IATF 16949 5TH Edition: Certification Rules

New procedural criteria to meet certification requirements of the IATF 16949:2016 quality standard for the automotive industry have been in force since January 1, 2017. **Contact us** to learn more about the changes and what you may need to consider for certification according to the new requirements.

BACKGROUND OF THE CHANGES FOR CERTIFICATION ACCORDING TO IATF 16949

Amended requirements apply to those already certified and seeking certification as well as to all certification bodies approved by the International Automotive Task Force (IATF). These changes were made to incorporate the sanctioned interpretations and frequently asked questions ge nerated by the fourth edition of the certification requirements. Passages worthy of interpretation have been omitted and requirements have been clarified. Experience gained in the application of the specifications has been included and the ISO/IEC 17021:2011 standard guidelines have been taken into account.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Published by the IATF in November 2016, the 5th edition of the automotive industry's certification specifications has been valid since January 1, 2017. There was no transition period from the 4th to the 5th edition.

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MAIN CHANGES OF THE 5TH EDITION OF THE IATF 16949 CERTIFICATION RULES

Changes in the scope of certification:
- "Original Equipment Manufacturers" (OEMs) suppliers are now entitled to IATF 16949 certification. "Original" components must be:
  - Manufactured to OEM product specifications and procured or released by the OEM
  - Mechanically or electronically connected to vehicles
  - Installed on the vehicle or engine before or after delivery to the end customer
  - Production sites whose customers require "third party" certification in accordance with IATF 16949 must also include all automotive industry customers served at that site in the audit scope.

Changes regarding transfer audits:
- The contract between the certification company and the client must include an agreement to ensure that the contract can be extended until all transfer activities to a new IATF-approved certification company have been completed. Among other things, certification bodies are obligated to:
  - Instruct clients to inform any previous certification body of their intention to change.
  - Inform clients of the company's intention to become a new IATF-approved certification body.

Even if a certification body has been informed of a change, it must allow for the transfer process. Suspension or cancellation of the certificate before the end of the transfer audit is therefore not permitted (assuming a contract is valid).

Prior to the start of the transfer audit, the new certification body must use the semi-automated transfer request process to verify that the client meets the transfer requirements. If all requirements for the transfer audit have not been fulfilled (mentioned under 7.1), an initial certification must be conducted.

Changes in the requirements for the audit process:
To assist in audit planning, the client shall inform the certification/registration body of the number of personnel working at a site and any associated remote support.
- It is no longer permissible to terminate an audit based on the detection of major non-conformities:
  - This applies to initial, surveillance, recertification, transfer and special audits.
  - An audit may be terminated for other reasons (e.g. natural disasters).

- The audit report shall include a written summary of associated supporting/supported processes of other sites and/or support functions that have been audited.

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Changes in deviation management:

- With no changes to the actual requirements, variance management is now divided into the following 5 subcategories:
  - Responsibility of the client in cases of major deviations
  - Responsibility of the client in cases of minor deviations
  - Responsibility of the certification body
  - On-site verification of major deviations

Changes to the Special audits:

- Special audits may not be terminated.
- Special audits of remote support functions shall not be entered in the **IATF database**.
- Once the decertification process has been initiated, e.g. due to a special customer status of an IATF OEM or changes to the client's quality management system, the certification body must conduct an on-site special audit.

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