

Almost nobody thinks about compliance, safety, and standardization. I have been working in either 3<sup>rd</sup> party testing or assuring my products pass compliance, in either aerospace, defense, automotive, and consumer electronics for seven years. The vast majority of people who ask about my jobs over the years have regretted it. “well, you see, the difference between creepage and clearance on a sealed device . . .” doesn’t make good small talk. I am completely fine with this. This is not due to it’s lack of importance, but rather as a testament to the success of the industry. I take it as a badge of pride that nobody thinks about it, because they don’t have to. Today, people seldom worry about the electrocution risk of plugging in a new device. This is not solely due to new technology, but the result of stringent standards and rigorous compliance & safety efforts.

This industry is crucial to ensuring the safety and reliability of things we use every single day. Behind the scenes, people in this industry work meticulously to ensure these standards are understood and adhered to, while also not stymying the advancement of the technology that these standards govern. The balance of advancing technology while preventing potential hazards and ensuring public safety is demanding, but astoundingly important.

The importance of this industry is not only in ensuring the safety of the end user. It goes far beyond preventing accidents and injuries; it fosters public trust and confidence. When the consumer trusts that their technology will be safe to use by default, the general public will continue to buy into the advancement of the technology without fear. This trust is the cornerstone of our industry, enabling innovation and advancement while maintaining a focus on user safety.

However, This trust is fragile. A notable example of this is the Three Mile Island nuclear accident. This was largely not due to the incident itself, but rather the response of the industry to the accident. lack of accountability of problems and poor communication severely impacted public confidence in nuclear energy. The incident led to widespread fear and a significant halt in nuclear power development. The loss of public confidence in regulatory safeguards can have long-lasting repercussions, stifling progress and innovation within an industry.

As we continue to innovate and develop new technologies, I view it as our responsibility to understand that this industry is the cornerstone of said innovation. As the plethora of yet to be discovered innovations work their way into the consumer realm, it will be our responsibility to make sure that these technologies are not only implemented with the end users safety being high priority while allowing necessary innovation, but also with the understanding that trust in our industry is also what allows that innovation and that the less people are thinking about us, the better we are doing and making sure that they don’t even have a second thought about safety.

My previous careers allowed me to become familiar with ISO, SAE, FAA, EASA, Etc, standards, however I have only been dealing with IEC for bit over a year. As such, it is still new to me. I have put a lot of effort into understanding the standards that are relevant to my position, however I would love to bridge the experience and lessons I have gained during my years working in other industries. I believe that by meeting industry experts, those who create these standards, and those whose knowledge has led to the current safety climate we live in, I can more effectively understand and apply the IEC standards.

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