

Coming Transition Dates for ITE in the EU

With the number of ITE Standards recently published, it is no wonder that there is much confusion about transition dates. While it took seven years and five amendments to get from the 2nd edition of EN60950:1993 ultimately to the 3rd edition of EN60950:2000, there was only one year between the later and subsequent EN60950-1:2001. Because of the longevity of the 2nd edition and the relative ease of upgrading to the associated amendments (A1, A2, A3, A4 and A11), there are many products out there that are approved to some level of 2nd edition, including many power supplies currently in use and end-use products shipped to

Europe.

The Official Journal of the European Union establishes such transition times, based on CENELEC's transition timetable, not necessarily due to any shortcoming or problem with the previous standard.

Important transition dates:

8/1/2003 - Last date that products approved through EN60950:1993, A1, A2, A3, and A4 should be shipped.

1/1/2005 - Last date that products approved through A1, A2, A3, A4, and A11 should be shipped.

Importantly, power supply vendors need to be encouraged



The January 1, 2005 deadline for 2nd edition is coming!

to upgrade their certifications in advance of the transition date, so that end-use product manufacturers can similarly certify their products in advance of the date. We recommend that you start asking for this upgrade to EN60950:2000, or better EN60950-1:2001, today. "Proof"

IC's - The Unsung Heroes of Product Safety

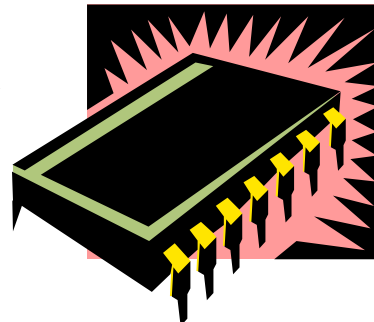
One hazard that must be addressed in product safety is the potential fire hazard. Burning down the building is not an option! So we have fire enclosure requirements with particulars for opening sizes and materials' flammability, and relevant to this article, current limitations to external cabling. According to Article 725.41 of the NEC (2002), only Class 2 circuits or Limited Power Source (LPS) circuits of IT Equipment may be routed through building structures without conduit (and other restrictions on Class 1 circuits). Therefore, a proper evaluation by a Nationally Recognized Test Laboratory (NRTL) should include consideration of the low voltage signal and power interfaces for their potential to start a fire.

Ironically, for all of the recent editions and updates to the 60950 family of Standards for ITE — with the rationale of

keeping pace with evolving technology — the Standards currently written do not address how integrated circuits (ICs) should be evaluated, although they clearly are depended upon to limit current to external interfaces.

Standards are explicit about fuses (and PTCs), impedance and inherent limiting, and regulating networks which require meeting current limitations under normal and single faults. If ICs are considered regulating networks, which single faults would be needed? Vcc to output pin, which would fail all ICs?! What are we depending on internally, in the proverbial "black box"?

UL has created a new Recognition category (QVGS2) under UL2367 for those ICs that intentionally deliver power to external circuits, such as USB drivers or PoE devices. These parts are shown to reliably deliver limited current after being subjected to a series of environmental tests and cycling.



The Standard should be updated albeit belatedly to explicitly allow ICs to limit external interfaces, as impedance limited, without significant additional effort. ICs have served this function quietly over the years, without being controlled as critical components, as a fuse would be. And we do not see the need to change now, particularly in light of ITE's successful track record, with minimal field failures and incidents, but let's give them credit as "unsung heroes" for serving a critical function, minimizing potential fire hazards.

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Special points of interest:

- For agency visit dates to SEL and seminar dates, see www.SELdirect.com
- For info between newsletter issues, see our website or contact us directly.
- To see our larger facility where SEL has been since early 2002, see our website, for directions see www.seldirect.com/map.html.



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Did you know?

- A new version of the Low Voltage Directive (LVD) is currently in the works, and will not have the exemption for products with voltages below 50Vac and 75Vdc that is currently in today's LVD.
- The current version of the LVD is mostly from 1973, which is why it is not written consistently with the more recently written Directives. Compliance with the LVD was required long before the CE Mark and the European Community push in 1992 for a Common Market.
- UL61010-1/CSA 22.2 No 61010-1 2nd edition is slated to finally be published by mid-year, as two remaining agencies (of three total) are expected to grant their final approvals by that time.

Useful Website

Visit <http://www.newapproach.org>, click on Directives & Standards and then on the particular Directive, to view those Standards that "presume conformity" and should be used for certification.

Transition Dates (continued)

would be in collecting the Notified Body certificate, showing the above Standards. We have unfortunately noticed that many well-known power supply vendors are behind the curve in this update. Although it seems that there is some time before 1/1/2005, the above Standards have in fact been around for a few years already, so there is no excuse!

Our opinion, from being familiar with the minor marginal increase in effort in the A11 amendment for most products, is that such amendment upgrades are more administrative than substantive. In contrast, recent test reporting efforts, which go "line-by-line" and "clause-by-clause" through the standard, need to be completely redone, when the Standard's edition has changed.

Some recommendations for our friends on the technical committees (and to those in industry who influence such folks):

- The CB Scheme should create an abridged Test Report that would upgrade a 2nd edition Test Report through A11, for example, to a 3rd

edition. This Test Report would only focus on those items different from the one Standard to the next. This would make it as easy to upgrade as it is now for an amendment. With a concerted effort into zeroing in on the deltas and summarizing them, this would work! Such deltas would not include trivial items such as recording temperatures in maximums rather than delta rise, but on substantive requirements.

- The European Union's transition scheme could simply allow products certified under a previous Standard to continue to ship, particularly if there have been no incidents in the field. The Standards seem mature enough at this point where a product that is "safe enough" under EN60950:2000, would not become "more safe", or add any additional assurances, by upgrading to EN60950-1 in the future. A strict, mandatory upgrade, similar to what is being done today by default, would be reserved for when the new Standard is legitimately different, justified, and new.

Compliance Tip!

As of January 1st, 2004, UL has a new labeling requirement, where UL Recognized label manufacturers under PGAA have signed contracts to only provide labels with UL's trademark if shown the Listing Authorization stamp. In order to avoid Variation Notices from UL, you should...

- (1) Confirm your label vendor is UL Recognized under PGAA on UL's website (many already are). And...
- (2) Have your stamped authorization at each factory. Remember that there is only one stamp, most likely done on your first product submittal only (years ago?), and it applies to all Listed products. To remind you what this looks like, please see the image below.

