of Conformity, in accordance with the IECEx Scheme, to demonstrate that their product comply with the IEC Standard; or
☐ Self declare compliance to IEC Standards without complying with the IECEx Scheme

d) It is likely that an IECEx Mark would be recognised, in my country, now or in the future by: (please tick/circle all applicable boxes)

☐ Manufacturers ☐ Suppliers ☐ End Users ☐ Regulators ☐ Others.....
☐ None

6 I estimate the number of manufacturers, involved in the Ex field, in my country to be (please tick/circle the most applicable)

☐ 0 - 100 ☐ 101 - 200 ☐ 201 - 500 ☐ 501 - 750 ☐ 751 - 1000 ☐ Over 1001

We thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!
Please feel free to insert or attach any comments you may wish to be considered.