



The IECEx Personnel Competence Certificate

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It is a requirement of the European Union and the IEC that personnel working in potentially explosive atmospheres are competent. The industry is confronted with the challenge of having to prove this. One of the most rigorous ways to demonstrate competence is through the IECEx Personnel Competence Scheme, and with CSA-Sira having recently issued the 100th certificate, the programme is really gathering pace.

Developed by the IEC to meet demand from the oil and gas industries for a global competence standard, the IECEx Certificate of Personnel Competence (CoPC) provides companies with globally recognised certification that a person has the knowledge and skills necessary to implement international standards relating to equipment, services and personnel operating in potentially explosive atmospheres.

The IECEx CoPC initiative introduces an internationally-accepted scheme to certify competence of personnel working in potentially explosive atmospheres. Candidates are required to complete a rigorous application process, where work experience is assessed to demonstrate practical application of IEC standards in Hazardous Area applications, as well as complete knowledge examinations and practical demonstration of skills.

The Units

The scheme comprises 10 units of competence to meet the varied needs of different functions in this highly specialised area:

- Ex001 Apply basic principles of protection in explosive atmospheres
- Ex002 Perform classification of hazardous areas
- Ex003 Install explosion-protected equipment and wiring systems
- Ex004 Maintain equipment in explosive atmospheres
- Ex005 Overhaul and repair of explosion-protected equipment
- Ex006 Test electrical installations in or associated with explosive atmospheres
- Ex007 Perform visual & close inspection of electrical installations in or associated with explosive atmospheres
- Ex008 Perform detailed inspection of electrical installations in or associated with explosive atmospheres
- Ex009 Design electrical installations in or associated with explosive atmospheres
- Ex010 Perform audit inspection of electrical installations in or associated with explosive atmospheres

The Progress and Future of the Scheme

IECEx Certification Body, CSA-Sira, has recently issued its 100th certificate under the IECEx Competence of Personnel Scheme. This now puts the number of people certified under the Scheme to 144 in total, with 3 other IECEx CBs appointed under the scheme, between them certifying 44 people in addition to the 100 certified by Sira. (source: www.iecex.com, correct as of 21st November 2012).

CSA-Sira (a CSA Group company) has worked with the IEC and industry to progress the scheme since its inception in 2010, where CSA-Sira also issued the world's first IECEx competence certificate. Speaking about the milestone achievement, Bob Cooper, Director of the Scheme for CSA-Sira said:

"This achievement highlights the growth of the scheme since it was introduced in July 2010. We have particularly seen expansion of the scheme in 2012 and expect 2013 to

continue this trend as acceptance of the scheme increases across the globe. We believe that the scheme will soon become the world-wide benchmark for demonstrating competence of personnel, and is already the choice of some major players in this field"

"In June this year CSA-Sira was granted the full scope of assessment modules under the scheme, and this in turn will lead to many more people being certified in line with the various skills that mirror their job function in the field, such as installation and inspection of Ex equipment."

The benefits of the IECEx Personnel Competence Scheme

The scheme provides companies with independent proof that a person holding an IECEx Certificate of Personnel Competence has the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the International Ex Standards. This can be especially important for contracting staff, or for firms securing tenders.

Having a CoPC also brings a level of confidence to the individual certificate holder as they have been deemed competent to an International Standard, and have been certified as having the required skill and knowledge to carry out the relevant aspects of their role.

For further information, or to apply to become an IECEx Competent Person through the world's leading certification body, please contact Sira Test & Certification Ltd:

Email: info@siracertification.com or Tel: +44 (0) 01322 520500.

Training

Sira Consulting Ltd is recognised as a leading provider of hazardous area training and awareness seminars. Sira Consulting has launched a suite of training courses tailored to meet the learning objectives of the IECEx CoPC scheme, practical skills and best practice necessary for people working in or associated with Hazardous Areas.

For further information on scheduled courses, or to arrange a bespoke on-site training and competence programme, please contact Sira Consulting Ltd:

Email: training@siraconsulting.com or Tel: +44 (0) 1244 670900

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