



PRODUCT SAFETY TECHNICAL CERTIFICATION

Traditionally, the electrical safety of a product or system has only been fully understood and implemented by a...

...small number of specialists. This is common in derivative fields (that is, fields not traditionally taught as part of the bachelor's degree program) of technology. The rapid advancement of electronic technology, the increased use of software operating systems, and the wide application of legislative requirements in the United States of America, the European Union (European Economic Community) and internationally, has resulted in a shortage of specialists in electrical safety. To avoid a dilution of capabilities in the face of expanding expectations or a critical shortage of electrical safety engineers and technicians, it is desirable to

Certification Scope

The purpose of the Product Safety Certification Program is to foster technical "excellence" in Product Safety engineering. This approach establishes technical competency criteria for Product Safety and enforces these criteria for personnel designing, manufacturing and assessing product electrical safety. The program benefits the engineering community as a whole by establishing a standard of excellence in Product Safety engineering that will endure and extend across the boundaries of private and government agencies.

Product Safety includes the following areas of technology

- Connection to supply
- Isolation of supply
- Mechanical hazards
- Earthing
- Types of Insulation
- Protection against electrical shock
- Resistance to fire
- Fire hazards
- Limits on fuel
- Limits on heat
- Insulation damage
- Creepage and clearance
- Operating & maintenance instructions & handbooks
- Equipment design
- Hazard analysis
- Risk assessment
- Design review
- Legislation US, EEC and International
- Military and Civil Electrical Safety STDs
- Inter system and intra system design
- Assessment authorities
- Competent Bodies
- Safety certification
- Declarations of Conformity
- Safety tests

establish a career path for professional development.

About three years ago a fellow in the training business struck up a conversation about the sad state of affairs with respect to the implementation of the Low Voltage Directive within the European Union. His position was that there was neither adequate training nor any group that would validate compliance to the LVD. He proposed that NARTE develop a certification in the safety arena that would embrace the LVD and become a worldwide identification of competence. Subsequently, eGlobal Education Partnership and NARTE formed an alliance to pursue certification in engineering product safety.

Qualification By Eminence (Grandfathering)

One question that comes up repeatedly in the start of any new certification is how to treat existing practitioners. We recognize that practitioners at the time of implementation have been and will continue to serve their customers competently. The vast majority of these practitioners have more than the desired depth of understanding but have not sat for an academic examination for years. With a full workload, it is not easy for them to take time off to study and to sit for the examination.

In accordance with US Constitution on ex post facto requirements, a grandfathering provision has been established during the initial implementation of the product

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Product Safety (continued)

safety certification. Recognizing this, NARTE provides a period for qualification for certification by eminence.

What that string of adjectives means is that a practitioner, with more than the minimum education, work experience and peer endorsement can be certified without examination.

This provision states that those persons who apply to NARTE and meet the requirements for product safety engineer or product safety technician will be eligible for certification without examination, provided they apply prior to August 31, 2004.

Grandfathering Period Closing Soon

NARTE Product Safety certification for engineers and technicians is in the sixth month of its 12-month grandfather period. NARTE initiated the certification in product safety for engineers and technicians during August of 2003.

The period for current practitioners to qualify by eminence (thus avoiding the examination) ends August 31, 2004. It is very important to have one's application postmarked by August 31, 2004 to grandfather.

An application package appears on the NARTE web site at: <http://www.narte.org>.

Consultants' References

Consultants have raised a ques-

tion about supervisory references for their applications. Consultants do not have supervisors, they have clients. Consultants seem to be reluctant to ask their clients to fill out a reference form just because it also uncovers a vulnerability and

"All Those submitting Product Safety applications postmarked after the Grandfathering period ends on August 31, 2004, will have to take and pass the Product Safety Examination."

what consultant wants to tell his client that there are things he does not know?

Here's the thing. NARTE wants expressions of confidence in the candidate's abilities from people who know their work. Most people or organizations hire consultants because they do not have the desired capability in house. If the candidate does not have a solid capability, we are not real crazy about hearing from their clients either.

A consultant should simply no-


tify the certification committee (by annotating their application) that they do not have a supervisor and indicate their relationship to the people whom that have asked to act as references. The certification committee can then make a judgment on the responses provided.

A consultant should not be reluctant to apply for certification just because they do not have a supervisor. It has to mean something that you do not have to be closely monitored in the performance of your job.

Getting the Word Out

With time, employers will be asking applicants and contractors if they are NARTE certified. It will become one of the discriminators used to sort out the well meaning from the well qualified. The most difficult part of starting any new certification is catching the eye of current practitioners. We are trying hard to get the word out but you can help.

If you know of anyone in the product safety field, tell them about this article. Tell them about the grandfather period and encourage them to go to the NARTE web site (www.narte.org) and download the application package.

It may be the most important career move they ever make. 

NARTE Proposes FCC Adopt New "Professional Installer" Definition

NARTE submitted comments in response to the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rule Making on the definition of "Professional Installer" under section 15.203. The Commission does not have a definition of Professional Installer. NARTE suggested that the Commission adopt the following definition to describe a Professional Installer and place this definition in section 2.1 or 15.3 of the FCC rules to describe a professional installer

"Professional Installer: An individual that has been thoroughly trained either through in-house training, by the manufacturer of the equipment, or by a 3rd party and

is technically qualified to perform one or more of the following tasks; the site survey, the system installation design, installation and configuration, the field modification and upgrades, or repair and service of the Part 15 wireless equipment that requires professional installation to fulfill the requirements of a professional installer as required per Part 15.203."

Copies of comments from NARTE and other organizations can be found at the FCC web site (www.fcc.gov) by using their internal search engine and entering ET Docket No. 03-201. 