



Industry Trade Association Surveys Members about Experience with NRTLs

Poquoson, VA, June, 2015 – For Immediate Release. **Survey reveals on-going issues with NRTL program managed by OSHA.** The members of the Measurement, Control & Automation Association responded recently to a short survey fielded by the Association with regard to their experience with standards used to test their products for hazardous locations as well as their experience with the acceptance of test data among Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratories (NRTLs) authorized by the OSHA department which manages the product testing and certification program for worker safety.

Many of the products produced by MCAA members are used in hazardous locations. Additionally, many are tested and certified for use in hazardous locations not just in the US but also around the world. The MCAA members noted that a very wide variety of standards are used with their products including ATEX, IECEx, FM, UL, and CSA standards as well as many from countries around the world including Canada, Russia, Brazil, Korea and the European Union.

MCAA also asked members whether they had experience with an NRTL refusing to accept the test reports from another NRTL for use in a new certification of the same product to the same hazardous area rating. The problem appears to be a common source of delay and cost among companies seeking the same safety scheme certification for the same product at multiple NRTLs. Lack of reciprocal treatment was noted between FM and CSA, and between UL and most other NRTLs. Respondents indicated that often they are told that the NRTL can *review* the data but still must rerun all the tests which saves neither money and, often importantly, time. Often there is no explanation for the refusal to accept the previous test data. One comment focused on the UL Panel Program which requires UL Listed parts to be used. UL claims this is reasonable because it is their program, their mark and they control the requirements. This requires the solution provider to get the component part tested by UL. The lack of reciprocal treatment of test data among NRTLs inevitably produces higher costs to the end user and makes the products less competitive in the global market and the duplicative effort has virtually no positive impact on the safety of products.

The Association plans to develop a Statement of Principles on key issues related to the product approval process and offer the NRTL companies an opportunity to provide their position and input on those issues. It should be noted that OSHA has floated the notion of separating the testing and the certification processes which would beg the question of acceptance of test data from other NRTLs.

MCAA exists to help the management teams of process and factory automation product and solution providers run and grow successful businesses by offering timely, unique and highly specialized resources acquired from shared management benchmarks where proprietary company information is secure. The Association marshals the resources of its members and speaks on behalf of the industry on issues of importance such as the OSHA-mandated NRTL testing and certification program. For more information, contact MCAA at mcaa@measure.org or 757-258-3100 and visit the website at www.measure.org.