

# IECEX OPERATIONAL DOCUMENT

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

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



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## CONTENTS

1.	First draft. ....	2
2.	Circulation of the first draft.....	2
3.	Handling of draft DS comments .....	2
4.	Handling of an accepted Draft DS .....	3
5.	Handling of a Draft DS requiring recirculation .....	4
6.	Application of accepted DS .....	4
7.	Maintenance of accepted DS.....	4

## Document History

Date	Summary
2009-07	Original Issue (Edition 1)
2016-05	Second Edition
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 TC 31 via the IEC TC 31 Liaison Officer

# 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, ExTAG Decision sheets 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 Web Site. 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 Ex TAG 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.

#### **1. Procedure Steps**

##### **Step 1 - First draft.**

ExCBs, ExTLs or Members of the IECEx Executive may propose a Draft ExTAG Decision Sheet. Prior to preparation of a draft Decision Sheet, the Originator shall first consult with the Maintenance Team (MT) Convener for the responsible Standard, where applicable, noting that the MT Convener cannot prevent the Originator proceeding to issue a proposed draft Decision Sheet to the IECEx Secretariat. A copy of the correspondence should be sent to the IEC TC 31 IECEx Liaison.

The IECEx Secretariat, in consultation with the ExTAG Officers, 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 ("ExTAG DS") as an ExTAG document for circulation.

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

##### **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 SCs. However, circulation shall include to the IEC TC 31 IECEx Liaison who will coordinate the consultation within IEC TC 31 via the IECEx Web Site under ExTAG Committee Documents. At this time the IECEx Secretariat will issue an e-mail 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 web site. 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 Chairman and identified on the cover sheet for the draft ExTAG DS.

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

ExTAG Members are expected to contribute to the development of ExTAG Decision Sheets and may 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 IECEx Liaison 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 MT's position.

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 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 than 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.

Once a disposition has been decided, the originator shall then send the final Draft ExTAG DS and Compilation of Comments to the ExTAG Deputy Chairman who will, following approval by the ExTAG Chairman, circulate the final Draft ExTAG DS and 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 also agreement from the ExTAG Chairman.

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 Web Site at ExTAG Decision Sheets. ExTAG Members and IEC TC 31 IECEx Liaison are again notified by an e- mail circular.

A new ExTAG DS shall be noted on the agenda of the next Ex TAG 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 taking into account 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 item 2 above, (unless the revision is considered minor).

Where, after two cycles, the parties commenting still do not accept the draft, the ExTAG Chairman shall decide on the course of action which may 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;
- b) Draft ExTAG DS with a Compilation of Comments shall proceed to publication but also be listed for discussion at the next ExTAG meeting
- c) Draft ExTAG DS shall be withdrawn and referred to the appropriate IEC TC31 Committee or appropriate Subcommittee, MT or working group (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 be withdrawn and referred to the appropriate ExTAG or ExMC working group. This action will also be noted on the agenda of the next ExTAG Meeting; or
- e) Draft ExTAG DS may be withdrawn permanently (for example in case of widespread opposition to the proposed answer). In order to record the position of the ExTAG, an INF document shall be issued by the ExTAG Deputy Chairman and posted to the ExTAG Decision List with advice that the draft ExTAG DS was withdrawn, a short summary of the ExTAG’s position and a link to the Compilation of Comments document.

If the originator does not agree with the comments or proposed changes from the commenter(s) the matter shall be referred to the ExTAG Chairman who will determine the course of action (which may be to refer the Draft DS and comments to the next ExTAG meeting).

## **2. Application of accepted DS**

Immediately 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 this ExTAG Decision Sheet as a mandatory part of the IECEx System.

## **3. Maintenance of accepted DS**

Any ExCB or ExTL may question an existing ExTAG DS by proposing new wording in line with Step 1 above in this document.

No more than five years after publication of an ExTAG DS the IECEx Secretariat shall add this ExTAG 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 this ExTAG DS or if it can be archived because updated standards have resolved the problem.