Legislation on Hazardous Areas Spurs Market Growth

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The European market for equipment destined for use in hazardous areas is currently in a period of significant change.? Recent media exposure of the ATEX Directives for such equipment has seized the attention of both users and suppliers alike. The European market for this equipment, estimated to be worth over 1.3 billion Euros in 2003, is predicted to grow to over 2.0 billion Euros by the end of the decade.

Market Analyst Don Tait of IMS Research says, â€œMarket growth is currently being driven by legislation following the ATEX Directives. This adds to the effect of general growth of production in the oil and gas, chemical and pharmaceutical sectors, which today account for over half the market for this equipment.â€•

Tait continues â€œThe European market as a whole will grow at a compound-average annual growth rate of around 6 percent to 2009. However, the Eastern European market, which is today relatively small, will grow at 1.5 times this rate. This is the result of investment in the latest EU member states to bring production to EU standards.â€•

IMS Research has recently surveyed users of equipment in hazardous areas, two thirds of respondents having annual expenditure of over 10,000 Euros on such equipment. Key findings from this survey included:

- Around three-quarters of respondents stated compliance with ATEX 137 was important to them.

- Current user awareness of the specifications on the specifications on gas and vapour zones (Zone 1, Zone 2 and Zone 3) was significantly higher than awareness of the more recent specifications on dust zones (Zone 20, Zone 21 and Zone 22).

- One-fifth of respondents stated they required IECEx certification in addition to ATEX.