

IECEE – Electrical and electronic equipment

What is the IECEE?

The IECEE is a multilateral certification system based on standards prepared by the International Electrotechnical Commission. The acronym stands for IEC System for Conformity Testing and Certification of Electrical Equipment. Its members use the principle of mutual recognition (reciprocal acceptance) of test results for obtaining certification or approval at national level.

What does it do?

The IECEE makes international trade in electrical and electronic equipment easier and less costly by reducing technical barriers to trade. A typical example of a technical barrier is differing certification requirements in various countries. IEC International Standards and the IECEE help to eliminate these technical barriers because electrical equipment manufactured to IEC standards and tested within the IECEE system ensure the same high level of safety, no matter where these products are made and tested. Quality and performance are also built into these products because they are based on IEC standards.

Why should I be interested?

The IECEE can help you save both time and money, thus reducing overall manufacturing costs. Different certification requirements in various countries mean that manufacturers have to test their electrical equipment over and over each time they wish to enter a new export market. Each test takes time and costs money. Because the IECEE operates according to the principle of mutual recognition, type-testing only has to be done once.

What kind of equipment are we talking about?

There are 17 categories of electrical equipment covered by the IECEE:

- IT and office equipment
- Electronics, entertainment
- Household and similar equipment
- Lighting
- Measuring instruments
- Electrical equipment for medical use
- Installation accessories and connection devices

- Switches for appliances and automatic controls for electrical household appliances
- Portable tools
- Safety transformers and similar equipment
- Low voltage, high power switching equipment
- Installation protective equipment
- Capacitors as components
- Batteries
- Cables and Cords
- Photovoltaics
- EMC

You can find a full list of categories, products and the IEC standards that relate to them on the following webpage: www.iecee.org/cbscheme/html/cbstand.htm

How does it work?

Take the example of a personal computer manufactured in Japan. The manufacturer sends the PC to a Japanese certification body for a CB Test Certificate and, upon request, for NCB certification based on IEC standards.* The NCB laboratory tests the PC for conformity to IEC standards and issues a CB Test Certificate. Wishing to sell the PC in the USA, Brazil, and Germany, the manufacturer sends the certificate to an American, a Brazilian and a German NCB that are part of the IECEE. The Japanese and Brazilian bodies each issue their certification mark without testing the equipment because they recognize the Japanese NCB as one of their peers in the IECEE and have full confidence in the testing and assessment that has already been done. The Japanese manufacturer may now affix the national mark of conformity of the American, Brazilian and German bodies to the PC and is free to export it to these countries.

How do these bodies participate?

The IECEE is represented world-wide and designates the NCBs within each country that will be responsible for recognizing and issuing test reports and certificates. Membership in the IECEE is open to any certification body anywhere in the world. You can find a full list of IECEE members, NCBs and associated testing laboratories on the following webpage:

www.cbscheme.org/cbscheme/html/cbcntris.htm.

*CB stands for Certification Body, and NCB stands for National Certification Body. Within the IECEE, an NCB can have more than one testing laboratory. It is up to the NCB to choose the local laboratory best suited to test the equipment.

What if I'm in a country where the IECEE does not exist?

No problem at all. You are free to choose any NCB in the world to which to send your equipment for testing and certification.

How can I find out more?

Please visit the IECEE website at www.iecee.org

You may also contact the IECEE secretariat at the following co-ordinates:

Mr Pierre de Ruvo

Executive Secretary IECEE

IECEE

c/o IEC Central Office

3, Rue de Varembé

PO Box 131

1211 Geneva

Switzerland

Tel. +41 22 919 02 07

Fax. +41 22 919 03 00

E-mail: pro@iec.ch