



# IECEX OPERATIONAL DOCUMENT

**IEC System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres (IECEX System)**

**IECEX certified equipment scheme –  
A procedure to generate, discuss, report, and publish ExTAG decision sheets**



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IEC Secretariat  
3, rue de Varembe  
CH-1211 Geneva 20  
Switzerland

Tel.: +41 22 919 02 11  
[info@iec.ch](mailto:info@iec.ch)  
[www.iec.ch](http://www.iec.ch)

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A procedure to generate, discuss, report, and publish ExTAG decision sheets**

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## INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

**IECEX operational document OD 035 –****IECEX certified equipment scheme –  
A procedure to generate, discuss, report, and publish  
ExTAG decision sheets****Document history**

Date	Summary
2009-07	Original issue (Edition 1)
2016-05	Second edition (Edition 2)
2016-09	Edition 2.1 published as approved by the 2016 ExMC meeting (refer ExMC Decision 2016/58 and ExTAG Decision 2016/32) and incorporating 2016 ExTAG meeting comments on ExTAG/424/CD
2018-10	Edition 2.2 published as approved via ExMC Decision 2018/32 regarding ExTAG/490B/CD as discussed at the 2018 ExTAG meeting
2019-11	Edition 2.3: Changes to include provision of cooperation between IECEx and IEC TC 31 via the TC 31 Liaison Officer
2023-05	Edition 3.0: Changes to clarify initial drafting stages and the 5-year maintenance process
2024-05	Edition 3.1: Changes to include form F-014 and put eight-week time limit on originators response to comments.

**Address:**

IECEX Secretariat  
Level 17 Angel Place  
123 Pitt St  
Sydney, NSW 2000  
Australia

**Contact details:**

Tel: +61 2 4628 4690  
[info@iecex.com](mailto:info@iecex.com)  
[www.iecex.com](http://www.iecex.com)

## INTRODUCTION

The uniform application of the IEC Standards used in the IECEX System is one of the basic elements to ensure that certificates are based on identical requirements. To improve uniform application, ExTAG decision sheets (DS) are a method to minimize different applications at IECEX test laboratories (ExTLs) and IECEX certification bodies (ExCBs). Under no circumstances can an ExTAG decision sheet be used to modify or correct requirements specified in IEC or ISO/IEC Standards.

The recommendations for uniform application are published as ExTAG decision sheets on the IECEX website. If it is suggested that an amendment or change to a standard(s) may be required as an alternative to the preparation of an ExTAG decision sheet, the matter shall be forwarded to the relevant IEC Technical Committee(s) responsible for the standard(s). The purpose of ExTAG decision sheets is not to modify or "interpret" standards, however once an ExTAG decision sheet is published it is a mandatory requirement of the IECEX System.

## **A procedure to generate, discuss, report, and publish ExTAG decision sheets**

### **1 Procedure steps**

#### **Step 1 – First draft**

ExCBs, ExTLs or members of the IECEX Executive may propose a draft ExTAG decision sheet, using form F-014, *Collection of IECEX/ExTAG Decision Form*.

##### **Step 1.1 – Originator to contact the IEC TC 31 Liaison Officer**

First, the originator shall contact the IEC TC 31 Liaison Officer to determine if there is any work currently underway for this matter that needs to be taken into account.

The TC 31 Liaison Officer provides input but cannot prevent the originator proceeding to issue a proposed draft decision sheet to the IECEX Secretariat.

As part of the draft, the originator shall suggest how the proposed draft decision sheet affects existing certified products and whether the DS shall be applicable to:

- projects commenced prior to publication of the DS; and
- all certifications issued after its publication; or
- only for the new certifications (Issue No. 0) and their subsequent revisions.

##### **Step 1.2 – ExTAG officers to edit the first draft**

The IECEX Secretariat, in consultation with the ExTAG officers (ExTAG Chair and ExTAG Deputy Chair), shall edit the first draft, if necessary, via correspondence with the originator. Once a draft ExTAG decision sheet has been approved for circulation by the ExTAG officers, the IECEX Secretariat will prepare the draft ExTAG decision sheet as an ExTAG document for circulation.

#### **Step 2 – Circulation of the first draft**

The IECEX Secretariat will circulate the draft ExTAG decision sheet for comment to ExTAG members except chairs and secretaries of IEC TC 31 and subcommittees (SCs).

However, circulation shall include the TC 31 IECEX liaison who will coordinate the consultation within IEC TC 31 via the IECEX website under ExTAG committee documents. At this time, the IECEX Secretariat will issue an email circular advising the members of ExTAG and IECEX management committee (ExMC) (for information only) and the IEC TC 31 IECEX liaison of the availability of the document for comment on the website.

The comment period is normally 6 weeks.

Where the comment period is less than 6 weeks this must be justified and agreed by the ExTAG Chair and identified on the cover sheet for the draft ExTAG DS.

#### **Step 3 – Handling of draft ExTAG DS comments**

**ExTAG members and TC 31 IECEX liaison**, except for chairs and secretaries of IEC TC 31 and subcommittees (SCs), **are to contribute** to the development of ExTAG decision sheets according to the following process.

### Step 3.1 – Comments

**ExTAG members** submit comments directly, on the **separate comments table** provided for each draft ExTAG decision sheet, to the IECEX Secretariat.

Comments from the **IEC TC 31 experts** will be considered within the relevant IEC TC 31 groups as determined by the TC 31 IECEX liaison prior to submitting a single set of comments that represent the IEC maintenance team's (MT) position, by the TC 31 IECEX liaison.

The compilation of all comments, as well as observations on these comments from the originator, are circulated as an Ex TAG document via the website as above.

Submitted comments shall be labelled as either of the following:

- general
- technical
- editorial

### Step 3.2 – Originator's statement

After circulation of the draft DS, all comments are collected and sent to the originator for completion of the observation column within no more than eight weeks and their recommendation as to the next step.

If there is no response from the originator within eight weeks, then the ExTAG Officers shall decide the course of action.

#### Allocation of comments given by the originator

For consistency, the dispositions of comments shall be allocated as follows (the use of acronyms for the following are not permitted):

##### a) Accepted

The comment was acceptable as presented.

##### b) Not accepted

This disposition indicates that the comment has been rejected and will not be incorporated into the document. All rejections shall have the justification for rejection, whether technical or editorial, documented as part of this disposition.

##### c) Accepted in part

This disposition indicates that some parts of the comment will be accepted and incorporated into the document and that other parts have been rejected. An explanation of how the accepted part is to be incorporated into the document shall be given. The parts that have been rejected shall have the justification for doing so, whether technical or editorial, documented as part of this disposition.

##### d) Accepted in principle

This disposition indicates that the principle of the comment was accepted but was incorporated into the document in a manner modified from that suggested by the commenter. Explanation of how this was incorporated into the document shall be included, along with the justification for the decision.

**e) Noted**

This is used where there is no action required on the comment.

In cases b), c), and d) above, the justification provided should clearly specify the reasons why the comment was rejected or included with modifications. This will allow the commenter the opportunity to provide additional information and justification at the next stage of review for those cases where, perhaps because of language barriers or interpretation difficulties, the commenter believes that the originator did not fully understand the proposal or comments.

The originator shall send the completed review of the compilation of comments and a revised version of the draft DS (if required) to the Secretariat.

The Secretariat will then consult with the ExTAG officers to determine the next step as Step 4 or 5 below.

The Secretariat will send, for information only, the final compilation of comments to the ExTAG members and the IEC TC 31 IECEX liaison.

**Step 4 – Handling of an accepted draft DS**

A draft ExTAG DS is considered approved to proceed to publication when there is no opposition to it proceeding to publication and it is also in agreement from the ExTAG officers.

A draft ExTAG DS which has received objections to proceeding to publication shall be handled according to Step 5 below.

Once a draft ExTAG DS has been approved to proceed to publication it is posted on the IECEX website at an ExTAG decision sheet. ExTAG members and IEC TC 31 IECEX liaison are again notified by an email circular.

A new ExTAG DS shall be noted on the agenda of the next ExTAG meeting following their acceptance.

**Step 5 – Handling of a draft DS requiring recirculation**

All proposed comment resolutions (other than “Accepted” or “Noted”) shall be considered by the originator.

If after considering the comments received, the originator agrees that a revised draft ExTAG DS is required then the originator shall provide the IECEX Secretariat with a revised draft ExTAG DS for reposting and circulation for comment according to Step 2 above, (unless the revision is considered minor, because it does not change the overall intent of the draft DS).

Where, after two cycles, the parties commenting still do not accept the draft, the ExTAG officers shall decide on the course of action which shall be any of the following:

- a) Draft ExTAG DS with a compilation of comments **shall be put on the agenda** of the next ExTAG meeting to discuss whether there is a need for the DS or not
- b) Draft ExTAG DS with a compilation of comments **shall proceed to publication and be listed for noting** at the next ExTAG meeting
- c) Draft ExTAG DS **shall not proceed and may be referred to the IEC TC 31 IECEX liaison** (for example, if the consensus is that the draft ExTAG DS introduces new requirements). This action will also be noted on the agenda of the next ExTAG meeting.

- d) Draft ExTAG DS **shall not proceed and may be referred to the appropriate ExTAG or ExMC working group**. This action will also be noted on the agenda of the next ExTAG meeting.

## 2 Application of accepted DS

Immediately an ExTAG decision sheet has been approved and published on the IECEx website, all ExCBs and ExTLs operating within the IECEx System shall apply this ExTAG decision sheet as a mandatory part of the IECEx certified equipment scheme for the projects opened following the publication. The DS shall contain a statement defining its applicability as outlined in Step 1.1 of Clause 1. The ExTAG WG 1 Convenor shall be informed of newly issued decision sheets.

## 3 Maintenance of accepted DS

An accepted DS applies to a specific edition or editions of one or more standards, and therefore an accepted DS normally remains applicable indefinitely. However, an accepted DS shall be reviewed to determine the following:

- a) Confirm that the accepted DS has been incorporated into new editions of any referenced standards published after the DS was accepted. If not, the IECEx liaison to IEC TC 31 shall contact the MT/WG responsible for the involved standard for feedback regarding plans to address the matter covered by the DS; and
- b) Confirm that a link to the accepted DS has been inserted into the blank ExTRs for any standards referenced by the DS. If not, the IECEx Secretariat shall address.

The first review for an accepted DS shall be performed five years after publication. The IECEx Secretariat shall add each accepted DS that is due for review to the agenda of the next ExTAG meeting so that a review can be held in accordance with the above.

Subsequent reviews of accepted DS may be performed as determined by the ExTAG Chair.

In addition, any ExCB or ExTL may question an accepted ExTAG DS by proposing new wording in line with Step 1 above in this document.

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INTERNATIONAL  
ELECTROTECHNICAL  
COMMISSION

3, rue de Varembé  
PO Box 131  
CH-1211 Geneva 20  
Switzerland

Tel: + 41 22 919 02 11  
[info@iec.ch](mailto:info@iec.ch)  
[www.iec.ch](http://www.iec.ch)