

Editorial



Dear reader,

do you really believe that some day it could be possible to freely market explosion protected equipment anywhere in the world with a single approval? Could you also imagine the advantages that such a simplification would bring for users, the planning and engineering companies, and, last but not least, the manufacturers of such products? Or to put it another way: Do you have any idea how much, largely unnecessary, additional effort is caused by the still fragmented approval situation for explosion protected products?

Surveys at R. STAHL have shown that the conversion to the ATEX approvals made a few years ago cost approx. 3 million Euros, and the need for IECEx approvals for the active sales program a few years later cost more than 1 million Euros. A lot of money that can certainly not be offset by any adequate additional benefits in relation to safety and functionality.

For this reason the positive progress on the worldwide IECEx certification scheme over the past 5 years can only be welcomed. The costs mentioned above of around 1 million Euros are well invested if in the foreseeable future there will be a large number of countries in which these certificates are recognized without additional effort. Currently this is the situation in Australia and a few countries in the South-East Asian region. Positive signs of movement in this direction are coming from other countries. In Europe consideration is being given to the possibility of a future issue of the European ATEX directive 94/9/EC forming an integral part of the IECEx scheme; this process could be completed in a few years. The addition to the scheme for the inclusion of certification of repair workshops and the qualifications of individuals on explosion protection will bring a significant increase in safety as, in this way, aspects of explosion protection during operation, maintenance and repair will also be covered. We have prepared an extensive status report for you on the topic of the IECEx scheme (page 20). In this year's issue you will once again find a large number of interesting articles on the latest issues from standardization, technology and, of course, a few application reports.

We hope you have a good read

The editorial team

Front cover picture: the world famous Sydney Opera House; designed by the danish architect Jørn Utzon; it is a cosmopolitan and modern symbol of Australia. In explosion protection, Australia is trendsetter and promoter of international certification and standardization.

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