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IECEX Operational Document

**IEC System for Certification to Standards relating
to Equipment for use in Explosive Atmospheres**

**A procedure to generate, discuss, report and publish ExTAG
Decision Sheets**



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INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

A procedure to generate, discuss, report and publish ExTAG Decision Sheets

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, the ExTAG decision sheets are a method to minimize different interpretations at IECEx Test Laboratories (ExTLs) and IECEx Certification Bodies (ExCBs). In no cases the ExTAG decision sheet can be used to modify or correct requirements given in IEC standards.

The recommendations for uniform application are collected as [ExTAG Decision Sheets](#) (DS), which are available on the IECEx Web Site. If an amendment/change to a Standard/s may be required, the question will be forwarded to the relevant technical committee/s of the IEC responsible for the Standard/s. The purpose of ExTAG Decision Sheets is not to modify or "interpret" Standards.

1. First draft.

ExCBs, ExTLs or Members of the IECEx Executive may propose a Draft Decision Sheet. The IECEx Secretariat, ExTAG Chairman and Ex TAG Secretary shall edit the first draft, if necessary, via correspondence with the originator. Once a Draft Decision Sheet has been approved for circulation by the Ex TAG Chairman and Secretary the IECEx Secretariat will prepare the draft Decision Sheet as an ExTAG document for circulation.

The wording in the Question and Answer sections of the draft DS and any accepted ExTAG DS shall follow the ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 requirements.

2. Circulation of the first draft.

The IECEx Secretariat will circulate the Draft Decision Sheet for comment to ExTAG members and the involved IEC MT(s) via the IECEx Web Site under [ExTAG Committee Documents](#). At this time the secretariat will issue an e-mail circular advising the members of ExTAG and ExMC and the convenor of the involved IEC MT(s) of the availability of the document on the web site. The comment period is normally 6 weeks. Where the comment period shall be less than 6 weeks this must be justified and agreed by the ExTAG Chairman and identified on the cover sheet for the draft DS.

3. Handling of draft DS comments

Comments, as well as observations on these comments, from the originator, are circulated as an ExTAG Document via the Web Site as above.

For consistency, the dispositions of comments shall be as follows (acronyms shall not be used):

a) Accepted.

The comment was acceptable as presented.

b) Not Accepted

This disposition indicates that the comment will not be incorporated into the document. All rejections shall have the justification for rejection, whether technical or editorial and 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. An explanation of how the accepted part is to be incorporated into the document shall be given. The parts that have not been accepted 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 different manner than that suggested by the commenter. Explanation of how this is to be 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), the justification provided should clearly convey the specific reasons why the comment was not acceptable. 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.

The Originator shall then send the completed document to the ExTAG secretary who will send it to the IECEx for circulation.

4. Handling of an accepted Draft DS

A Draft DS is considered accepted to proceed for publication on the basis that there is no opposition to proceeding to publish.

A Draft DS which has received objections to proceeding shall be handled according to Clause 5 below.

Once an ExTAG Draft Decision Sheet has been approved for use it is posted on the IECEx Web Site at [ExTAG Decision Sheets](#). ExTAG Members are againnotified by an e-mail circular.

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

5. Handling of a Draft DS requiring recirculation

A revised document taking into account comment/s received shall be circulated for comment/approval as in Steps 1 and 2. Prior to recirculation of any draft DS In cases b), c) and d) above the Originator of the Draft DS shall contact the member submitting the comment to seek clarification and resolution of the comment prior to circulation of the collated comments and any subsequent recirculation of the draft DS.

While the circulation period is intended to achieve consensus, absence of sustained opposition is regarded as no opposition to proceed for publication.

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

- a) Draft DS shall be put on the agenda of the next ExTAG meeting; or
- b) Draft DS shall proceed for publication but also listed for discussion at the next ExTAG meeting

6. Application of accepted DS

Once an ExTAG Decision Sheet has been approved and published on the IECEx Web Site all Ex CBs and Ex TLs operating within the IECEx System shall apply the DS. Decision sheets are to be applied by ALL Ex TLs and ExCBs and form a mandatory part of the IECEx System.

7. Maintenance of accepted DS

Every ExCB or ExTL may question an existing DS by proposing new wording in line with step 1 – First draft.

Five years after publication of a DS the IECEx Secretariat shall add the DS to the agenda of the next ExTAG meeting so that a review can be held to determine if there is still a need for the DS or it can be archived because updated standards have resolved the problem.