

IEC Forms Working Group To Set Industrial Standard For Micro Fuel Cells

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The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), the multi-national organization that defines industrial standards for electronic devices, consumer products and communications equipment, today announced that it has established a working group proposed by Japan within its technical committee (TC105) to consider industrial standards for [micro fuel cell](#) for use in portable products, including notebook PCs and mobile phones. Manufacturers around the world, including [Toshiba](#), have recently announced significant progress in prototypes of highly compact micro fuel cell power unit, and micro fuel cells are moving closer to becoming an alternative power source for consumer products. The IEC will lead the way in setting international standards for such micro fuel cells and their fuel cartridges.

On July 30, representatives from sixteen IEC member countries with voting rights, including the U.S.A., Japan, Canada, France and the U.K, agreed to establish "Working Group 10 (WG10)," a special task force within TC105 to discuss interchangeability standardization. This step followed Japan's proposal to the IEC to establish such a working group. WG10 is tasked with providing customers and manufacturers around the world with standards for compatibility as and when micro fuel cell becomes a viable alternative power source for portable devices.

The IEC has discussed micro fuel cell standardization for some time. By establishing WG10 it has brought together a team of experts on micro fuel cells that will focus on setting common guidelines on specifications for micro fuel cell power units and their fuel cartridges by 2007. A

recognized industrial standard for micro fuel cell will provide users of micro fuel cell with easier access to standardized fuel cartridges designed to fit any type of electronic device and produced by manufacturers around the world. Along with the vote to set up WG10, the IEC also voted to approve the appointment of Dr. Fumio Ueno, Technology Executive of Display Devices and Components Control Center, Toshiba Corporation to chair the working group.

Dr. Ueno's election reflects the active role that Toshiba has played in the development of fuel cells and in promoting the commercialization and standardization of micro fuel cells.

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