**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 2 May 2023 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 the ExMC note the approval by ExAG of the following as assessors since the last meeting of ExMC:

1) Dr Villalan Ramasamy, Malaysia, for the IECEx03 Scheme

2) Mr Kevin Wolf, USA, for the IECEx02 Scheme

**Recommendation 2**

That ExMC approve the document (separately circulated as ExMC/1956/DV) for revision of IECEx 06, Edition 1.0 IECEx Assessment Group (ExAG) – Membership and Terms of Reference

The following documents have been subject to an initial revision by ExAG with further actions to follow. Once the revisions are finalised the documents will be sent to ExMC for voting via correspondence.

* Revision of OD 003-2 to take account of changes in mid-term and application forms and so other matters raised during the last ExTAG meeting.
* Revision of OD 032, the assessment guide, to take account of online assessment options and experience going forward after COVID.
* Revision of F-003 the ExCB/ExTL report to update standards for Service Facilities Scheme and to update issues of standards in Annex A

Some other documents may be revised to reflect the latest edition of standards and latest proficiency testing programs.

**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)**

**DRAFT MEETING AGENDA FOR MEETING #5**

**Online**

**Tuesday, 2 May 2023 commencing at 1100 UTC**

**Planned duration is four hours**

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| **Item** | **Description** | **Documents** |
|  | **Opening and welcome to the fifth meeting of ExAG**  **Convenor:** Jim Munro  **Deputy Convenor:** Katy Holdredge  See Annex A for members. There has been no change to members since the last meeting.  Apologies: Ron Webb, Ralph Wigg, Michel Brenon |  |
|  | **Approval of the agenda** |  |
|  | **Report of last meeting of ExAG**  The report of the last meeting was issued and provided to ExMC.  An action list arising from the above meeting has been prepared and provided separately. See Agenda Item 6 where this action list will be considered. | ExMC/1870/R - Report from ExAG  Action list Annex C |
|  | **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. The report of the last ExAG listed the items and they are included here in Annex B.  It was agreed to initiate a change to IECEx 06.  **Action 2023/1**: The meeting agreed to incorporate the changes to IECEx 06 as shown in Annex B of the agenda and present them for approval at the ExMC meeting in Edinburgh. Action: Secretariat. | IECEx 06 - IECEx Assessment Group (ExAG) – Membership and Terms of Reference |
|  | **Last meeting of ExMC held on 8 and 9 September 2022 remotely**  Extract from ExMC minutes of meeting that are relevant to ExTAG:  Dr Munro as ExAG Convenor presented his report highlighting the recommendations and activities. These included:   * Examination of documents used for midterm assessment – reports and checklists. These were previously ODs but now reformatted and changed to F (form) documents. * Processed one application for assessor (Hong Zhao – P R China). This is now approved by ExAG. * OD 003-2 now to be revised- related to the assessments and change of documents above. Will include some matters raised in ExTAG related to contracting. * OD 032 – Assessment Guide to be revised to address on-line assessments and experience gained – also reflecting changes with remote assessment as discussed earlier in the meeting. * Looking into provision of additional assessor training online.   The following are the decisions from ExMC held on 8 and 9 September 2022 remotely that are relevant to ExAG:  **Decision 2022/13**  The meeting accepted a report from the ExAG Convenor, Dr Munro as circulated as ExMC/1870/R, supported the ExAG Recommendation #2 regarding the appointment of Hong Zhao as an Assessor and, via  **Decision 2022/14**  The meeting approved the revision of IECEx OD 204 as circulated as ExMC/1863/DV.  **In favour:** AU, BR, CA, CH, CN, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, HR, HU, IL, IN, IR, IT, JP, KR, MY, NL, NO, PL, RO, RU, SA, SE, SG, SI, TR, UAE, USA, ZA  **Objections:** Nil  **Absent:** GR, NZ  **Abstaining:** Nil  **Decision 2022/15**  The meeting approved the revision of IECEx OD 205 as circulated as ExMC/1864/DV.  **In favour:** AU, BR, CA, CH, CN, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, HR, HU, IL, IN, IR, IT, JP, KR, MY, NL, NO, PL, RO, RU, SA, SE, SG, SI, TR, UAE, USA, ZA  **Objections:** Nil  **Absent:** GR, NZ  **Abstaining:** Nil  **Decision 2022/09**  The meeting agreed the following policy text prepared during the meeting:  *After 1 January 2023, the planning of Peer Assessments shall ensure that the Assessment Team assigned by the IECEx Secretariat conducts the audit in person unless otherwise provided for (for example, in an IECEx OD) or where the IECEx Lead Assessor determines that there are governmental sanctions, restrictions, advice or requirements that impinge such travel and informs the IECEx Secretariat of this determination.*  *After 1 January 2023, the planning of manufacturer/service facility audits shall ensure that the ExCB conducts the audits in person unless otherwise provided for (for example, in an IECEx OD) or if there are governmental sanctions, restrictions, advice or requirements that impinge such travel, in which case the ExCB shall record such situations for review at the next IECEx peer assessment. In case of doubt, the ExCB shall consult with the IECEx Secretariat.*  *The IECEx Secretariat shall monitor the issue of equity among the System (for example, to ensure that audit planning into the longer term is consistent with the spirit and intent of the above requirements.*  *Additionally, the ExAG and ExSFC are tasked to work on proposing additional guidelines for use of remote assessments of bodies and service facilities respectively and ExMC WG5 to work on updating OD 025 for the use of remote auditing of manufacturers. These proposals are to be first submitted for consideration by the Executive and then voting for approval to publish by correspondence by the ExMC.*  OD 060 has been revised to Edition 2.2 to incorporate the above decision.  F-012 – Xu Jianping suggests specific clauses to record observation. But there is an option to use the table summarising the certificates reviewed to include observations. | ExMC minutes  ExMC/1870/R  Forms F-012 and F-013 (published) |
|  | **Review of actions from the last meeting of ExAG and outstanding actions from previous meetings**  Action list to be discussed with some items to be addressed in agenda items below. | Action list Annex C |
|  | **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. | Action list Annex C  See action list. |
|  | **Possible revision to assessment report forms**  From Mark Amos:  May we add the following items to the agenda for next week’s ExAG meeting please .... this arose from the use of the latest F-003 by Marino in the assessment of an Applicant ExCB for the 03-4 Scheme ....  *Consideration to add “m” and “q” equipment to the table in Clause 1.6.4 of F-003 (so that the details of actual applications via ExMC/417C/Q (or its revision to a F-\*\*\* format if/when ExAG are able to prepare this in consultation with the ExSFC)) are reflected in assessment reports AND to add a NOTE explaining “m” and “q” are not applicable for applicant seeking acceptance for the 03-5 Scheme*  **Action 2023/6**: Mark to draft proposed change in F-003 regarding adding “m” and “q” equipment to the table in Clause 1.6.4 of F-003 and to add Unit Ex 011, also to discuss converting ExMC/417C/Q to an F form with ExSFC.  **Post meeting query by Jim Munro** – should forms ExMC/46M/Q the country application (possibly with list of standards in an Annex like F-008) and ExMC/570D/Q IECEx 05 ExCB Application Form also be converted to F forms?  *AND ALSO*  *Consideration to add* **Unit Ex 011 – Basic knowledge of the safety of hydrogen systems** *to the table in Clause 1.8 of F-003*  See above  Action item 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.  No additional action needed.  From Ralph:  He says he has a project to integrate ISO/IEC 17024 into F-003 & F-004. Will try to complete by mid-June.  It is unclear why he is proposing to do this. Mark to discuss with Ralph to clarify. (OD 505 and OD 507 are of relevance)  Action item 2022/13: Jim to draft guidance in F-003 on special surveillance visits for consideration by ExAG.  To be considered after Mark has made his proposed modifications.  Once modifications complete, F-003 to be circulated to ExAG for agreement before voting by ExMC. |  |
|  | **Revision of OD003-2 Assessment procedures for IECEx acceptance of applicant Ex Certification Bodies (ExCBs), Ex Testing Laboratories (ExTLs) and Additional Testing Facilities (ATFs) – Part 2: Assessment, surveillance assessment and re-assessment of ExCBs and ExTLs operating in the IECEx 02, IECEx Certified Equipment Scheme**  Action item 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.  Action item 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. |  |
|  | **Revision of OD 032 Guidelines and information for IECEx assessments**  Action item 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. |  |
|  | **Discussion regarding lead assessors and possible revision of OD 003-1**  Katy – request to discuss lead assessor appointment – Clause 11.2 of IECEx OD 003-1  **Action 2023/7**: Chris Agius to recommend wording for OD 003-1 based on current practice and taking account of IECEE approach in IECEE 02-3.  See also 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. | OD 003-1 |
|  | **Assessor applications**   * Approval of Dr Villalan Ramasamy * New application just received from Kevin Wolf |  |
|  | **Technical capability documents**  Katy to report on any developments.  Quite a bit of work has been done for new edition of TCD. |  |
|  | **Report on feedback forms on assessments**  At an earlier meeting it was agreed this should be a standing agenda item. Chris Agis to report.  Keep as agenda item. |  |
|  | **Assessor training**  Possible topics for training:   * From Katy - Propose to include Ed. 9.0 of TCD with a focus on IEC TS 60079-46 and the new hydrogen requirements. I assume it will be published by then, but, if not, we could use a draft. * Other suggestions?   Ajay to assist with hydrogen presentation.  Chris- focus on certification process  Katy – use of back office  Follow up on this agenda item from last meeting on 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   Mark noted the difficulties he has with people trying to attend this training simply out of interest. There was not clear resolution to ensuring the correct people attend, but noting the need for those considering becoming an assessor to attend. |  |
|  | **Any other business**   1. Ajay – Deployment of assessors    1. We have an intake of new assessors into the Assessors Group. Is that sufficient to meet the requirements of assessments?    2. Are the new assessors being sufficiently utilized?    3. Does the Assessors Group provide avenues to allow the new assessors to become more valuable by increasing their skills and experience?    4. Does the Assessors Group need to showcase their work to attract more applications?   Jim noted that assessor fees had not increased in many years so perhaps an increase is warranted. Chris noted that the Swiss France has increased in value in recent years and so there has been some effective increase. However, the lower assessor fee may impact on bodies proposing assessors, noting that only one or two new assessors are being accepted each year. It was agreed that this potentially sensitive topic be discussed in ExTAG first to gauge reactions from ExCBs/ExTLs.  **Action 2023/8**: Jim Munro to draft question of ExTAG about getting more assessment applications. Would raising fees help them consider putting forward assessors. |  |
|  | **Next Meeting**  May need meeting to discuss OD 032 and possibility OD 003-2 before ExMC meeting. Date to be advised. |  |
|  | **Close of Meeting**  The meeting was closed at approximately 1330 UTC. |  |

**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 28 April 2023**

**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**

**Progress on actions for ExAG**

Below is the status of actions from the last meeting and actions from earlier meetings that were not complete at the last meeting.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action no** | **Source** | **Action required** | **Responsibility** | **Progress** | **Comments** |
| 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 |
| 2021/7 | 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 circulated for discussion at this meeting. | To be considered in Agenda item 10  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 considered in Agenda item 10  To be done as part of 2021/7. See current meeting report for formal action going forward. |
| 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  **Action 2023/2**  Secretariat to consider options to make available information on an assessor’s competence to lead assessor, eg the application forms, F-007, containing the declared competencies. The aim is to avoid putting too much information on the website which could be an issue for privacy.  **Action 2023/3**  Katy and Jim to discuss with Secretariat to ensure what now appears is consistent with the latest approach, but not with the same amount of information. For example, the schemes that the assessor is deemed competent for should appear. | 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. |

| **Action no** | **Source** | **Action required** | **Responsibility** | **Progress** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022/1 | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | 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. | Jim Munro and Katy Holdredge | No progress to date  See proposed actions in 2021/12 above. |  |
| 2022/2 | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | ExSFC to be invited to run a dedicated training session for IECEx03 incorporating ongoing guidance for assessors | Not assigned |  | John Allen to advise  Suggested that training be aimed at the ExCB auditors rather than the IECEx assessors.  **Action 2023/4**: John Allen to prepare an initial specification for training of ExCB auditors rather the proposed training for assessors. |
| 2022/3 | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | 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. | Not assigned |  | John Allen/Ralph Wigg to advise  To be treated as an expansion of the above action. |
| 2022/4 | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | 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. |  | Added to meeting report. | See Agenda Item 4 |
| 2022/5 | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | IECEx Secretariat to investigate option of issuing the form for declaring national differences as an F form. | IECEx Secretariat | This subsequently became the following action in ExMC:  **Action 2022/5**  IECEx Secretariat to investigate option of issuing the form for declaring national differences as an F form. | Chris Agius or Mark Amos to advise  Considering doing as an online process. No further action needed by ExAG. |
| 2022/6a | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | 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. | Katy | Waiting on outcome of 2022/5 | See above |
| 2022/6b | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | 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. | Katy Holdredge |  | Katy Holdredge to advise.  See earlier. |
| 2022/7 | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | 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. | Secretariat | Not received. | Chris Agius or Mark Amos to advise  Also see agenda item 8  See agenda for possible item. No other issues identified. |
| 2022/8 | ExAG meeting 5 April 2022 | 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. | Jim Munro |  | See Agenda Items 9 and 10 |
| 2022/9 |  | Jim to provide some guidance regarding providing NO and ABSTENTION votes for assessor application voting by ExAG. | Jim Munro | It is suggested the following text be included as shown :  The system provides for votes of YES, No and ABSTAIN. For any of those cases it is possible to provide comments. (add to set 7)  All members of ExAG are encouraged to vote. If they are considering voting with NO or ABSTENTION, they are encouraged to first discuss their position with the Convenor to see if their concerns can be addressed. (add to voting form)  **Action 2023/5**: Secretariat in conjunction with Jim Munro to add guidance regarding NO and abstention votes to website and the voting form for new assessors. | For discussion in the ExAG meeting. |
| 2022/10 |  | Report to be provided by Chris Agius for assessment feedback forms at next meeting. | Chris Agius |  | Included in agenda item 14 |
| 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. | Secretariat |  | Retain for revision of OD003-2.  See Agenda item 10 |
| 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 | Secretariat |  | Secretariat to report  See Agenda item 15 |
| 2022/13 |  | Jim to draft guidance in F-003 on special surveillance visits for consideration by ExAG. | Jim Munro | . Waiting on next revision of F-003. | See Agenda item 8 |
| 2022/14 |  | Katy to draft some information in relation to possible decision sheets for ExAG. | Katy Holdredge | Discussed at ExAG meeting. It was clarified that the convenors of ExAG as members of the Executive can initiate ExTAG, ExSFC and ExPCC decision sheets which should address technical issues. Other types of issues requiring uniform application by assessors may be addressed in OD 032. | Katy to advise. |