

Frankfurt, January 2018

EHEDG Certification – Implementation of a 5-Years' Recertification Policy

Interview with Dr. Peter Golz, Chairman of the EHEDG Sub-Committee Product Portfolio

Q: In 2015 EHEDG implemented a 5-years' recertification policy for all certificates which have been issued since then. What is the reasoning behind this decision?

Golz: EHEDG certificates are a proof of compliance of the certified component with the EHEDG Hygienic Design Evaluation criteria according to EHEDG certification procedures at the date of issue. EHEDG certificates are further subject to annual prolongation, meaning that the certificate holder reassures and declares once a year that the design of the certified component has not changed since the date of issue. Looking back on a history of almost 20 years of successful certification, the question comes up whether the design of the components certified in the pioneer days still meets with the demands and Hygienic Design criteria of the current EHEDG certification scheme. The answer is: 'We do not know'. But we know for sure that the certification scheme has been revised, and that also the evaluation criteria and their interpretation have changed over time. The classic design might still meet with these requirements. But only a re-evaluation can reveal that this holds true. To avoid any uncertainty and to be always in-line with the state-of-the-art Hygienic Design Criteria set by EHEDG, the current certification scheme demands that all components need to be re-evaluated every 5 years.

Q: And what about the old certificates?

Golz: The consequence of our policy is that equipment which had been tested and certified prior to the introduction of the current certification scheme needs to undergo a re-evaluation procedure according to the latest requirements, if the equipment is intended to be further recognized by EHEDG as certified. EHEDG has therefore agreed on a transition policy for old certificates, which will assure that starting from 2020 only those certificates will be listed on EHEDG website which have been issued under the new certification scheme.

Q: What does this transition policy imply?

Golz: In principle, we defined the dates when evidence of a successful (re-)evaluation of the design of the equipment under the current EHEDG certification scheme is required as a precondition for a 'prolongation' of the respective certificate. This means that all certificates issued prior to 2015 are going to be cancelled effective on the announced dates. Certificate holders who want to continue their certificates need to initiate the (re-)certification process in time to show evidence of a successful re-evaluation ready at the date of cancellation, and will receive a new certificate issued under the current EHEDG certification scheme.

Q: How can the recertification process be initiated?

Golz: As the evaluation needs to be done by one of the EHEDG Authorized Hygienic Design Evaluation Officers (AEO's), the applicant should contact an AEO of his choice to initiate the process. A list of AEOs is published on the EHEDG website.

Q: Equipment that has not been recertified will vanish from EHEDG website of certified equipment?

Golz: Yes.

Q: Does the withdrawal of a certified piece of equipment from the EHEDG website indicate that it bears a higher hygiene risk compared to those components which are still listed?

Golz: No, the withdrawal is only made for formal reasons. It simply means that the withdrawn equipment was due to re-certification and hasn't been re-certified in time. EHEDG does not at all reflect the reasons behind this fact. To come back to the example of the classic HD component: If this component drops out of the list of EHEDG certified equipment on <https://www.ehedg.org/testing-certification/certified-equipment/>, nothing changed from a technical point of view. It is still the same design that once – at the date of issue – met the requirements to obtain an EHEDG certificate. We still don't know whether this component meets the requirements of the current certification scheme. But nowadays EHEDG requires evidence as a prerequisite to be listed. There are clear procedures on what needs to be done to prove the required evidence, and the door to have the equipment in question back on the published list of all EHEDG certified components is still open.