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Reform of mandatory standards in electrical equipment industry and revision of GB 19517

China Electrical Equipment Industry Association (CEEIA) organized a seminar on the reform of mandatory standards in the electrical equipment industry and the revision of GB 19517 on 19-20 May 2015 in Beijing. Twelve representatives participated in the seminar. The Standardization Administration of the P.R.C. (SAC) highly values the revision of GB19517 National safety technical code for electric equipment, hoping the revision of which can provide an efficient and effective model for the reform of mandatory standards for the electrical equipment industry.

So far, SAC has temporarily paused the submission, approval and publishing of mandatory standards as well as other related work. SAC is also streamlining the volume and decreasing the funds for the submitted mandatory standards. In response to this, CEEIA put an emphasis on analyzing and researching on the generic safety requirements with a strict limit of content when cleaning up the mandatory standards. Lessons can be drawn from the National Electrical Code (NEC hereinafter) of the United States and the Low Voltage Directive of the European Commission in revising GB 19517. Additionally, the stability of the standardization system of the electrical equipment industry needs to be maintained, so does the mirroring system with IEC.

Most mandatory standards for the electrical equipment industry were transformed from IEC standards, in which the standards for low-voltage electrical equipment, electrical accessories, electrical tools and explosion-proof electrical equipment account for the majority, and should therefore be the focus of research. An introduction to the NEC of the National Fire Protection Association was made at the seminar. NEC specifies the safety requirements for wiring methods, materials, and equipment for general use, as well as the requirements for special equipment, special occupancies and special conditions. The purpose of the NEC is to protect people and property from electrical hazards. Some representatives viewed the NEC as a good example of providing guidelines for revising GB 19517.

The following topics were also discussed at the seminar:

- For those standards transformed from IEC standards, is appropriate to make them mandatory simply because the content involves mandatory factors such as safety.
- Due to varied ways of developing and implementing mandatory standards in different areas of the electrical equipment industry, such as granting a CCC certification or issuing a safety production permit etc., the reform should take into consideration the complexity of the issue and develop tailor-made measures;





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- Consider revising the mandatory standards listed in Annex A of the Conformity Standards of GB 19517 to recommendatory standards. Include other mandatory standards conformed to GB 19517 into the list, maintaining the completeness of the standardization system.

The participants of the seminar also discussed the model of developing GB 6675-2003 national safety technical code for toys, GB 18401-2010 national general safety technical code for textile products as well as other industry safety technical codes, so as to draw lessons from the above-mentioned model. The following consensuses were reached regarding the direction of reforming mandatory standards in the electrical equipment industry:

1. The great majority of mandatory standards are technical specifications rather than regulations in nature; therefore those standards should be adjusted to become recommendatory standards.
2. Since only mandatory standards can be listed in the CCC catalogue, the ensuing question of standards implementation after adjusting mandatory standards to recommendatory standards should be discussed with certification bodies to develop a solution.
3. GB 19517 should continue to be a mandatory standard, the revision of which should achieve the following goals:
 - The recommendatory conformity standards listed in Annex A of GB19517 will have the nature of being mandatory when being referenced.
 - In conjunction with the recommendatory standards listed in Annex A, which are mandatory before the reform, the content of GB 19517 should provide basis for examining conformity with safety requirements. Therefore, for the products without corresponding standards or certification (including voluntary certification and providing samples to laboratories to be tested), conformity with safety requirements should be conducted against GB 19517.
 - Maintain completeness and coherence of the technical standardization system of the electrical equipment industry.

The following consensuses were reached in the revision of GB 19517

1. The object and scope of GB 19517 should be identical with the recommendatory standards covered by GB 19517. Content without supporting data or standards should be excluded. The explosion-proof products category is one product category covered by GB 19517, however, only particular aspects (i.e. the uniqueness of voltage classes) are included.
2. Add manufacturers' declaration. None of the mandatory standards is in a position to guarantee that the products are completely risk free when they are in the hands of consumers', even if tests or inspection were conducted against the relevant mandatory standards. On one hand, only samples rather than all the products were tested and inspected to examine conformity. On the other hand, the responsibility for any harm or damage caused by risk factors not covered by GB 19517 should be assumed by manufacturers instead of the government.



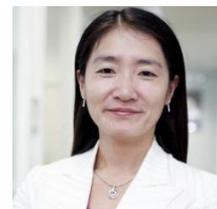
Reform of mandatory standards in electrical equipment industry and revision of GB 19517

3. Materials are not included in the objects, however materials can be included in conductor materials. Wires and cables themselves can be regarded as products frequently used by non-professionals. Manufacturers should be responsible for the wires and cables attached to their products. Conductor materials will have an impact on resistance of return circuit, a key relevant indicator of products such as heat control factor. Therefore, only copper, aluminum or better materials can be conductor materials.
4. Requirements should be supported by indicator parenthesis, which can either be specified in the regulation, or determined and provided by manufacturers, such as the limit. Test must be performed as long as there is an indicator parenthesis, and testing methods should be recommended. The primary testing methods should be the ones indicated in IEC standards, which are transformed into GB standards.
5. Risk evaluation of electrical safety should be introduced. Since technical safety codes cannot completely address all the possible hazards, risk evaluation of
6. f electrical safety can be one of the effective ways of decreasing the risk.

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Introduction of SESEC Project

The Seconded European Standardization Expert in China (SESEC) is a visibility project co-financed by the European Commission (EC), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) secretariat and the three European Standardization Organizations (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI).



Since 2006, there has been two SESEC projects in China, SESEC I (2006-2009) and SESEC II (2009-2012). In Dec 2014, SESEC III was officially launched in Beijing, China. Dr. Betty XU was nominated as the SESEC expert and will spend the next 36 months on promoting EU-China standardization information exchange and EU-China standardization cooperation.

The SESEC project supports the strategic objectives of the European Union, EFTA and the European Standardization Organizations (ESOs). The purpose of SESEC project is to

- Promote European and international standards in China;
- Improve contacts with different levels of the Chinese administration, industry and standardization bodies;
- Improve the visibility and understanding of the European Standardization System (ESS) in China;
- Gather regulatory and standardization intelligence.

SESEC III Monthly Newsletter

SESEC III Monthly Newsletter is the gathering of China regulatory and standardization intelligence. Most information of the Monthly Newsletter were summarized from China news media or website. Some of them are the first-hand information from TC meetings, forums/workshops, or meetings/dialogues with China government authorities in certain areas. Regulatory and standardization information summaries, translations, and strategic analyses in the prioritized areas selected by SESEC partners, were offered by SESEC III expert. With the limited resources of SESEC III, detailed translations of some news items only can be available on request.

SESEC III Special Reports

SESEC III Special Reports are the regulatory and standardization reports on some areas with deeper and wider overview or analyses. SESEC III Special Reports also cover the prioritized areas selected by SESEC partners. They also can be some hot topics or lobby activities reports in China.