

Improving safety of hazardous areas through certified personnel competence First IECEx Certificate of Personnel Competence in Australia

Geneva, Switzerland, 2011-11-14 – *Having Ex (explosive) equipment and the servicing of that equipment tested and certified is essential, as is the assessment and certification of competence of those individuals that install, repair and handle equipment in hazardous areas. Safety depends on it.*

Early in 2010 IECEx launched the new CoPC (IECEX Certificate of Personnel Competence Scheme), which provides companies with independent proof that a person has the qualifications and experience necessary to implement the International Ex Standards. This can be especially important for contracting staff.

A first in Australia

Sean Segond von Banchet, Managing Director of SvB ExTech, the company he founded in Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia, is the first Australian expert to be granted an international IECEx CoPC.

Sean officially received his Certificate from Ron Sinclair, Managing Director of Baseefa, one of the foundation IECEx Certification Bodies for the IECEx CoPC Scheme and a leading and internationally-recognized certification body for explosion-protected equipment. The ceremony took place during the IEC General Meeting held in October 2011 in Melbourne. Also present were Kerry McManama, IECEx Chairman, Chris Agius, IECEx Executive Secretary, Allan Ogden, DSEAR (Dangerous Substances And Explosive Atmospheres Assessments) & Service Facilities Manager, Baseefa, and Ralph Wigg, Chairman of the IECEx CoPC Committee.

Wide Ex area experience

To obtain his IECEx CoPC, Sean, who has worked in the Ex field since he began his career in 1979, had to undergo a series of knowledge tests and an assessment of qualifications and experience. The IECEx Personnel Competence Scheme uses several criteria to establish a person's level of competence when working in Ex industries and that person under assessment must be able to perform a number of tasks in or near explosive areas.

- apply basic principles of protection
- perform classification of hazardous areas
- design electrical installations
- install explosion-protected equipment and wiring systems
- test, maintain, overhaul and repair explosion-protected equipment
- perform visual, close or detailed inspection of electrical installations
- perform audit inspection of electrical installations

Safety in Ex areas is a must

Sean passed all assessments and tests with flying colours. His scope of competence, as recognized in the certificate, is the widest ever achieved by an applicant.

Asked what his motivation was in seeking the IECEx certification, Sean explained: "Safety has always been the trigger for me. Safety in Ex areas is non-negotiable. When equipment is not installed or repaired according to strict Ex standards, the outcome can be devastating. What may be tolerable in non-explosive atmospheres can directly lead to explosions that not only destroy property but cost human lives or cause severe injuries. One always assumes that danger lurks only in obvious places, such as the chemical, mining and oil and gas industries. But this assumption is incorrect. Industries with some of the highest explosive risks include sugar refineries, grain handling and storage silos or wood and metal saw mills."

A passport to the world

The international IECEX certificate is personal, non-transmittable and valid across international borders. Along with the certificate, IECEX also provides a wallet-sized identification card with photo for instant proof of certification. The IECEX CoPC gives independent proof that the person has the required qualifications and experience to work on, or repair, electrical equipment located in hazardous areas.

###

About IECEX

IECEX is the IEC Conformity Assessment System that operates the following international Certification Schemes dedicated to ensuring the safety of Equipment and Persons in areas where the risk of fire and/or explosions due to flammable gases, liquids and dusts may exist (Ex areas). Ex areas are part of almost all industries and not just limited to the obvious oil and gas and mining

- IECEX Certified Equipment Scheme
- IECEX Certified Service Facilities Scheme, eg Repair and Overhaul Workshops
- IECEX Certificate of Personnel Competence (CoPC)

Certificates issued under all of the IECEX Schemes are publicly available in a single location on the IECEX website, providing instant verification of any claims of certification.

IECEX covers the broad spectrum of devices, systems and services used in explosive environments, and verify their conformity to International Standards such as those prepared by IEC Technical Committee 31: Equipment for explosive atmospheres. Typical examples include interrupters, lamps, communication equipment and all kinds of instrumentation and rotating machines.

IECEX, in conjunction with the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) and ESMA (Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology) are hosting the 2012 IECEX International Conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 20-21 March 2012.

For further information contact: www.iecex.com

About SvB ExTech

SvB ExTech is one of the leading companies in electrical hazardous area compliance, inspections assessment and training.

The company offers electrical hazardous area services to a variety of markets from power stations to petrol stations, fuel facilities, mines, refineries, waste processing facilities, and LNG (liquefied natural gas) plants. It provides worldwide services to projects and plants involving potentially explosive atmospheres, and is competent with all international electrical hazardous area standards and directives.

For further information: <http://www.svbextech.com.au/>

For further information, please contact:

IEC Media Contact Gabriela Ehrlich Tel: +41 22 919 02 78 Mob: +41 79 600 56 72 Email: geh@iec.ch Skype: gabriela.ehrlich	IECEX Contact Chris Agius Tel: +61 2 8206 6940 Email: chris.agius@iecex.com
--	---