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

**TITLE: Report from the IECEx ExAG Working Group April 2022 Meeting**

**Circulation to: Members of the IECEx Management Committee, ExMC**

**INTRODUCTION**

This document contains a report from the IECEx ExAG Working Group following their 5 April 2022 Meeting held as an online meeting.

The following are the ExAG Recommendations to the ExMC arising from the above meeting and subsequent actions:

**Recommendation 1**

That ExMC approve the documents (separately circulated as ExMC/1863/DV and ExMC 1864/DV) for conversion of the mid-term assessment report and checklist to forms.

**Recommendation 2**

That the ExMC note the approval of Hong Zhao from P R China as an assessor since the last meeting of ExMC.

**IECEx Secretariat**

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**INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION**

**IEC SYSTEM FOR CERTIFICATION TO STANDARDS RELATING TO EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES (IECEx SYSTEM)**

**IECEx Assessment Group (ExAG)**

 **MEETING REPORT FOR MEETING #4**

**Online**

**Tuesday, 5 April 2022 commencing at 1000 UTC**

**Planned duration is four hours**

**Attendance per membership Annex A with following variations:**

**Apologies**

Ron Webb

Thierry Houeix

**Additional attendees**

Mark Amos IECEx Secretariat

Steve Allan IECQ Secretariat

Paul Meanwell, Chair of ExMC, expressed an interest in being an observer but had a conflicting appointment.

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| **Item** | **Description**  | **Documents** |
|  | **Opening and welcome to the fourth meeting of ExAG****Convenor:** Jim Munro**Deputy Convenor:** Katy HoldredgeSee Annex A for members. There has been one change to the membership since the last meeting. As Marino Kelava has been appointed as a lead assessor, he automatically becomes a member of ExAG. |  |
|  | **Approval of the agenda**The agenda was approved with one additional item in other business requested by Katy. |  |
|  | **Report of last meeting of ExAG**The report of the last meeting was issued, and a slightly modified form of that report was provided to ExMC. A PowerPoint presentation was used to present the report. An action list arising from the above meeting has been prepared and provided separately.**Action 2022/1**Convenors together with Secretariat to look at website having information regarding roles assigned, eg for IECEx02, IECEx03 etc. This will reduce the amount of unnecessary public information. Secretariat to maintain updated list of assessor competencies.John Allen – ExSFC also involved together with ExAG regarding witnessing of ExCBs doing audits. There is a potential issue with assessors having the competencies to do this witness assessing.**Action 2022/2**ExSFC to be invited to run a dedicated training session for IECEx03 incorporating ongoing guidance for assessors. **Action 2022/3**ExSFC to be invited to submit information for inclusion in IECEx OD 003-1, and other documents, if relevant, to address assessor competencies for IECEx03.  | ExMC-1727-RM-ExAG-2021-JM\_ExAG reportAction list  |
| 1.
 | **Terms of Reference and Responsibilities**Terms of reference (from IECEx 06) are shown in Annex B.It was agreed at previous meetings that at some stage ExAG may recommend some modification to the terms of reference. There are only couple of minor items outstanding that might form the basis for revision. Members to advise if they would like to start the process now or wait for more proposed changes.NotesCAB will be involved in endorsing any changes to IECEx 06. **Action 2022/4**Revision of IECEx 06 to be deferred to a later meeting when more changes to IECEx 06 have been identified. Jim Munro to include the ongoing collection of possible changes in the report of this meeting.NOTE Ongoing possible changes have been added to Annex B of this report • | IECEx 06 - IECEx Assessment Group (ExAG) – Membership and Terms of Reference |
|  | **Last meeting of ExMC**The following are extracts from the relevant decisions from ExMC:**7.2 IECEx Maintenance and Consultative Group for matters relating to the IECEx Assessment of ExCBs and ExTLs across all IECEx Schemes – Report from ExAG****7.2.1 Report from ExAG Convener****Decision 2021/11**The meeting accepted a report from the ExAG Convenor, Dr Munro as circulated as ExMC/1727/RM and, via**Decision 2021/12**approved the update of IECEx Forms as proposed and circulated as ExMC/1737/DV, ExMC/1738/DV, ExMC/1739/DV and ExMC/1736/DV (with account taken of the US NC comments in ExMC/1754/CD).**Action 2022/5**IECEx Secretariat to investigate option of issuing the form for declaring national differences as an F form. **Action 2022/6**When form for declaring national differences as an F form, form F-008 will need to be revised to include reference to the new form. Katy to progress.**7.2.2 Re-Appointment of ExAG Convener and Deputy Convener****Decision 2021/13**In the absence of other nominees, members approved the incumbent officers• Dr Jim Munro, ExAG Convener• Ms Katy Holdredge, ExAG Deputy Convenerto continue in these positions for a second term of three years commencing on 1st January 2022. Noted by members. | ExMC decisions |
|  | **Outstanding actions from the last meeting of ExAG**Action list to be discussed.The action list was reviewed with following actions occurring (action numbers from last meeting retained):**2021/7** Outcomes from remote assessment training will be used to form basis for new chapter for assessment guide (responsible person to be nominated later). Jim Munro nominated at meeting April 22. See Action 2022/8 below.**2021/8**Consideration to be given to including information about documents needed in English for remote assessment in assessment guide when it is next revised (see also Action 6 above).Jim Munro nominated at meeting April 22. To be done as part of 2022/8 below.**2021/12**Mike Roy and ExAG officers to investigate options for providing information on assessor competencies. See Action 2022/6 below.**Action 2022/6** Addressing action 2021/12 from previous meeting “Mike Roy and ExAG officers to investigate options for providing information on assessor competencies”. Look at website having information regarding roles assigned eg for IECEx02, IECEx03 etc. This will reduce the amount of unnecessary public information. Secretariat to maintain updated list of assessor competencies.Annex C contains the status of actions by ExAG from previous meeting. | Action list  |
|  | **Training**There is an action from the last meeting that needs progressing, ie 2021/5 IECEx Secretariat is requested to consider training options in conjunction with Convenor of ExAG to be put forward for consideration at ExMC.The Secretariat and Jim Munro will set up a meeting to get this moving. The meeting could also provide guidance to ExSFC on an appropriate format for their training. The meeting could also look at the need to make assessor training more targeted.Chris – some training on use of Word and formatting could be helpful. Also, feedback to assessors on expectations for the reports. This might be directed at lead assessors.Discussion about role for assessor or lead assessor mentors. Not clear if there is a need to implement anything at present.Mark – assessors should be checking the bodies are using latest IECEx documentation, eg Rules, ODs and scheme decisions. Also, whether they are checking latest editions of standards and whether they need to be in their scope, eg ExFSC – need scopes updated to Edition 4.0 of IEC 60079-19.Chris – documentation control should also look at control of external documents, not just internal documents. **Action 2022/7**Secretariat to provide to Jim Munro issues found when checking reports that could be included as guidance to assessors in F-003 and then Jim to produce a new draft of that form.  | Action list  |
|  | **Management of extraordinary circumstances**Lessons learnt and next steps for remote assessments.**Action 2022/8**Jim to draft a revision of OD 032 guidance on assessments to address remote assessments more comprehensively than at present, drawing on information in the workshop presentation. This may end up as an annex because of the size of the information. OD 003-2 may also need some revision to incorporate appropriate reference to remote assessments.Chris mentioned he will be raising with the Executive the need to make provision for the use of OD 060 up to the end of 2022. ExAG supported this. | Training presentation from last year’s meetings |
|  | **Revised report forms for mid-term assessment**See proposed revisions to OD 204 and OD 205 to turn them into F forms.Forms discussed and changes essentially agreed but some further discussion is needed offline on the report and the checklist needs to end up as one document. Final versions will be circulated to ExAG members before submitting for vote by ExMC.The meeting noted that OD 003-2 will need revision to refer to the revised forms and only refer to the checklist form, rather than repeat the checklist in the OD. | See documents circulated separately. |
|  | **Assessor applications** 1. Currently applications for assessor that are judged worthy of approving are submitted for voting by ExAG along with a spreadsheet showing how they meet the criteria. However, the process for dealing with applications that do not appear to meet criteria is not clear.
2. In the last assessor ballot, we had one no note, one abstention and five who did not vote.

For discussion.1. Agreed that applications should meet all criteria before being submitted to vote. However, ExAG can be involved in discussion based on the review by Jim and Katy.

**Action 2022/9**Jim to provide some guidance regarding providing NO and ABSTENTION votes for assessor application voting by ExAG. | ExAG/010/RV |
|  | **Technical capability documents**  Katy to report on any developments.Katy said there will be some changes coming. |  |
|  | **Report on feedback forms on assessments** At an earlier meeting it was agreed this should be a standing agenda item. Chris Agius to report.Forms now going out. Positive experiences reported. **Action 2022/10**Report to be provided by Chris Agius for assessment feedback forms at next meeting. |  |
|  | **Changing of lead assessors for bodies**At the last meeting, Xu Jianping suggested consideration be given to changing lead assessors for bodies more often. Due to lack of time, it was agreed to include this as an agenda item at a later meeting. For discussion.Xu – opportunity for bodies to experience different assessors, particularly at re-assessments. Chris – need to ensure body is not seen to be picking assessor.Support shown for this approach. **Action 2022/11**Secretariat to consider changing lead assessors when assigning assessors for later assessments. OD 003-2 to include something on this at next revision. |  |
|  | **Use of assessors from own country**There has been a recent case of an assessor from their own country being used. Should we have clearer rules? Chris – extenuating circumstances and making use of OD 060. So not creating precedent. Normally would use assessors from different country.Katy noted that we did make exemption already for mid-term in OD.  |  |
|  | **Attendance at assessor training?** 1. What should be done about assessors who have not attended training in recent years?
2. Who can attend assessor training? A possible list is:
	1. Accepted assessors
	2. Applicant assessors
	3. Those considering applying to become an assessor
	4. Members of IECEx Executive
	5. Members of IECEx Secretariat
	6. Members of ExAG
	7. Others only by agreement of the Convenor of ExAG

**Action 2022/12**Secretariat to periodically remind assessors of their need to attend assessor training and if not resolved, to show cause why they should remain as an assessor. |  |
|  | **Special surveillance visits**The following recommendation was added to a recent report by the Secretariat:Based on this assessment and consultation with the Secretariat and in accordance with OD 003-2, it is further recommended that a special surveillance assessment be conducted 1 year from acceptance. Following a successful result of this special assessment, then JS Hamilton would revert to the usual 5 years re-assessment intervalWhere should we document this approach to ensure it is applied consistently?Katy – standardised wording? Ajay – assessment may well be able to be done remotely, for example examining projects that have been done.**Action 2022/13**Jim to draft guidance in F-003 on special surveillance visits for consideration by ExAG.  |  |
|  | **Any other business****Action 2022/14**Katy to draft some information in relation to possible decision sheets for ExAG. |  |
|  | **Next Meeting**To be advised – probably next year unless issues arise. |  |
|  | **Close of Meeting**  |  |

**Annex A**

**Members of ExAG**

**Membership of ExAG as defined by IECEx06**

**4.3 Membership**

The ExAG shall comprise Lead Assessors plus up to fifteen (15) experts nominated by IECEx Member Bodies and appointed by the ExMC. The ExMC shall ensure that a balance of interest across all IECEx Schemes is maintained.

As start up for the Group, members of previous ExMC WG4 that fit this criteria and wish to continue shall comprise part of the membership.

**Membership of ExAG at 30 March 2022 (with apologies for meeting noted)**

**Convenors:**

Dr Jim Munro (Convenor)

Ms Katy Holdredge (Deputy Convenor)

**Secretariat:**

Mr Chris Agius

**Lead assessors (in addition to those above who are all lead assessors):**

Mr Ajay Maira

Mr Ralph Wigg

Prof Xu Jianping

Mr Thierry Houeix

Mr Bernard Piquette

Mr Ronald Webb

Mr Marino Kelava

**Other members:**

Dr Alexander Zalogin – ExMCWG4

Mr Michel Brénon - ExMCWG4

Mr Klauspeter Graffi - ExMCWG4

Mr John Allen – ExMCWG4

Mr Julien Gauthier – ExMCWG4

Ms Yulia Tikhonenko – RU nominee

TOTAL: 16

**Annex B**

**Terms of Reference and Responsibilities of ExAG**

Terms of reference (from IECEx 06):

To act as the dedicated IECEx Maintenance and Consultative Group for matters relating to the IECEx Assessment of ExCBs and ExTLs across all IECEx Schemes

Responsibilities:

Responsibilities as directed by the ExMC include but are not limited to the following:

* Ensure on-going alignment with the Peer Assessment fundamentals of CAB (reference is CAB Policy documents, eg IEC CAB-P02)
* Develop and maintain criteria for Assessors and Lead Assessors in consultation with the Scheme Committees
* Review and approval of assessor applications for all schemes, with newly appointed assessors to be reported to ExMC for noting
* Periodic review of existing pool of assessors for all schemes
* Maintenance of Assessment Procedures for all IECEx Schemes.
* Maintenance of report forms and records used in assessments
* Maintenance of IECEx Assessors' Guide(s) – Note that *“IECEx Assessors’ Guide”* is now *"Guidelines and Information for IECEx Assessments"*
* Development and delivery of assessor training
* Provide a consultative forum for recommendations on issues found during assessments
* Development of common interpretations, for example for ISO/IEC 17025
* Maintenance of checklists such as those for ISO/IEC 17024, 17025 and 17065

**Potential future changes to IECEx 06**

The following two potential changes have been identified:

1. “To act as the dedicated IECEx Maintenance and Consultative Group for matters relating to the IECEx Assessment of ExCBs, ~~and~~ ExTLs and ATFs across all IECEx Schemes”
2. Add an additional dot point in responsibilities:

“• Other actions or roles as agreed by the ExMC“

**Annex C**

**Status of actions by ExAG from previous meeting**

All actions from the previous meeting are complete or carried forward as new actions in the current meeting.

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| **Action no** | **Source**  | **Action required** | **Responsibility** | **Progress**  | **Comments** |
| 2021/1 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | IECEx Secretariat is requested to convey our thanks to Heinz Berger for his long years as an assessor and lead assessor, plus other roles such as Treasurer. | IECEx Secretariat |  | Complete |
| 2021/2 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | ACTION 2021/02: ExAG Convenor to include revision of IECEx 06 on the agenda for a later meeting. | ExAG Convenor  |  | Complete. But agenda item will be carried forward. |
| 2021/3 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | ACTION 2021/03: Mark Amos to advise ExAG when the revised ODs are issued. | Mark Amos  | Complete | Complete |
| 2021/4 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Annex C 2019/09. It is recommended that referencing of ISO/IEC17021 in OD 316-4 is clarified to reflect the need to evaluate the resource management and competence of staff to conduct Quality management system assessments, according to Clause 7 and Annex A and Annex B of ISO/IEC 17021-1. | Secretariat? | Progressing separately, including in ExMC WG1 and so no need to deal with further in ExAG | Complete for ExAG |
| 2021/5 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | IECEx Secretariat is requested to consider training options in conjunction with Convenor of ExAG to be put forward for consideration at ExMC. | Secretariat and Jim Munro | No progress since last meeting. | To be considered in Agenda item 7 |
| 2021/6 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Jim Munro to draft initial presentation on a guide for remote assessments for circulation to others with experience for feedback and modification | Jim Munro | Done and used during annual meetings | Complete |
| 2021/7 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Outcomes from remote assessment training will be used to form basis for new chapter for assessment guide (responsible person to be nominated later) | Jim Munro nominated at meeting April 22  | To be done | Draft to be circulated to members by Jim Munro before being sent to ExMC for voting. See current meeting report for formal action going forward. |
| 2021/8 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Consideration to be given to including information about documents needed in English for remote assessment in assessment guide when it is next revised (see also Action 6 above) | Jim Munro nominated at meeting April 22  | To be done | To be done as part of 2021/7. See current meeting report for formal action going forward. |
| 2021/09 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Jim Munro to convey the proposals from the ExAG meeting to the convenors of ExTAGWG4 and ExTAGWG1. (This has been done) | Jim Munro |  | Complete |
| 2021/10 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Based on the feedback from the meeting, Jim Munro is to draft the application forms for the IECEx02 scheme for ExCB, ExTL and ATF and circulate them to members for ExAG for feedback before they are sent out for voting by ExMC. | Jim Munro |  | Complete |
| 2021/11 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Xu Jianping to draft suggested revised form. (Draft has been provided to Jim Munro) | Xu Jianping |  | Complete |
| 2021/12 | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 | Mike Roy and ExAG officers to investigate options for providing information on assessor competencies. | Mike Roy and ExAG officers | In progress | At meeting April 2022. Look at website have information regarding roles assigned eg for IECEx02, IECEx03 etc. This will reduce the amount of unnecessary public information. Secretariat to maintain updated list of assessor competencies.See current meeting report for formal action going forward. |
|  | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 to ExMC | **Recommendation 1:**That ExMC approve the documents (separately circulated) for initial applications for the IECEx02 Scheme for ExCB, ExTL and ATF.  | Approved | Two decisions taken effectively approving everything. | Complete |
|  | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 to ExMC | **Recommendation 2:**That ExMC approve ExAG revising the above documents when there are changes in editions of standards for use in the scope, without obtaining approval from ExMC. This would be consistent with the earlier approval given for the F-003 report form and would facilitate changes in all four documents to be made concurrently. | Approved  | Not specifically in the decisions. | Complete |
|  | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 to ExMC | **Recommendation 3:**That ExMC approve the revised application for change of scope form for IECEx02 Scheme (separately circulated). . | Approved |  | Complete |
|  | ExAG meeting 7 April 2021 to ExMC | **Recommendation 4:**That the ExMC note the approval of Giovanni Hummel Borges from Brazil as an assessor since the last meeting of ExMC. | Noted |  | Complete |