



IECEX OPERATIONAL DOCUMENT

IEC System for Certification to Standards relating to Equipment for use in Explosive Atmospheres (IECEX System)

Assessment Procedures for IECEx acceptance of Candidate Accepted Certification Bodies (ExCBs) and Ex Testing Laboratories (ExTLs)

Part 1: Appointment and surveillance of assessors for IECEx certification schemes





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IEC Central Office
3, rue de Varembe
CH-1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland
Email: inmail@iec.ch
Web: www.iec.ch

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Email: csc@iec.ch
Tel.: +41 22 919 02 11
Fax: +41 22 919 03 00



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INTERNATIONAL
ELECTROTECHNICAL
COMMISSION

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
INTRODUCTION.....	3
Appointment and surveillance of assessors for IECEx certification schemes	4
1 Scope.....	4
2 Application	4
3 Endorsement of application	4
4 IECEx assessor training	4
5 Review by ExMC Secretary	4
6 Review by WG4.....	4
7 Acceptance by ExMC.....	4
8 Entry into list of approved assessors	4
9 General requirements for all assessors.....	5
10 Competencies and skills of assessors and lead assessors.....	5
10.1 Assessors	5
10.2 Lead assessors.....	5
11 Communication.....	5
12 Maintenance of competencies and skills	5
13 Acceptance of assigned tasks.....	6
14 The re-appointment of assessors.....	6
15 Feedback on assessments and assessors	6
Annex A Competencies and skills for assessors	7
A.1 General competence.....	7
A.2 Technical competence and skills.....	7

INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

IECEX Operational Document 003-1

Appointment and surveillance of assessors for IECEx certification schemes

INTRODUCTION

This operational document has been prepared to detail the process for appointing IECEx assessors and to establish a general Code of Conduct for all IECEx assessors appointed by the IECEx Management Committee, ExMC. This document replaces previous document OD 003-1.

This document also sets out requirements for the maintenance of assessors' competencies and the on-going verification of acceptance by ExMC as a means of maintaining international confidence in the IECEx ExCB/ExTL Assessment process.

Document History

Date	Summary
April 2009	Edition 1 This document supersedes and replaces ExMC/102/CD Surveillance of IECEx Assessors
September 2017	Edition 2.0 This document supersedes and replaces OD 003-1 Edition 1.0

Address:

IECEX Secretariat
Level 33, Australia Square
264 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia

Contact Details:

Tel: +61 2 4628 4690
Fax: +61 2 4627 5285
e-mail: info@iecex.com
<http://www.iecex.com>

Appointment and surveillance of assessors for IECEx certification schemes

1 Scope

This operational document addresses the appointment and surveillance of IECEx assessors for all of the schemes within the IECEx System.

2 Application

The applicant assessor shall complete ExMC/43/Q, (latest edition) IECEx Assessor Application, and attach a copy of their current Curriculum Vitae.

3 Endorsement of application

The application shall be reviewed and endorsed by the applicant's National Member Body and forwarded to the ExMC Secretary. This process shall include a review of the assessor competences as required by 10.1 and Annex A. The supporting information for this review may initially be provided to the National Member Body by the applicant assessor's sponsoring organization/employer.

4 IECEx assessor training

The applicant will need to attend IECEx assessor training prior to final acceptance. This day may be attended any time after the application is made. But consideration will be given to including others when the training is conducted, for example those just about to make application.

NOTE The members of ExMC WG4 have a standing invitation to attend IECEx assessor training sessions.

5 Review by ExMC Secretary

The ExMC Secretary determines that the application is in order and forwards copy/ies to the Convenor of Working Group 4: Technical Reference Group for Assessment of ExCBs and ExTLs.

6 Review by ExMC WG4

The ExMC WG4 Convenor will circulate the application to the WG members for review of the application/s. If accepted by the WG, their recommendation/s will then be provided to the ExMC Secretary.

7 Acceptance by ExMC

Once the above recommendation is received, the ExMC Secretary will prepare a document for consideration by the ExMC. If an applicant has not undergone IECEx assessor training, they may be accepted subject to them attending IECEx assessor training.

8 Entry into list of approved assessors

Following an applicant's acceptance by the ExMC, the ExMC Secretary will arrange for official notification, and entry in the List of IECEx Approved Assessors and Assessment Teams, on the IECEx website. Where the acceptance has been conditional on the assessor attending training, this will be noted on the website and the applicant will be advised of the need to attend IECEx assessor training.

9 General requirements for all assessors

All assessors, when conducting ExCB and ExTL assessments, shall follow the assessment procedures as outlined in the following documents, as applicable: OD 003 Part 2, IECEx Technical Capability Documents, and the IECEx Scheme Rules, IECEx 02. IECEx 03 series, IECEx 04 and IECEx 05.

IECEX assessors are expected to act professionally and in a timely manner at all times during the assessment process, including not allowing any commercial or other interests to impair their judgement.

10 Competencies and skills of assessors and lead assessors

10.1 Assessors

Applicant assessors are expected to have the competencies and skills shown in Annex A. These shall be reviewed by the national member body as part of the application process. Assessors must have both general competence, and technical competence and skills detailed in the annex. In addition, assessors shall meet the following, which shall be detailed in the application form:

- Good English skills, both written and verbal
- Auditor training on ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO 9001
- Employment or other experience relevant to Ex
- IECEx experience over a period of at least 5 years
- Relevant auditing experience of at least five years

10.2 Lead assessors

Appointment of lead assessors will be by invitation by the Chairman of IECEx from the existing pool of assessors. Each new lead assessor will be required to initially lead one assessment under supervision of an existing lead assessor, prior to being recommended for appointment as a lead assessor. The Chairman of IECEx may consult with WG4 as part of the process of making a decision on the appointment of a lead assessor.

Lead assessors are expected to be able to demonstrate the ability to lead ISO 9001 audits. For example, a lead auditor with an ExCB body auditing to ISO/IEC 80079-34 would meet this requirement.

11 Communication

Assessors shall respond in a timely manner to all correspondence relating to the IECEx Assessment or any other IECEx System matters. In general, a maximum response time of 48 hrs, from receiving the correspondence.

E-mail or Fax correspondence is expected. Assessors shall at all times ensure that their contact details, as recorded on the IECEx website Directory, are current and if not, to immediately notify the ExMC Secretary at chris.agius@iecex.com.

12 Maintenance of competencies and skills

It is expected that all assessors will ensure that their technical knowledge of Ex matters and audit skills remain current and that they maintain up to date knowledge of changes in Ex Standards and IECEx Schemes' requirements.

Assessors are expected to maintain auditing skills.

13 Assessors are required to attend an IECEx assessor training at least once every two years. Those who do not meet these requirements may be

removed from the assessor panel by the ExMC Secretary on recommendation of ExMC WG4. Acceptance of assigned tasks

Assessors are expected to accept assessment tasks assigned to them, noting that there may be periods during which assessors may be unavailable. In such instances assessors shall inform the Secretariat of their unavailability and the period of time for which they are unavailable.

As noted in the application form, the availability of assessors is critical to the bodies being assessed and to the credibility of the IECEX System and its Schemes. If assessors are consistently unable to be available for assessments, or are not able to respond to issues related to assessments so they can be carried out and concluded in a timely manner, then their position in the assessor panel will be reviewed.

14 The re-appointment of assessors

A periodic review of assessors (at approximately 5-year intervals) will be carried out by ExMC WG4. At this time assessors may be required to submit a new IECEX Assessor Questionnaire form (ExMC/43/Q), (latest version).

If an assessor fails to submit a new IECEX Assessor Questionnaire when requested during the review, the ExMC Secretary may remove the assessor from the panel of appointed IECEX assessors.

15 Feedback on assessments and assessors

At the end of an assessment, when all issues have been resolved and the report finalised, the IECEX Secretary will issue a form (IECEX OD 206) to the body that has been assessed seeking their feedback on the assessment process and the performance of the assessors.

In addition to the above complaints regarding the conduct of an assessor may separately be raised with the ExMC Secretary. These complaints shall be in writing.

The Secretary shall notify the Convenor of ExMCWG4 and in consultation with the IECEX Chairman and Officers shall determine the course of action in relation to complaints about assessors. One option available is the removal of the assessor from the assessor panel. In such cases, the Convenor of ExMC WG4 shall report at the next ExMC meeting. The Secretary may need to adjust the above process if the Convenor of ExMCWG4 is the subject of the complaint.

The Secretary shall maintain a record of complaints and the action taken.

Feedback on the assessment process will be used by ExMC WG4 as a means to identify potential improvements to the assessment process.

Annex A

Competencies and skills for assessors

A.1 General competence

Assessors shall possess the following general competence:

- a) Good interpersonal skills
- b) Good oral and written communication skills
- c) Basic knowledge of ISO 9001, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 80079-34, ISO/IEC 17040, and ISO/IEC 17024 as far as appropriate

A.2 Technical competence and skills

Assessors shall possess the following technical competence and skills

- a) A broad knowledge of Ex philosophies including an understanding of:
 - The ignition properties of flammable and combustible materials,
 - The properties, mechanisms and control of ignition, and
 - A significant range of protection techniques in the IEC 60079 series and ISO/IEC 80079 series
- b) access to, or involvement in:
 - IEC or corresponding national standards such that there is assured access to knowledge of all developments in those standards, and
 - Ex research;
- c) documentation and reporting skills; and) at least five years' practical experience in the scope of the relevant IECEx scheme(s)