



**INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION SCHEME
FOR CERTIFICATION TO STANDARDS RELATING TO EQUIPMENT
FOR EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES (IECEx SCHEME)**

CIRCULATED TO: ExMC Members

Title: Comments from the German IECEx Member Body

INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared by the German National Committee and is issued for discussion during the ExMC Shanghai Meeting, September 2006.

Chris Agius
IECEx Secretariat

Address:
Level 7
286 Sussex Street
Sydney 2000
Australia

Tel: +61 2 8206 6940
Fax: +61 2 8206 6061
Email: chris.agius@iecex.com
Web: www.iecex.com

Statement of the German national committee AK 241.0.16

Status and development of the IEC Ex Scheme 2006-06-02

During the second meeting of the German national committee responsible for the coordination the German IEC Ex Scheme activities end of February 2006, the current status of the IEC Ex Scheme and its development for the future have been discussed and evaluated.

In general the overall impression of the participants was that the IEC Ex Scheme is an excellent instrument but that there are some concerns about the future and the general acceptance of the Scheme.

The delegates from the chemical industry pointed out that they appreciate the world wide availability of explosion protected products with one single, by regulators accepted certificate but the current status of the IEC Ex Scheme does not provide this (just for Australia).

Beside this the issues are:

- Sufficiently high quality and safety level of the products as it is established since many years inside of the European Union.
- An effective protection against products, which are below this level and do not meet the requirements of the relevant international standards.

To fulfil these requirements it is absolutely necessary that all procedures, which are fixed in the IEC Ex Scheme rules , have to be followed truly in practice.

The members of the German working Group came to the conclusion that all the documents and procedures, which the scheme consists of, are sufficient and cover all important aspects to assure a high level of safety, which is comparable to European standard. So there is no need for any substantial additions or modifications.

However the daily practice of applying those rules raises some serious concerns. So the opinion of the German NC of IECEx is that the acceptance of the laboratory of a manufacturer as an Ex TL and the commercial dependence of other Ex-TL's as part of the manufacturers/organisations are not in accordance with the basic rules of the Scheme. Some doubts have been raised by considering the short time needed for basic audits under consideration of language problems and travel distances.

We believe that it will be wise to use all the available instruments like the board of appeal in order to double-check the correctness of the audit results and the decision based on these.

Another concern arises due to the fact that we still have the situation that with Australia and NZ only two countries are willing to adopt the complete Scheme. During the next 2 to 3 years it is necessary to bring all the potential advantages of the IEC Ex Scheme to reality. In other words: At the moment an IEC Ex – certificate has no advantages neither for an European manufacturer nor for the majority of international customers since the ATEX certificate has the same or even a higher value! This statement is underlined by the increasing costs of IEC Ex certificates due to the increasing complexity of the procedures.

Last but not least it was discussed that the IEC Ex homepage is not updated sufficiently so that the access to the current versions of the documents is not ensured in each case.

Germany is still convinced that the IEC Ex Scheme is important for the international trade and for the establishment of a high worldwide level of safety.

Germany want to continue their active contribution and support for the scheme but they have the opinion that after a certain period of growth a period of consolidation is required to convince the international Ex – community of the seriousness of the IEC Ex Scheme.

Waldenburg, 02.06.06