INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION SYSTEM FOR CERTIFICATION TO STANDARDS RELATING TO EQUIPENT FOR USE IN EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES (IECEx SYSTEM)

Title: IECEx Assessor Survey Report – Lessons Learned from Conducting Remote Peer Assessments as per OD 060

Circulated to: IECEx Management Committee, ExMC

Introduction

This document provides the results from the IECEx Survey completed by IECEx Assessors who have conducted remote peer assessments. The assessor survey was initiated as a lessons learned exercise to record the benefits as well as the challenges when preparing and conducting remote peer assessments during extraordinary circumstances as per OD 060. The feedback from the assessor survey will assist ExAG in making recommendations, both for situations of extraordinary circumstances and when international travel resumes.
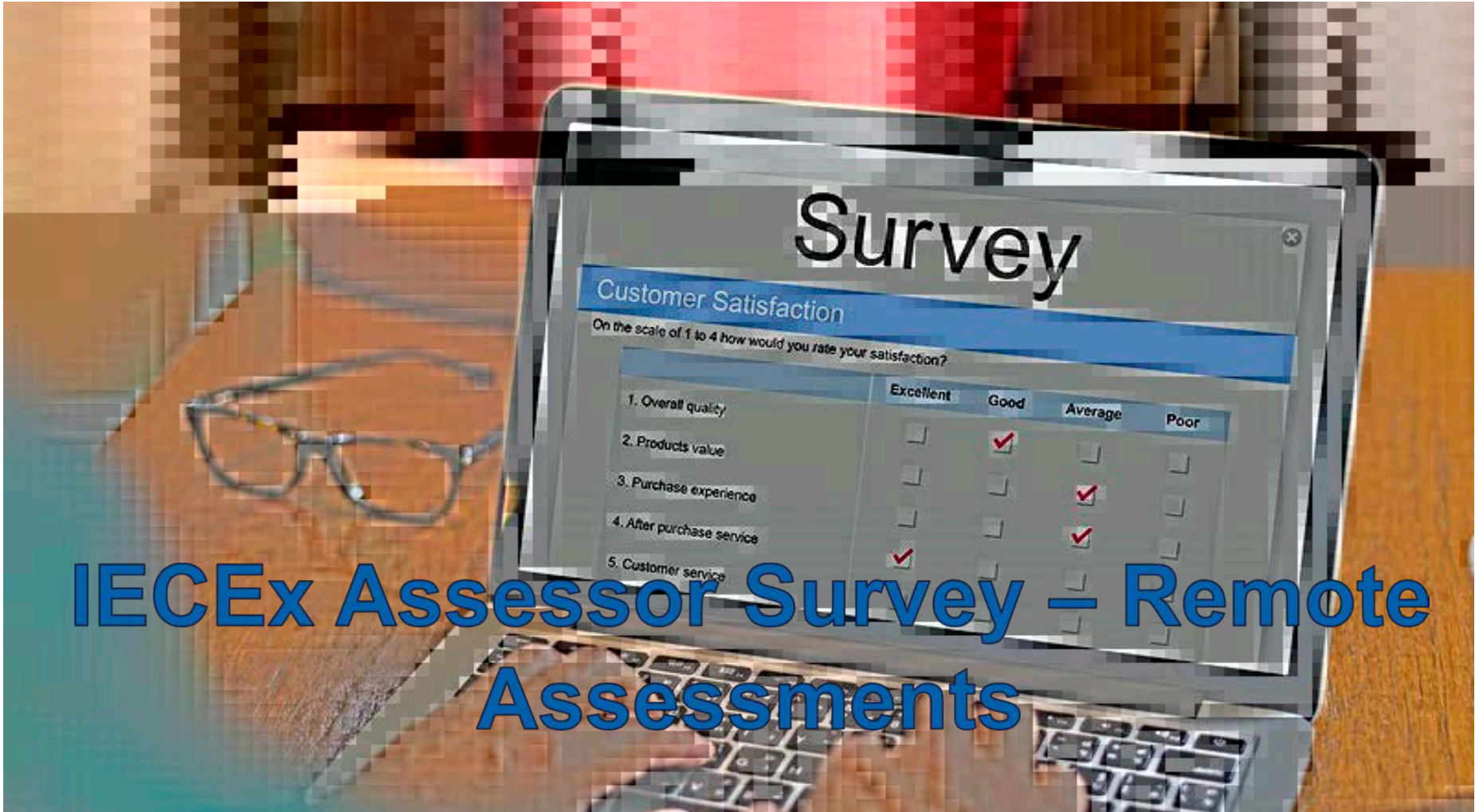
Please also find Annex A attached as the assessor survey document.

This document is issued for the information of ExMC.

Kind regards,

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IECEx Assessor Survey – Remote Assessments

2021 Remote Assessor Training August 30ᵗʰ

IEC System for Certification
to Standards Relating to Equipment
for use in Explosive Atmospheres

IECEx Assessor Survey – Remote Assessments - lessons learned objectives

70% of Assessors who conducted remote assessments responded to this survey – Thank you.

This survey was conducted to share the experiences of the IECEx assessors who conducted remote assessments so the following could be achieved:

- ✓ Understand the challenges of remote assessments and identify what worked well and what did not
- ✓ Learn from others how they overcame some of the challenges
- ✓ Determine which type of assessments may be considered post implementation of OD 060 to reduce international travel costs on bodies
- ✓ Confirm that the pre-assessment information including (DTRs) provided by the IECEx Secretariat is of value and assists the assessor
- ✓ Understand if the IT tools available were appropriate and sufficient
- ✓ Determine the maximum time to prepare for the re-assessment, mid-term surveillance and other
- ✓ Determine the maximum audit session time as well as the total session time
- ✓ Document lessons learned should OD 060 need to be reactivated in the future
- ✓ Provide guidelines in regards to assessment preparation and execution

Question 1: Were you provided with sufficient information from the IECEx Secretariat during the preparation of the peer assessment?

- Yes = 12 responses   No = 0 responses

Comments:

- Seems difficult to have more information
- but I did run into one situation with DEKRA Certification B.V. The secretariat agreed that the annual surveillance could be skipped because of timing of the reassessment. I was not aware of this and planned the timing of the reassessment based on the last reassessment date and the requirements of IECEx OD 060.

Question 2: Did this information assist the Assessor during their preparation and the undertaking of the re-assessment or surveillance assessment?

- Yes = 12 responses   No = 0 responses

Comments:

- but items referred from the previous assessment are not always clear what needs to be checked. E.g. a document has been verified in English but the translation was not completed so it needed to be checked at the next assessment. What needs to be checked if the EN version has been verified???
- But the information was essentially the same as received for an onsite assessment.
- Yes, in particular the out of date QAR and participation to proficiency testing
- However this is the same information as provided in non-remote assessment too.

Question 3: What IT tools were used during the remote assessments? (Zoom, GoToMeeting etc?) (Green text denotes a clear preference)

- **GoToMeeting** = 2
- **Teams** = 11
- **Zoom** = 4
- **Tixeo** = 1
- **Gogglemeet** = 1

Question 4: Who selected the IT tools to be used, was it the Assessor or the ExCB/ExTL?

Assessor: **ExCB/ExTL:**

- GoToMeeting = 2   Teams = 5
- Teams = 6
- Zoom = 1

Comments:

- Usually in consultation
- Suggested by assessor = 3
- Let ExCB choose IT tool, but propose Teams

Question 5: Were these IT tools region specific or required due to regional restrictions?

- No = 11 Yes = 1
- In some countries Zoom could not be initiated, but could link to an established Zoom meeting
- Agreed with Body in advance
- Zoom may not be allowed by some organisations
- Selected based on familiarity of the ExCB/ExTL
- Teams is the preference of the assessor's organization. In the past we had some restrictions over the use of Zoom due to security concerns and I am not sure if those are still in place because I haven't been asked to use it.

Question 6: Did the IT tools you had available to you to conduct a remote assessment meet the requirements to effectively communicate and interact with ExCB/ExTL or other IECEx scheme re-assessments?

Responses with comments:

- Yes = 12, No = 0

- MS Teams worked perfect, GoToMeeting only used for 50% due to poor coms quality

- Both video and audio considering the scenario, tools supported as expected

- Tools are fine, issues are commonly related to limited bandwidth and related disturbances in communication (bad internet connection, occasional low resolution of video, interruptions/sudden disconnection etc.)

- Had to adjust to the time zone of the Body under assessment

- Not to the standard of an onsite assessment

- Because of the security control of the ExCB, the remote control function during assessment of IT tool does not work, which is beneficial for the efficiency of assessment.

- Mostly they met the requirements, but close up examination of test equipment, focussing on small object and also far-away objects was not good.

- In general, yes, however, there were more difficulties to ensure clear understanding of the questions and responses for the audits conducted for Chinese bodies.

Question 7: Using a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being easy and 10 difficult, how difficult was the planning process for the assessment considering time zones and time allocated for each of the remote re-assessment or surveillance interactions?

- **Rating 2** = 3 responses
- **Rating 4** = 1 response
- **Rating 5** = 3 responses
- **Rating 6** = 1 response
- *Rating 1 and 9** = 1 response (see comments)
- *Rating 3 and 6** = 1 response (see comments)

Comments:

- 3 hours time difference, so easy to manage
- 4 hours time difference, no issues
- Sure, had to adjust for the time zone sometimes (working during night, but this is something only flat earthers could avoid when working remotely 😊)
- Similar amount of work on planning was required for a remote assessment as that for a face to face, especially for initial assessment for an applicant body
- Have always been able to find a time slot that is suitable for all parties provided shorter sessions are accepted
- *1 for the actual planning as I always use the time zone of the party to be assessed. 9 for the impact on other parties such as the assessors and ATF associated ExTL personnel.
- *3 for planning, 6 for execution
- The planning process was not difficult due to the fact that the biggest time difference was 2 hours but I found that we need more time to conduct the assessment correctly.
- The planning process took considerably more time for audits under IECEx OD 060, so I would give it a 5.

Question 8: What do you recommend the maximum or ideal remote re-assessment session and surveillance assessment duration in hours per session, considering the assessment may require numerous sessions to complete? (Green text denotes a clear preference)

- 3 hours = 2
- **4 hours = 7**
- 5-6 hours per session is helpful for completion = 1
- 6 – 8 hours with lunch = 1
- Approx. 8 hours with appropriate breaks = 1
- Multiple 2-3 hrs sessions are better = 1

Comments:
- Not more than 4 hours. (with comfort breaks)
- 4 hour, but if required 6 hour max. If more time required, split sessions
- Opportunities to reduce time, example do the close out meeting the next morning (their time). Then the reports can be prepared in a time suitable for the assessor. Use online process to follow up where there have been a lot of issues raised. This session can be shorter. So, there is no ideal duration. It needs to be flexible to meet the preferences of all parties involved.
- 3 hours per session, although 2 is the limit when focus becomes difficult

Question 9: How many remote assessments did you perform or were involved with under each of the IECEx Schemes? Specify against each type:

- **Initial** = 9
- **Surveillance** = 9
- **Re-assessment** = 17
- **Mid-term assessment** = 9
- **Scope extension** = 11 (most combined with above)

(note if combined with one of the above)

- *Pre-assessment* = 2

Other: 1 as a body being peer re-assessment

Question 10: Which types of assessments and re-assessments could be managed remotely when pandemic restrictions are lifted and international resumes? (click the appropriate boxes)

	Not recommended	Recommended (remote) post OD 060	Results Summary (Green Text denotes a clear preference)
Applicant ExCBs (all schemes)	☐	☐	Not recommended = 8 Recommended = 3
Applicant ExTLs and ATFs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 10 Recommended = 1 (see note)
Re-assessments of Equipment Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 6 Recommended = 6
Re-assessment of ExTLs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 7 Recommended = 4 (see notes)
Surveillance of Equipment Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 2 (see comment) Recommended = 10
Surveillance of ExTLs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 3 Recommended = 8
Mid-Term assessments for Equipment Scheme, ExCB and ExTLs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 2 Recommended = 10
Re-assessment of the Certified Services Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 7 Recommended = 4
Surveillance of the Certified Services Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 1 (see comment) Recommended = 10
Re-assessment of the Personnel Competencies Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 7 Recommended = 2
Surveillance of the Personnel Competencies Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	Not recommended = 2 (see comments) Recommended = 8

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Comments from question 10

Applicant ExCBs (all schemes):

- From my understanding and experience I recommend that all initial and reassessment to be performed in person. They are longer than a surveillance or mid-term and this is a way to gain the trust and really see the structure and people.

- Not recommended, physical presence cannot be replaced with virtual

- Scheme dependent

- I would recommend that they have national accreditation for ISO/IEC 17065 if remote assessment were to be considered

Applicant ExTLs and ATFs:

- It is also recommended only if the applicant holds national accreditation with enough experience in Ex.

- Strongly not recommended, cannot be done right if not in position to check, feel the laboratory rooms, equip, settings, read small letters, explore environment

- Recommend that remote assessment is used as a tool BUT at least 1 of the assessors should visit the TL, the scope of this site visit can be determined after the remote component of the assessment has been completed

- I would recommend that they have national accreditation for ISO/IEC 17065 if remote assessment were to be considered

Re-assessments of Equip Scheme ExCBs:

- Would not recommend, physical presence cannot be replaced with virtual

Re-assessment of ExTLs:

- Strongly not recommended, cannot be done right

- Recommend that remote assessment is used as a tool BUT at least 1 of the assessors should visit the TL, the scope of this site visit can be determined after the remote component of the assessment has been completed

Surveillance of Equip Scheme ExCBs:

- Mostly paper check, can be done effectively during remote session

- Since there are four between re-assessments, perhaps at least one could be remote (For those who do Not have national accreditation)

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Comments from question 10 Continued - 1

Surveillance of ExTLs:

- Can be done, but would not recommend

Mid-term assessments for Equip Scheme, ExCB and ExTLs:

- Can be done, but would not recommend
- For surveillance and mid-term as this is short and considering the assessor already "know" the ExCB/ExTL, remote can be an option is agreed in advance for that.
- Where records can be readily made available electronically and where there have not been significant changes in the organisation.
- Probably the easiest to do remotely

Re-assessment of the Cert Service Scheme:

- Strongly not recommended, this would normally require witnessing at client's facility

Surveillance of the Cert Service Scheme:

- Mostly paper check, can be done remotely
- Since there are four between re-assessments, perhaps at least one could be remote (For those who do Not have national accreditation)

Re-assessment of the Personnel Comp Scheme ExCBs:

- Strongly not recommended, need to check, touch feel examination rooms, hubs and equip with installations setup, explore the env. (no applicable for units Ex001, 001

Surveillance of the Personnel Comp Scheme ExCBs:

- Mostly paper check, can be done remotely
- Since there are four between re-assessments, perhaps at least one could be remote. *Secretariat comment – not applicable, there are no annual surveillance assessments for the 05 Scheme (OD 501)*

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Question 11: List what worked well during the remote assessment/surveillance process?

Comments:

- See response to Q12
- The documentation that is required for the assessment was submitted in advance or in electronic format during the assessment. It was more easy to review the required documents.
- Videos and screen sharing helped a lot
- Checking documents using screen share
- Planning for multiple sessions
- Good camera at the Body's premises
- Use of Go-Pro or mobile camera to "walk thru" the organisation
- Requesting complete set of documents after each Document review to ensure that at the followup document reviews that each time we were in possession of the latest editions of all Procedures and Manuals of the Body
- Multiple sessions of a shorter period enables the body being assessed to address any issues between sessions
- None of the online interactions were as good as being there in person
- An understanding of the process required
- Communication with interlocutors (takes part in a dialogue or conversation) is working fine, if you have a good internet connection For ExCB using cloud system, document sharing also works fine
- There was no time pressure, no travel delays, lower expenses for the ExCB/ExTL
- Elimination of travel time & costs for short audits.

Question 12: List what were the challenges or difficulty of conducting a remote assessment/surveillance were?

Responses:

- Witness testing
- Document review if a non-English doc
- Long time looking into screen. People got bored and may cut video or audio
- Occasional issues with connection, quick discharging of battery on handheld device with camera, lack of good wi-fi signal in some parts of the laboratory, inability to see and feel the environment and equipment and to read small letters/symbols…
- Reviewing completed files where hand written notes are used by the CBs and TL
- Perhaps a trial of the internet connection ahead of a formal assessment is useful
- Very careful planning is key
- Although asking in advance to wear headphones for all, this was not observed resulting in poor sound quality. This in turn places a higher burden on the assessor to handle the higher level of concentration. Can be tiring. If required, difficult to assess equip. Balance of the 'remote' online time with the offline assessment is quite different from a remote assessment, due to assessor completing a review of the info offline. This can be hampered by lack of documentation and in correct cross referencing.
- Biggest difficulties were with witness testing. The loss of 'peripheral vision' was significant. It was not as time efficient as time is wasted waiting for things to happen. When on site additional things can fill the gaps, eg. Looking at calibrations labels or tips on thermocouples.
- Virtual jet lag

Responses:

- Not easy when there are two assessors – coordination can be a challenge

- Real visits can allow you to meet many of the relevant staff.   When remote, certain staff may not be available due to not working (furlough) or other reasons

- Not easy to 'finish' the assessment in the time period allocated. For example, if the assessment were scheduled for Monday to Friday of a particular week it is difficult to have it completed on time by the Friday (setting aside any issues requiring clearance). Overall it takes more time than initially expected.

- Different time zones

- When the files in the technical body are retained in paper version, it is challenge to both.
- There is only limited time when there are any un-expected questions.

- Supervision of the tests was at times very difficult due to the camera guidance and communication which is often poor in the test area.

- Lot of difficulty in following laboratory tests, in getting the feel if all the right parameters were being measured at the right spots on the test equipment. Language barriers often meant that the focus on the test was lost.

- Balancing the audit with my "regular" job because I was not out of office. Conducting audits very early and very late was not ideal for work-life balance or alertness.

Question 13: Do you have any suggestions for improvements that you would like to share with ExAG?

- Photo translation software is very useful

- Not to arrange a single assessment activity for too long

- Make a detailed assessment plan session by session

- Take the vaccine (full dose) and fly, otherwise kindly ask IEC to invest heavily into VR infrastructure to make remote work more realistic.

- Careful and solid planning

- A check of internet/video connection in advance

- Being in possession of the complete set of latest ed./versions of CB/TL documents and procedures

- Guidelines for the time estimates for an assessment would help

- Intro of revised F-003 and F-004 may require some fine tuning but are already showing benefit

- The plan and cost estimate would need to be more detailed so that the client fully understood the work involved

- Specify general recommendation working-days for different assessment.

- Remote assessment require that the documentation and records of ExTL and ExCB are managed in an electronic way. This is not always the case especially for the records.

- Where it is a matter of interviews of people and examination of documents, use remote assessments.

- Where laboratory equipment has to be used, use in-person during initial and reassessments, and remote for surveillance / midterm.

- Unrelated to IECEx OD060 directly, I think we could improve upon the current arrangement, which involves email back and forth. If we could set-up a OneDrive, Sharepoint site or similar with appropriate permissions, I think it would be an easier arrangement. This is being done occasionally on a case-by-case basis due to document size, but a consistent process for document sharing would be more streamlined.

Question 13: Continued - 1

Secretariat Note: comments below relate <u>to issues beyond the survey</u>

- The most concerning issue is conformity assessment of portable equipment with Ex i type of protection.

- Taking into account great number of issues to be solved I propose to start with the most critical issue – assessment principles of lithium batteries in portable apparatus for Zone 0.

- During some audits of CBs/TLs it has been noted that the manufacturers and experts interpret intrinsic safety requirement different from those which were taken into account by MT 60079-11 members during drafting of the standard.

- E.g. IEC 60079-11 cl 7.4.1 GENERAL reads as follows:

  – «Contrary to the batteries requirements of IEC 60079-0, cells and batteries are permitted to be connected in parallel in intrinsically safe apparatus provided that intrinsic safety is not impaired».

  – For the experts preparing the standard it is clear that such parallel connection is possible only under specific conditions, but for the others as there are no definite criteria to be met and no express prohibition in the standard, such connection is considered acceptable.

- Could you please suggest to proper way forward when during the audit it becomes evident that the provisions of the standard are incorrectly used, e.g.:

  - lithium batteries are connected in parallel and it could lead in future that one of the batteries could be overcharged by the other and lead to explosions, thought it is not prohibited by the standard to install them in this way, but provided that safety conditions shall fulfilled;

  - integrated circuits are considered as semiconductors and it is not taken into account that in clause 8 of IEC 60079-11 the integrated circuits are not considered as infallible components and integrated circuits are not just a set of the transistors but complex operating amplifies of the microchip that have several outputs. If the fault has been applied according to d) clause 7.6 IEC 60079-11 (- integrated circuits fail so that any combination of short and open circuits can exist between their external connections. Although any combination can be assumed, once that the fault has been applied, it cannot be changed, for example by application of a second fault. Under this fault situation any capacitance and inductance connected to the device shall be considered in their most onerous as a result of the applied fault) and if there are several outputs for each integrated circuits, different combination of the faults can be applied. Even three integrated circuits can be failed in such a way that they will stop to limit the current.

Question 13: Continued - 2

Secretariat Note: comments below relate <u>to issues beyond the survey</u>

- During remote assessment as well as during usual assessments it might be revealed by the assessor, that the requirements of the standard are interpreted not in proper way.

- I would like to propose to consider within ExAG a possibility to address such issues and prepare proposals for draft EXTAG or ISH to ensure consistency and common approach by Assessors, ExCB and manufacturers.

- I propose to discuss the following list of issues within ExAG and then to submit to ExTAG draft decision sheet. The following questions are proposed to be discussed within IEC experts, ExCB representatives:

  - Is it permitted according to IEC 60079-11 to have parallel connection of lithium elements without the use of the protective diodes that prevents discharging elements on each other and without compliance the limitations on the maximum current specified by the manufacturers of these elements for ia level of protection?

  - Is it reasonable to test lithium elements with internal protective elements according to IEC 60079-11 for ia level of protection?

  - It is sufficient to accept the declaration of conformity of the lithium batteries to the requirements of IEC 62133 without the submission of the test reports carried out by the accepted body? Is it sufficient and essential to have such a declaration to apply the parallel connected lithium elements in the intrinsically safe apparatus without the use the additional protective elements from reverse current and short-circuit current?

  - Is it sufficient to have the protection of electrical contacts, that are not declared as intrinsically safe ones, by means of the cap with at least IP 54 in the intrinsically safe apparatus for Group I level Ma?

  - Is it possible to consider the failure of the integrated circuit (not package) as the countable fault under specific conditions? There is no question about the risk related with the integrated circuit. The concern is in the loss of their functional properties. What requirements shall be applied to integral circuits to operate within their control functions?

Question 14: Although the cost of air travel was nil, the remote assessment process may have introduced other tasks that required additional hours to complete the assessment. Please list the additional tasks and an estimate re-assessment time for various scenarios when conducting a remote re-assessment versus a face to face re-assessment?

- May need additional hours for detailed planning and prep
- As I conducted just one assessment I haven't felt any necessity
- Pre-assessment: Documentation review that was normally reviewed on site needs to be revised in advance in the remote mode.

  - Post-assessment: Documentation that was normally prepared and delivery to ExCB/ExTL before departure now needs to be considered as post-assessment.

  - As I just performed the mid-term assessment in a ExCB I will limit my experience into this.

- In average, one to two working days in addition to "normal", mostly to be used for communication with applicant, exchange of documents, photos, videos and to cover interruptions in communication…

- Assessment Planning – around 25% additional time

- Careful document review ahead of the assessment – around 25% additional time as during face to face assessments   some of the review can be done with the ExCB/ExTL

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Question 14: Although the cost of air travel was nil, the remote assessment process may have introduced other tasks that required additional hours to complete the assessment. Please list the additional tasks and an estimate re-assessment time for various scenarios when conducting a remote re-assessment versus a face to face re-assessment? Continued - 1

- Found that the off line time can increase by as much as 50% while the reduction in remote time reduces by only 25%.

- More work is required on review of documentation beforehand to make assessment run more smoothly.

- Half day pre assessment to set the scene.

- During the assessment, some documents, including procedure, record and report will be sent by email separately. Additional hours are needed to review all those, half day is needed.

- The remote evaluation requires having documents in advance and a more important preparation. In my opinion, the preparation time for the assessment should be increased by at least 30%. It can also be useful to have time between sessions to prepare for the next session.

- Not faced any additional costs.

- It was necessary to provide lists of the certification documents that we wanted to see in advance so they could make them electronic (in some cases where they only had hard copies) and make arrangements to interview the necessary staff.

- An extra day was added for one of the reassessment audits that I conducted because of the remote aspect.

Question 15: Please provide any other comments or recommendation in regards to remote assessments?

Responses:

- **None = 3**

Comments:

- Conducted only one assessment, no other comments.

- IECEx system was built based on trust. We cannot think only about travel costs reduction or other stuff related because the remote assessment is a good tool but is less personal and less effective and consequently trust may be impacted. The remote is important but will take us out of the circle of trust. If we can use the remote for the mid-terms and/or surveillance we may be reducing the overall costs within 5 years cycle but during the in-person initial and reassessment we will be able to keep and build this important point related to IECEx.

- It is very clear now remote is the future, although most of us would like to do it old fashion way. Currently, the technology that is commonly available to majority of us, is not on the development level to provide smooth realistic experience, but is reasonable to expect soon it will be… I would recommend to keep an eye on the development of VR tools, but to keep our assessments real as long as possible.

- Having learnt how to handle remote assessments coupled with the global acceptance of use of remote meeting tools like gotomeeting/zoom/webex/Teams etc, IECEx must cater for remote assessments as part of the overall tool box of assessments to ensure time and costs efficiencies for all concerned post COVID-19.

- From my point of view the sound issue is the top priority

- Remote assessments give you more opportunity to examine reports and records in detail. Of course the opportunity to look sideways in a lab tour are very much reduced.

- Make sure the organisation sets up effective video conference facility and can point the camera where you want it.

Question 15: Please provide any other comments or recommendation in regards to remote assessments? Continued - 1

- Make sure there is a good way of transferring documents, especially when large files are involved.

- Remote assessments allow a more detailed look at documents being reviewed. This makes the process superior to in-person audits.

- I think the most valuable tool of remote assessments after restrictions are removed will be to use them for follow up where a lot of issues are raised at an assessment, rather than schedule another onsite assessment. They may also become a more common feature of mid-term assessments.

- We should also not just look at the success of an assessment from an IECEx point of view. In addition to providing acceptance and ongoing acceptance, assessments should be a value way for bodies to improve their operations through interaction with the assessors. A lot of this occurs outside the formal assessment process. This is unlikely to occur with time-focussed remote assessments. So the wishes of the body also need to be taken into account. I have had several bodies say they are looking forward to me attending in person, even thought the remote assessment has delivered the required outcomes.

Results Summary

Q1 – Secretariat information provided is sufficient

Q2 – Information provided did assist the Assessor

Q3 – Teams is the standout IT tool for remote assessments

Q4 – Assessor or ExCB/ExTL picked Teams as the preferred IT tool

Q5 – IT tools were not region specific

Q6 – IT tools for remote assessments provided effective comms but refer to comments

Q7 – Planning for a remote assessment – easy,

    Execution – moderate to hard, refer to comments

Q8 – Ideal remote re-assessment session = 4 hours preference, refer to comments

Q9 – 45 total remote assessments with 11 scope extensions

Q10 –

Remote Not recommended	Recommended
Applicant ExCBs (all schemes)	Surv. ExCBs
Applicant ExTLs and ATFs	Surv. ExTLs
Re-assessment ExTLs	Mid-term ExCBs & ExTLs
Re-assessment Cert Services Scheme	Surv. Cert Services Sch
Re-assessment Personnel Scheme	Surv. Personnel Sch
Re- assessment of ExCBs – split 6 recommended and 6 not recommended	

Q11 to Q13 - Comments and suggestions in regards to challenges, recommendations and improvements as per slides 12 to 17

Q14 – Remote Assessment duration vs. face to face - responses varied as per slide 18 & 19 – could be better defined for inclusion of remote assessments in OD 032 (ExAG)

Q15 – Other comments in regards to recommendations remote assessments - see slide 20 & 21

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Thank you!

ANNEX A

IECEx Remote Assessment Survey
IECEx Remote Assessment as per OD 060 - Lessons Learned

IECEx Remote Peer Assessment were adopted in 2020 by the IECEx as per OD 060 as a result of the extraordinary circumstances related to international travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Officers of ExAG Convenor, Dr Jim Munro and Ms Katy Holdredge, invite feedback from Assessors who have participated in remote assessments according to OD 060. The remote assessment challenges have been successfully undertaken by the IECEx Assessors with good cooperation with the ExCBs and ExTLs over the past year. However, this presents an opportunity to learn and share the experiences from our panel of IECEx Assessors.

The objective of this survey is to understand the benefits as well as the challenges when preparing and undertaking remote assessments and this will provide important information on what worked well and what difficulties were encountered. The feedback from this survey will assist ExAG to make recommendations moving forward, both for situations of extraordinary circumstances and when international travel resumes.

Please provide your feedback to the following questions.

1. **Were you provided with sufficient information from the IECEx Secretariat during the preparation of the peer assessment?** *Yes or No and provide any comments if applicable.*

2. **Did this information assist the Assessor during their preparation and the undertaking of the re-assessment or surveillance assessment?**

3. **What IT tools were used during the remote assessments? (Zoom, GoToMeeting etc?)**

4. **Who selected the IT tools to be used, was it the Assessor or the ExCB/ExTL?**

5. **Were these IT tools region specific or required due to regional restrictions?**

6. **Did the IT tools you had available to you to conduct a remote assessment meet the requirements to effectively communicate and interact with ExCB/ExTL or other IECEx scheme re-assessments?**

7. **Using a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being easy and 10 difficult, how difficult was the planning process for the assessment considering time zones and time allocated for each of the remote re-assessment or surveillance interactions?**

8. **What do you recommend the maximum or ideal remote re-assessment session and surveillance assessment duration in hours per session, considering the assessment may require numerous sessions to complete?**

9. **How many remote assessments did you perform or were involved with under each of the IECEx Schemes? Specify against each type:**

   Initial

   Surveillance

   Re-assessment

   Mid-term assessment

   Scope extension (note if combined with one of the above)

10. **Which types of assessments and re-assessments could be managed remotely when pandemic restrictions are lifted and international resumes?** *(click the appropriate boxes)*

	Not recommended	Recommended (remote) post OD 060	Comments
Applicant ExCBs (all schemes)	☐	☐	
Applicant ExTLs and ATFs	☐	☐	
Re-assessments of Equipment Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	
Re-assessment of ExTLs	☐	☐	
Surveillance of Equipment Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	
Surveillance of ExTLs	☐	☐	

Mid-Term assessments for Equipment Scheme, ExCB and ExTLs	☐	☐	
Re-assessment of the Certified Services Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	
Surveillance of the Certified Services Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	
Re-assessment of the Personnel Competencies Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	
Surveillance of the Personnel Competencies Scheme ExCBs	☐	☐	

11. List what worked well during the remote assessment/surveillance process?

12. List what were the challenges or difficulty of conducting a remote assessment/surveillance were?

13. Do you have any suggestions for improvements that you would like to share with ExAG?

14. Although the cost of air travel was nil, the remote assessment process may have introduced other tasks that required additional hours to complete the assessment. Please list the additional tasks and an estimate re-assessment time for various scenarios when conducting a remote re-assessment versus a face to face re-assessment?

15. Please provide any other comments or recommendation in regards to remote assessments?