

# REVISION 5

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Dated 30 October 2020



International Automotive Task Force

## **IATF GLOBAL WAIVERS AND MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC (COVID-19)**

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# CONTENTS

Foreword	4
Initial Release	5
Revision 1	5
Revision 2	6
Revision 3	6
Revision 4	7
Revision 5	8
General Remarks	9
IATF 16949 Certificates	10
Affected IATF 16949 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Audits	11
Remote Audit	12
Remote Audit Day Calculation	13
Remote Audit Planning	13
Conducting the Remote Audit	14
Postponed Audits in Accordance with the Previous Version of This Document	15
Nonconformity Management	19
Certification Decisions	20

Auditor Assignments	20
Certification Body Internal Audits	21
IATF 16949 3rd Party Auditor Waivers	21
IATF 16949 Monitoring	22
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	28
Annex A - IATF Remote Audit Requirements	31
Contacts	34

## FOREWORD

The International Automotive Task Force (IATF) is constantly reviewing the impact of the coronavirus 2019-nCoV on the IATF 16949 certification scheme. First and foremost, our current top priority is the safety, and well-being of everyone involved in the IATF 16949 scheme.

The impact on the global economy and, in particular, on the automotive industry is unprecedented. Each day brings new developments and we want to assure you that the IATF leadership continues to both monitor and address all the emerging situations regionally and globally as they occur.

The IATF is in close communication and working together to assess the next steps to be implemented from our contingency plan(s) and the IATF will make frequent updates to these extraordinary waivers as needed.

All updates and subsequently visible in the IATF Certificate Validity Check which can be found on the IATF Global Oversight website:

[www.iatfglobaloversight.org](http://www.iatfglobaloversight.org)

Please subscribe to the IATF mailing list on the IATF Global Oversight website to automatically receive notification of these updates.

# INITIAL RELEASE

## Initial Release – dated 27 March 2020

This newly created document supersedes the previously issued IATF Certification Body Communiqué (CBC) 2020-001.

In addition to the global waivers and measures already published in the CBC 2020-001, the IATF approved a major change affecting the validity of all issued and currently valid IATF 16949 certificates (these are described in Section “IATF 16949 Certificates”).

# REVISION 1

## Revision 1 - dated 9 April 2020

The first Revision incorporates two additional Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs no. 2 and 3) that were approved by the IATF. Additionally minor grammatical errors and graphical modifications were corrected and

- a small clarification added to the section “Special audits”
- the timing requirements in the section “NONCONFORMITY MANAGEMENT” were changed from a maximum of sixty (60) calendar days to a maximum of ninety (90) calendar days to allow for further flexibility and to align the possible maximum extensions throughout this document
- an additional graphic has been created for the section “NONCONFORMITY MANAGEMENT” to explain the original timings and additional maximum allowances in one graphic
- the timing requirements in the section “CERTIFICATION DECISIONS” were changed from a maximum of sixty (60) calendar days to a maximum of ninety (90) calendar days to allow for further flexibility and to align the possible maximum extensions throughout this document.

## REVISION 2

### Revision 2 - dated 27 April 2020

The second revision incorporates a new chapter "IATF 16949 Monitoring" between the existing chapters "Affected IATF 16949 3rd party audits" and "Nonconformity Management". This new chapter introduces a process to enable the IATF-recognized certification body (CB) to remotely monitor the status of the client's Quality Management System to assess the continued effectiveness of the client's Quality Management System to the requirements of IATF 16949 during this extraordinary period of the COVID-19 pandemic and to proactively identify risks to the certified Quality Management System of a certified client.

## REVISION 3

### Revision 3 – dated 8 June 2020

The third Revision incorporates the following updates:

- The IATF 16949 Monitoring usage is now limited to the surveillance audit cycle
- An IATF 16949 Monitoring can start no earlier than 30 days prior to the end of the 2nd 90-day extension period
- The criteria for conducting an IATF 16949 Monitoring were simplified, as well as the output recommendations
- A simplified guidance is now available for the use of information sharing technologies during an IATF 16949 Monitoring
- The specific instructions (for certification body internal audits and CB waivers) were moved to a separate IATF Certification Body Communiqué
- Four new Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were added

# REVISION 4

## Revision 4 – dated 17 July 2020

The fourth Revision incorporates the following updates:

- The IATF 16949 Monitoring period is expanded to last 90 days and starts 30 days before the end of the 2nd 90 day surveillance audit extension
- For surveillance audits, the certificate is withdrawn if no IATF 16949 Monitoring is conducted or a low risk result is not achieved
- The latest possible extended recertification audit is aligned with IATF Rules, 5th Edition time allowances
- Clarification on when onsite audits must be conducted
- Clarification that the IATF 16949 Monitoring information includes data from related Remote Support Location processes
- Clarified criteria for high risk and low risk assessments during IATF 16949 Monitoring(s)
- Clarification on steps if high risk is assessed during an IATF 16949 Monitoring
- Clarified criteria for the 100% resolved status of nonconformities
- Simplification of FAQ 2, clarification for FAQ 7 and newly added FAQ 8

# REVISION 5

## Revision 5 - dated 30 October 2020

This fifth Revision incorporates the following updates:

- The IATF clarifies that recertification audits are not extended even though all certificate expiration dates were extended
- A Remote Auditing section was added, including audit day calculation, audit planning, and conducting of the remote audit(s)
- Minor clarification in the graphic for postponed recertification audits of Revision 4
- Changed a “should” to a “shall” for the IATF Monitoring with low risk
- Updated Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) no. 1 and added a new FAQ no. 9
- Added **Annex A - IATF Remote Audit Requirements**

All changes to the previously communicated Revision 4 are **highlighted in red**.

## GENERAL REMARKS

The purpose of this document is to advise all IATF-recognized certification bodies and subsequently all affected certified organisations and other stakeholders that the IATF has approved global waivers in response to the outbreak of the recent coronavirus, affecting certification activities globally. These waivers and measures are not limited to a certain country or region but can be applied globally if the audits and certification activities are affected as described.

The IATF has developed and approved the following global waivers for which the IATF-recognized certification bodies will not need to request a waiver from their relevant IATF Oversight Office; however, the IATF-recognized certification body is required to document the justification and all related information for these waivers internally, in all related audit documentation and in the IATF Database as applicable.

Whenever it is specified: "...the IATF is granting an additional extension of X days..." in the following situations, it is to be understood that these are additional days to the defined maximum timing(s) of the IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. This extra time will allow for a certain flexibility and prolongation of activities for affected audits and certification activities.

If there are no reasons directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic that prevent an onsite audit within the allowable timing and intervals as per the IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition section 5.1.1, then the CB shall conduct the audit onsite at the manufacturing site and remote support location(s) (as applicable).

## IATF 16949 CERTIFICATES

The IATF has approved a global extension to all currently issued and valid IATF 16949 certificates to prevent the automatic expiration of certificates if a recertification audit could not be conducted due to reasons directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although all certificate expiration dates were extended 6 months in the IATF database, that does not mean that all recertification audits are automatically extended 6 months.

With this major change in direction, the IATF requires that audits due from 1 January 2021 forward be conducted onsite or remotely and the certification body can no longer apply the conditions and waivers described in the previous revisions of this document. Special conditions apply if the organisation is not operating or is not manufacturing automotive products when the audit is due.

The extension of six (6) months (i.e. 183 calendar days) to every currently issued and valid certificate (including those certificates that are currently in the status of suspension) will be reflected in the Global IATF Database and subsequently visible in the IATF Certificate Validity Check: [LINK](#)

In this extraordinary situation the IATF-recognized certification bodies are not required to reissue the certificates immediately. This document together with automated updates to the IATF Database and the IATF Certificate Validity Check are providing the evidence that the certificate is valid beyond the documented expiration date printed on the certificate.

If the IATF-recognized certification body is required to update the certificate due to any changes, the revised expiration date shall be updated accordingly and the certificate shall be uploaded in the IATF Database.

If a certified organization needs an updated IATF 16949 certificate, please contact your relevant IATF-recognized certification body.

## AFFECTED IATF 16949 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY AUDITS

The IATF prefers audits to be conducted onsite. However, in cases where an IATF 16949 audit cannot be conducted onsite within the allowable timing and intervals per IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition section 5.1, the IATF is permitting the certification body to conduct the **audit using remote auditing methods and technology (i.e. remote audit)** under the following condition:

- It is demonstrably evident that a regular onsite audit will **not be possible for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

A **remote audit** is conducted the same as an onsite audit but using electronic methods, such as video conferencing, to remotely obtain audit evidence and evaluate it in order to determine the extent of conformity to the audit criteria.

The certification body shall have a defined process for approving the use of remote auditing methods for each remote audit, including the justification for why an onsite audit is not possible.

If there are no reasons directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic that prevent an onsite audit within the allowable timing and intervals, as per IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition then the CB shall conduct the audit onsite and remote audits shall not be used.

In cases where a manufacturing site or a remote support location is completely shut down, or is not producing automotive parts at the time an audit is required, the certification body shall gather the necessary information from the client to understand their current and expected future situation. Based on the evidence gathered, the certification body shall determine the potential date for the audit and contact the appropriate IATF Oversight office with a waiver request.

## REMOTE AUDIT

If the conditions listed above are met, the certification body can conduct audits using remote auditing methods at the following client sites:

- Manufacturing sites (including extended manufacturing sites)
- Remote Support Locations

Audit types which can be conducted using remote auditing methods:

- Initial audit (stage 1 and stage 2)
  - In cases where the stage 2 audit is performed remotely, the validity of the certificate shall not exceed 12 months (the expiration date of the certificate is twelve months minus 1 day). The subsequent audit would be a recertification audit.
- Surveillance audit
- Recertification audit
- Transfer audit
- Special audit

The certification body shall use the remote auditing principles outlined in:

- [IAF ID 12 \(Principles on Remote Assessment\)](#)
- [IAF MD 4 \(Use of ICT for Auditing/Assessment Purposes\)](#)
- Annex A - IATF Remote Audit Requirements

## REMOTE AUDIT DAY CALCULATION

The duration of the remote audit shall be equivalent to that of an onsite audit per the IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition section 5.2.

The certification body shall calculate 10% of the total audit days, but no more than a maximum of eight (8) hours, and apply this time to complete the additional audit planning steps required for a remote audit (refer to *Annex A - IATF Remote Audit Requirements* for details).

## REMOTE AUDIT PLANNING

The certification body shall comply with all requirements for establishing the audit team as defined in the IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition section 5.6, and for audit planning in section 5.7, based on the specific audit type.

The certification body shall have a process to evaluate and select IATF 16949 3<sup>rd</sup> party auditors that are competent in the use of the technologies necessary to carry out an audit remotely. A remote audit shall only be conducted by qualified IATF 16949 3<sup>rd</sup> party auditors.

The certification body shall require the client to provide the following information related to the COVID-19 pandemic to be used as input for developing an audit plan:

- a) Length of time the client was shut down, as applicable;
- b) Startup verification plan/risks identified, etc. (after medium term shutdowns [greater than 1 month], including across the different regions of operation);
- c) Any extraordinary measures taken;
- d) Resources lost (permanent or temporary);
- e) Changes in regulations or operating conditions (including operator safety);
- f) List of customers to the site, identifying which are operational or not.

The audit team shall successfully implement the IATF Remote Audit Requirements – Planning section (refer to Annex A in this document), including IAF MD4 (Use of ICT for Auditing / Assessment Purposes).

Based upon the completion of audit planning requirements listed above, the certification body shall determine if it is appropriate to proceed with the remote audit or not. The decision shall be documented and retained as part of the audit record(s) (refer to Rules Annex 3).

The final audit plan shall clearly identify if the audit was to be conducted remotely.

## CONDUCTING THE REMOTE AUDIT

The remote audit is considered to be a regular audit and shall comply with all requirements defined in the IATF Rules, 5th Edition sections 5.8 - 5.12, 5.14 and 6.4 - 7.2 (depending on the audit type).

The remote audit shall be conducted taking into consideration the Annex A - Remote Audit Requirements.

In addition to the audit report content per IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 5.10, the report shall clearly include an explanation of the following in the Audit Summary section of the Result page in the audit report:

- 1) Any portions of the audit activities which could not be effectively completed, or where a complete determination could not be made (e.g. failure of technology);
- 2) Any portions of the audit already excluded during audit planning preparation; and
- 3) Risks to the customers due to changes related to COVID-19, especially to the IATF OEM customer(s).

If during the audit a portion of the audit activities could not be effectively completed, then the equivalent amount of time shall be added to the subsequent audit to adequately cover those activities.

During the closing meeting of the remote audit, the audit team shall explain to the client any increase in audit days for the subsequent audit based on the outcome of the remote audit.

The certification body shall identify the audit as a remote audit in the IATF database.

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*NOTE: The IATF reserves the right to witness or observe any of the remote audits, including the audit planning between the client and CB auditor to test the technology to be used for a remote audit. The client cannot refuse the witnessing or observation of a remote audit by an IATF witness auditor or IATF representative.*

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# POSTPONED AUDITS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT

Audits that will become due from **1 January 2021** forward can no longer apply the conditions and waivers described in the previous revisions of this document (provided below for reference).

Nonconformities requiring a decision of acceptability after **1 January 2021** shall follow the requirements in IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 5.11.

For those clients with a postponed audit, the certification body shall either conduct an onsite or a remote audit. The timing of the audit (onsite or remote) shall not exceed the current extensions described in this section of the document. The certification body shall comply with all applicable requirements defined in the IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.

As of **1 January 2021**, Monitoring events are no longer permitted.

This section of the document describes how to manage existing audits which were already postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic prior to the release of Revision 5 of this document.

## Stage 2 audits:

In cases where the stage 2 audit cannot be conducted within the specified ninety (90) calendar days from the last day of the stage 1 readiness review, the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence the stage 2 audit.

In cases where an initial audit (stage 1 readiness review and stage 2 audit) is to be conducted to “upgrade” from a letter of conformance to an IATF 16949 certificate, the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence with a maximum reduction of 50% in the stage 2 audit days after the expiration date of the letter of conformance.

As a result, the stage 2 audit shall commence within a maximum of one hundred and eighty (180) calendar days from the last day of the stage 1 readiness review.

In cases where an initial audit (stage 2 audit) is to be conducted to “re-apply for another letter of conformance”, the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence with a maximum of 50% reduction in the stage 2 audit days after the expiration date of the letter of conformance.

In situations where the remote supporting location cannot be audited prior to the manufacturing site, as required as per the IATF Rules 5th Edition section 5.5, the IATF-recognized certification body shall submit a waiver to the relevant IATF Oversight Office for consideration of approval.

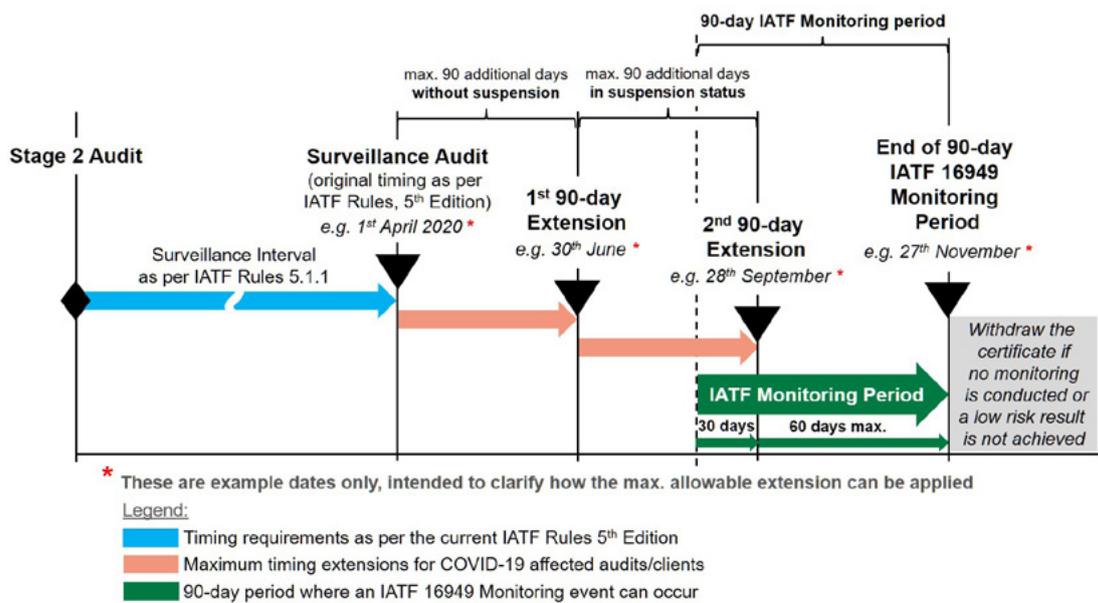
## Surveillance audits:

In cases where the required surveillance audit cannot be conducted within the allowable intervals and timing as per the IATF Rules, 5th Edition (Table 5.1: Surveillance interval), the

IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence with the surveillance audit without initiating the decertification process. This is referred to as the “1st 90-day extension” in the graphic below. When this additional timing cannot be met, the decertification process shall be initiated in accordance with IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 8.1 e). This leads to an additional 90-day extension referred to as the “2nd 90-day extension” in the graphic below.

*NOTE: during the suspension period the certificate remains valid and is still recognized by the IATF.*

In cases where the decertification process has already been initiated prior to 27 March 2020 as per IATF Rules, 5th Edition, section 8.1 e), the IATF-recognized certification body shall lift the already imposed suspension and follow the timing requirements in the paragraph above.



When an onsite surveillance audit cannot be conducted due to COVID-19, an IATF 16949 Monitoring is to be conducted as described above; also refer to the IATF 16949 Monitoring chapter of this document on page 22.

The IATF 16949 Monitoring shall be conducted in the period from 30 days prior to the end of the 2nd 90-day COVID-19 extension to 60 days after the end of the 2nd 90-day COVID-19 extension (i.e. the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period, see graphic above), and only if it becomes demonstrably evident that a regular onsite audit will not be possible to be conducted, see graphic above. IATF 16949 Monitoring is no longer applicable 60 days after the end of the 2nd 90-day COVID-19 extension.

If an IATF 16949 Monitoring is conducted and low risk is identified (see the IATF 16949 Monitoring chapter), then the suspension is lifted.

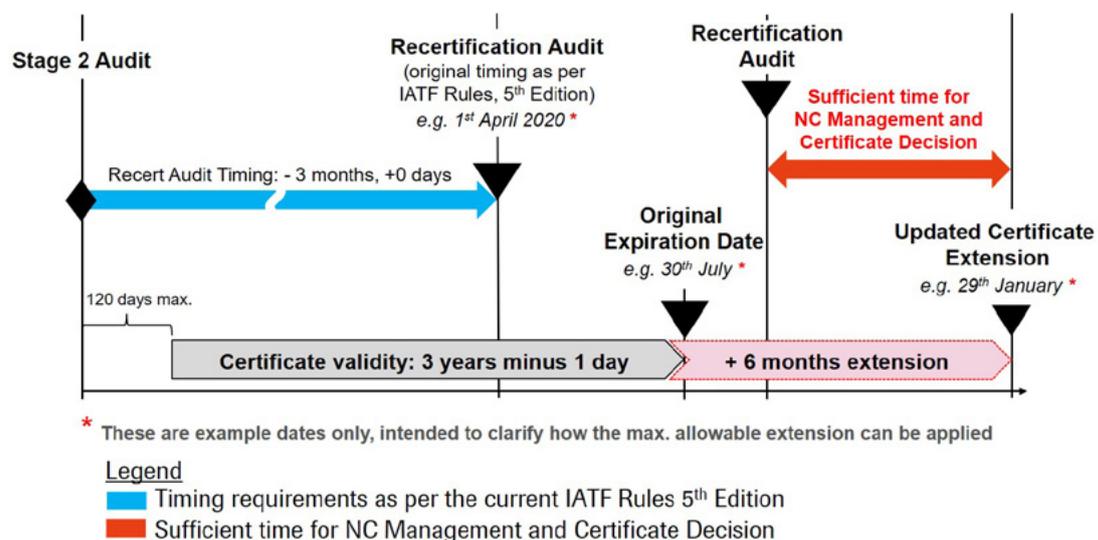
The certificate is withdrawn for the two following conditions:

- If an IATF 16949 Monitoring event is not scheduled by the certification body to occur during the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period (see graphic above)
- IATF 16949 Monitoring is conducted during the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period, but a low risk assessment is not achieved before the end of the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period (see the IATF 16949 Monitoring chapter)

### Recertification audits:

In cases where the required recertification audit cannot be conducted onsite within the allowable interval and timing as per the IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 5.1.1 for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, the recertification audit timing can be extended per the graphic below.

The scheduling of the onsite recertification audit shall provide sufficient time to close or 100% resolve any nonconformities that may be raised at the onsite recertification audit and the certification decision made prior to the prolonged expiration of the existing IATF 16949 certificate.



If there are no reasons directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic that prevent an onsite recertification audit within the allowable interval and timing as per the IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 5.1.1, then the CB shall conduct the recertification audit onsite at the manufacturing site and this extension shall not be applied.

### Transfer audits:

In cases where a transfer audit is planned to take place at the planned recertification audit timing (see IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 7.1.1), the transfer audit shall be completed no later than 120 calendar days prior to the prolonged expiration date of the currently valid IATF 16949 certificate.

In cases where a transfer audit is planned to take place during the surveillance audit cycle, the new IATF-recognized certification body is still permitted to transfer the client as long as the global waiver conditions for not conducting the surveillance audit are met.

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*NOTE: if transfer requests were rejected during this extraordinary situation in the semi-automated transfer audit process of the IATF Database (refer to IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 7.1.1), the IATF-recognized certification body is requested to contact the relevant IATF Oversight Office.*

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### Special audits:

In cases where a (required) on-site special audit cannot be conducted, the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence with the special audit.

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*NOTE: the impact of the Coronavirus may affect the site or certification process at different timing periods; for a special audit to close the major nonconformity with extended timing and applicability of using open but 100% resolved, please see "NONCONFORMITY MANAGEMENT".*

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The IATF is also aware that an extension to conduct a required special audit will result in situations where a certificate suspension will exceed 110 calendar days. Also, in these situations the suspended certificate still remains valid and is still recognized by the IATF.

In all the above-mentioned situations the certification body is required to enter a comment in the IATF Database, i.e. in the relevant comment field of the affected audit and/or the affected certificate.

## NONCONFORMITY MANAGEMENT

In cases where the client is unable to submit required documentation as per the timings of the IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 5.11.1 and/or 5.11.2 for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, the IATF is granting an additional extension of a maximum of ninety (90) calendar days for all the relevant required steps to be completed (including the timing requirements of the IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 5.11.3), as applicable. The additional extension is to be understood as a maximum potential extension to the overall process and not to be understood as a potential extension for every single step. This results in an overall extension of a maximum of ninety (90) calendar days to resolve the corrective action process.

In cases where the client is unable to complete the corrective action process defined by IATF Rules 5th Edition sections 5.11.1 or 5.11.2, or the CB is unable to complete an onsite special audit to verify the effective implementation of the corrective actions, for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CB can consider the nonconformity to be 100% resolved, if the following conditions have been met:

- a) The nonconformity management 90-day extension has been exceeded, and
- b) The client submits the evidence that meets the requirements of IATF Rules 5th Edition sections 5.11.3 a) and b)

When a major nonconformity is considered to be open but 100% resolved, the certification body schedules an onsite special audit as soon as onsite audits are permitted.

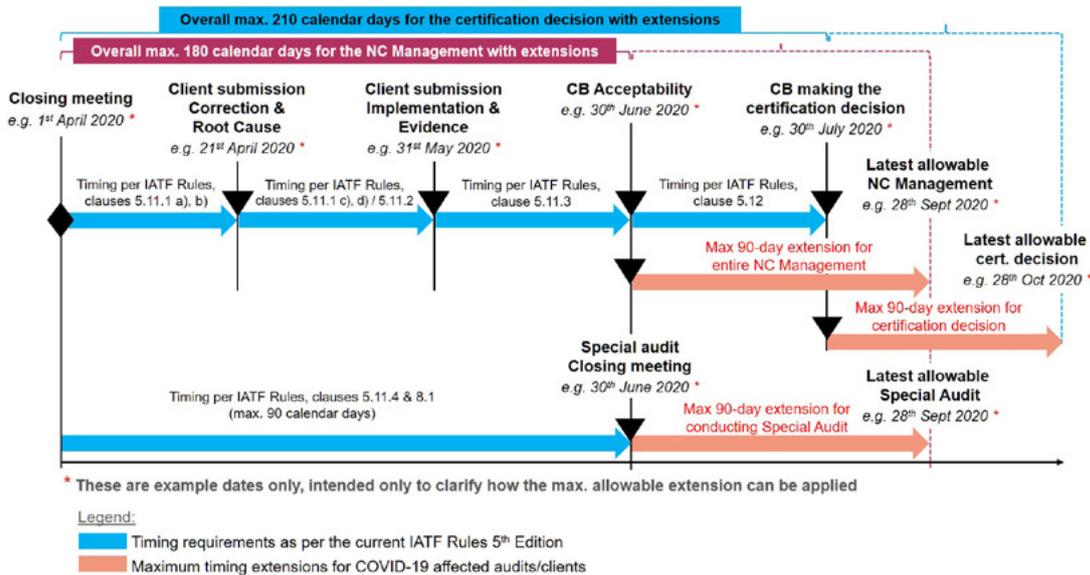
When a minor nonconformity is considered to be open but 100% resolved, onsite verification of the corrective action is at the discretion of the CB per IATF Rules 5th Edition 5.11.5. The certification body shall review the corrective action evidence submitted by the client and determine the next steps per the process for minor nonconformities in IATF Rules 5th edition 5.11.

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*NOTE: For minor nonconformities that are 100% resolved for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, an onsite special audit is not required prior to the next planned onsite audit. However, for major nonconformities, an onsite special audit is required when onsite audits are permissible.*

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In cases where the client cannot submit the required documentation or it is found not to be acceptable and the extension is exceeded, the final audit result shall be considered failed, the IATF database shall be updated and the certificate withdrawn.



## CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

As described in the above sections “Special audits” and “Nonconformity management”, the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days for submitting data and conducting a special audit. Subsequently the IATF is granting an additional maximum extension of ninety (90) calendar days that can be applied to making a certification decision.

## AUDITOR ASSIGNMENTS

In cases where the original audit team member(s) cannot be assigned to an on-site audit due to official travel restrictions, the IATF-recognized certification body may assign new audit team member(s) to an audit (see IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 5.6 – force majeure). The IATF-recognized certification body shall determine additional audit days, if required, based on experience with the client.

The newly assigned audit team member(s) are permitted to participate on the audit team for the subsequent three (3) year audit cycle.

## **CERTIFICATION BODY INTERNAL AUDITS**

Section moved to the CB Communiqué no. 2020-008

## **IATF 16949 3RD PARTY AUDITOR WAIVERS**

Section moved to the CB Communiqué no. 2020-008

# IATF 16949 MONITORING

## Definition

The IATF has developed and approved a monitoring method for IATF-recognized certification bodies and their certified clients that are affected by the current global COVID-19 pandemic. This method is named “IATF 16949 Monitoring” and is described in the following process.

This “IATF 16949 Monitoring” is a method for IATF-recognized certification bodies to request information from IATF 16949-certified clients to remotely monitor and assess the status of the client’s certified Quality Management System (QMS) only if a regular onsite audit cannot be conducted for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Objective/Purpose:

The IATF 16949 Monitoring is not to be understood as a “remote audit.” Its purpose is for the IATF-recognized certification body (CB) to remotely monitor the status of the client’s Quality Management System to assess the continued effectiveness of the client’s Quality Management System to the requirements of IATF 16949 during this extraordinary period of the COVID-19 pandemic and to proactively identify potential risks with the certified Quality Management System of a certified client that could also constitute a risk to the client’s customers.

The IATF 16949 Monitoring event is not an audit, and therefore, nonconformities cannot be written as a result of identifying gaps or risks during an IATF 16949 Monitoring.

The IATF 16949 monitoring shall only occur when the following criteria are met:

- a) The client is currently manufacturing automotive parts or products for customers (even if the volume of manufactured parts is significantly reduced), and
- b) The IATF 16949 3rd party audit cannot be conducted onsite for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If the above criteria are not met, a regular onsite audit shall take place.

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*NOTE 1: An onsite audit is to be conducted by the certification body if the client is currently manufacturing automotive parts or products and the auditor is permitted to go onsite before the end of the 2nd 90 day extension (see surveillance section).*

*NOTE 2: Recertification, initial, special and transfer audits are excluded from this process.*

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The IATF 16949 Monitoring shall be scheduled only if it is demonstrably impossible for reasons that are directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic to conduct a regular onsite audit and if the timing of the monitoring event is between 30 days prior to the end of the 2nd 90-day COVID-19 extension and 60 days after the end of the second 90-day COVID-19 extension (during the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period, see surveillance audit section).

### IATF 16949 Monitoring Information

The certification body shall notify clients that the following information shall be available at the time of the IATF 16949 Monitoring event. The following information a) through t) shall include processes and performance results for both the manufacturing site and for any applicable Remote Support Location(s) linked to the manufacturing site.

- a) the number of employees of the site and all associated remote support location(s);
- b) the client's Quality Management System documentation, including evidence about conformity to IATF 16949 requirements and showing the linkages and interfaces to any remote support functions and/or outsourced processes;
- c) customer and internal performance data since the previous audit;
- d) customer satisfaction and complaint summary since the previous audit, including a copy of the latest customer reports and/or scorecards;
- e) identification of any customer special status condition since the previous audit;
- f) notification about any new customers since the previous audit;
- g) results of internal audits and management review since the previous audit, including extraordinary measures due to COVID-19;
- h) Start up verification plan/risks identified etc. (after medium term shut-downs [greater than 1 month] associated with the COVID-19 pandemic);
- i) Equipment Maintenance status;
- j) Measurement equipment calibration status;
- k) Length of time the client was shut down (as applicable);
- l) Resources lost due to COVID-19 pandemic;
- m) List any processes distributed across different locations or regions impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- n) Changes in regulations or operating conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic (including operator safety);
- o) List of customer CSRs which cannot be met and corrective action plans to address the gap(s);

- p) List of customers to the site identifying which are operational or not;
- q) Major changes in the QMS since the prior onsite audit;
- r) Identification of any new products or processes initiated just before the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- s) Whether or not the client has multiple customer programs, new program launches and stage/maturity of the launches; and
- t) Whether or not the site has safety – critical commodities.

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*NOTE: Safety-critical parts or products are those which include characteristics identified by risk analysis (such as FMEAs) and to be important to meet customer/regulatory safety requirements (such as being assigned a severity of 9 or 10 in FMEAs).*

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**CBs shall analyze the client-provided information** to assess the effectiveness of the client's certified QMS. During the remote IATF 16949 Monitoring, per the CB analysis, the CB shall focus its questions to the client on that information which appears to pose the greatest risks and what is unclear.

### Conducting an IATF 16949 Monitoring

The above event shall be conducted by a qualified 3rd Party IATF 16949 auditor, preferably the lead auditor of one of the audits in the current audit cycle. If the lead auditor is not available, the IATF 16949 Monitoring may be conducted by an auditor who was part of an audit team for the site in the current cycle.

The duration of the IATF 16949 Monitoring shall be a minimum of 1 working day (8 hours).

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*NOTE 1: the Certification body should consider the size of the organization when determining the number of days for the IATF 16949 Monitoring event.*

*NOTE 2: IATF reserves the right to witness any of the IATF 16949 Monitoring events. The client cannot refuse the witnessing of an IATF 16949 Monitoring event by an IATF witness auditor.*

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To ensure robust IATF 16949 Monitoring, the IATF 16949 certification body auditor and the client shall follow the guidance outlined in IAF ID 12 (Principles on Remote Assessment) and MD 4 (Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Auditing/Assessment Purposes).

[IAF ID 12 \(Principles on Remote Assessment\)](#)

[IAF MD 4 \(Use of ICT for Auditing/Assessment Purposes\)](#)

## Output of an IATF 16949 Monitoring

The IATF 16949 certification body auditor conducting the IATF 16949 Monitoring activity shall analyze all information gathered during this IATF 16949 Monitoring and establish the conclusion.

The auditor shall identify any risks to the customer(s) and/or issues found with respect to the effective implementation of the quality management system related to the items a) through t) above.

The certification body shall issue a written report to the client.

The written report shall include a description of the auditor's recommendation to the certification body.

Recommendation options made by the auditor based on risk are:

- A) **Incomplete IATF 16949 Monitoring** due to not all items a) through t) above being available and presented during the IATF 16949 Monitoring
  - a) Additional IATF 16949 Monitoring event(s) required within the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period or the certificate is withdrawn
- B) **Low risk to the customer or to the QMS identified**
  - a) The IATF 16949 Monitoring can replace the original surveillance manufacturing site audit
    - I) if the next audit is a surveillance audit, the onsite audit days **shall** be equivalent to recertification audit days.
    - II) If the next audit is a recertification audit, the onsite audit days **shall** be equivalent to stage 2 audit days.
- C) **High risk to the customer or to the QMS identified**
  - a) Conduct additional IATF 16949 Monitoring event(s) during the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period to review the client's corrective action responses to the high risks identified, until low risk is achieved.
  - b) Withdraw the certificate if a low risk assessment is not achieved before the end of the IATF 16949 Monitoring Period.

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*NOTE: if high risk is initially assessed, all evidence for items a) through t) must meet the requirements for low risk (including current customer and other performance metrics) during a subsequent IATF 16949 Monitoring event; otherwise the certificate is to be withdrawn.*

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Low risk assessment means low likelihood throughout the client's operations of non-conforming product (to quality and delivery requirements) reaching the customer.

High risk assessment means high likelihood anywhere within the client's operations of non-conforming product (to quality and delivery requirements) reaching the customer.

The certification body shall issue the final written IATF 16949 Monitoring report within seven (7) calendar days of each IATF 16949 Monitoring.

The final written report of an IATF 16949 Monitoring shall contain the following information:

- a) scope, products, and a list of all automotive customers whose performance information was reviewed and analyzed during this IATF 16949 Monitoring;
- b) total number of employees on site, including permanent, part time, contract, the average number of daily workers, and temporary employees. For a single site with an extended manufacturing site certificate structure, the total number of employees at each site shall be identified separately;
- c) list of all automotive customers and, if applicable, the latest date of their customer-specific requirements;
- d) list of IATF OEM supplier codes of the client manufacturing site;
- e) summary of the client's performance (i.e., product quality, delivery, and special status) to the IATF OEM customers;
- f) information on the performance of each process audited (i.e., defined objectives, targets, and current performance);
- g) names of the audit team and any technical expert or translator used, where relevant;
- h) if a remote support location is included as a part of this report, the report shall include their address, their functions, a list of the sites it supports, and a written description of the interactions;
- i) the auditor recommendation to the certification body decision function (e.g. qualified and approved Veto Power) for review;
- j) for a single site with an extended manufacturing site certification structure, the report shall include the complete address of all sites, including the identification of the main manufacturing site and the complete scope of the certification covering all sites;
- k) any risks to the customer and/or issues found with respect to the effective implementation of the Quality Management System; and
- l) Identification of risks to the Quality Management System and customer(s) associated with IATF 16949 Monitoring information items a) through t) above.

The certification body decision function shall make a decision on the recommendation of the auditor after reviewing the content of the written IATF 16949 Monitoring report. The decision shall be to confirm the level of risk assessed by the auditor, the identified risks and any recommended subsequent actions. Before a decision is made, the certification decision function may require additional information in order to clarify any aspect of the auditor's final written IATF 16949 Monitoring report.

A decision shall be made within a maximum of twenty (20) calendar days from the last day of the IATF 16949 Monitoring event.

The certification body shall enter the IATF 16949 Monitoring in the IATF database, including the IATF 16949 Event recommendation and a summary of the risks in the comment field, within twenty (20) calendar days of the IATF 16949 Monitoring.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

## Updated FAQ

### 1 Can the upcoming audit be conducted remotely by using web-conference tools or similar?

This fifth Revision of the document introduces the option of remote auditing.

### 2 If the client is manufacturing automotive parts, but with a reduced headcount, how should the audit days be calculated?

There is currently no change to the requirements of IATF Rules 5th Edition. The certification body shall determine the number of audit days based on the total number of employees (as per IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 5.2). The number of employees includes permanent, part time, contract and the average number of daily workers for the previous six (6) month period and temporary employees. The total number of employees does include all employees that are under contract to the client even if these employees might not currently be actively involved in the on-site activities of the client.

### 3 During this crisis the conducting of internal system audits by certified organizations in accordance with the requirements of the IATF 16949 Standard (i.e. sections 9.2 and the subsequent sections) may be restricted or limited. How shall compliance with these requirements be justified and documented?

Even during this crisis, the basic requirements outlined in section 9.2.2.1 are still applicable. The requirements specify, for example, "The audit programme shall be prioritized based upon risk, internal and external performance trends, and criticality of the process(es)." Therefore, this requirement already covers the risk associated with conducting internal audits. In this crisis, the risk for the safety and health of internal auditors and auditees is at an even higher priority than during "normal" times. The organization shall determine the risk associated with physical on-site audits and potentially consider other auditing methods (e.g. remote audits), providing the organization is able to demonstrate the effectiveness of these auditing methods and associated risk assessments.

**4 If the organization is on a 6-month surveillance audit interval and the next surveillance audit (e.g. April 2020) was delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic, can the two 6-month surveillance audits (e.g. April 2020 and October 2020) be combined into a single annual surveillance audit?**

Yes. The two surveillance audits can be combined into a single annual surveillance audit. The new combined surveillance audit shall be scheduled based on the allowable timing and intervals in IATF Rules 5th Edition, 5.1.1. for the second surveillance audit (e.g. October 2020). No waiver is required to change the interval. The duration of the combined surveillance audit is based on the total number of audit days that would have been conducted with the two separate surveillance audits.

**5 Does a certificate suspension affect the validity of the IATF 16949 certification?**

No. During the suspension period, the certificate remains valid and is still recognized by the IATF, per the definition in the IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 8.3.

**6 Is the certification body required to complete the Annex 3 (Table for documenting the output of the audit planning process) document, per IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 5.7.2, for each the IATF Monitoring event?**

No. The IATF Monitoring event is not an audit and therefore Annex 3 is not required. However, it is up to the certification body to determine if the Annex 3 or an equivalent document should be used by the audit team to organize the Monitoring event information received from the client.

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*NOTE: since the Monitoring information items a) through t) are not required to be submitted to the CB ahead of the monitoring event, and if Annex 3 is used as described above, the first three items in Annex 3 may not be applicable.*

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**7 If a CB auditor is able to enter the organization’s site, but some of the support activity staff (all not involved in manufacturing or handling of products), normally assigned to work at the site, continue to perform their work off-site due to protection measures implemented by the organization directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic; can those off-site staff be included in the onsite audit?**

Yes. The staff off-site due to the COVID-19 pandemic can participate in the onsite audit remotely, providing the guidance outlined in IAF ID 12 and MD 4 is followed.

[IAF ID 12 \(Principles on Remote Assessment\)](#)

[IAF MD 4 \(Use of ICT for Auditing/Assessment Purposes\)](#)

**8 If a CB auditor is able to conduct an onsite audit at a Remote Support Location, but some of the employees, (not involved in handling of product), continue to perform their work offsite due to protection measures implemented by the organization directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic; should those offsite employees be included in the onsite Remote Support Location audit?**

Yes. The Remote Support Location employees, working offsite due to the COVID-19 pandemic, should participate in the onsite Remote Support Location audit remotely, as required, providing the guidance outlined in IAF ID 12 and MD 4 is followed.

[IAF ID 12 \(Principles on Remote Assessment\)](#)

[IAF MD 4 \(Use of ICT for Auditing/Assessment Purposes\)](#)

**New FAQ**

**9 Is it possible to transfer a client whose previous audit was replaced with a IATF Monitoring event?**

Yes. However, the new certification body shall also apply the increase in audit days identified for a low risk assessment recommendation. The onsite audit days for the transfer audit would be equivalent to stage 2 audit days.

# **ANNEX A - IATF REMOTE AUDIT REQUIREMENTS**

A successful and effective remote audit requires a different approach with different technical equipment, techniques, and increased preparation time as compared with an onsite audit.

The certification body is encouraged to add time to ensure an effective and robust audit process, over and above that stated in IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 5.2, due to time to retrieve and display information, connect necessary participants, address any technology issues, allow for breaks to avoid screen fatigue, and follow audit trails beyond the initial audit plan.

## **1.0 Planning steps prior to an IATF remote audit**

The certification body shall comply with the following requirements when planning an IATF remote audit:

- 1.1 The certification body has approved the audit to be conducted remotely, based on meeting all the requirements 1.2 through 1.8 below.
- 1.2 The certification body shall have a documented agreement with the client which includes:
  - a) Identifying the specific remote audit technology(ies) to be used at each stage during the audit.
  - b) Identifying the specific equipment which may be needed for different environments (e.g. wireless connection may not work in a manufacturing environment, but a cellular connection may operate; noise cancelling headsets with microphones may be needed).
  - c) Confidentiality requirements and how the information requested during the audit is to be shared (e.g. via email vs. shared on the screen), what type of communication technology can be used in certain facilities (e.g. some areas may not allow video- refer to 1.3 below).
  - d) An audit coordinator (or host) for the audit is identified. This coordinator manages connections, availability of auditees and manages technical issues throughout the entire audit. It may be necessary to have more than one coordinator, especially if there is more than one CB auditor with parallel audits being conducted simultaneously.
  - e) Contingency plan, in case technology fails or becomes unavailable during the audit.
  - f) Availability of client backup equipment, including fully charged batteries for mobile equipment, in case of mobile device power loss or other failure.

- 1.3 The client communicates internally to all auditees the remote auditing methods to be used, including the use of video. If any objections exist, the client shall notify the audit team prior to the start of the audit.
- 1.4 The client establishes meeting passwords and other necessary security protocols, only issued to those affected participants for each stage of the audit. The client may prefer the audit coordinator to manage that.
- 1.5 The client ensures all identified auditees are familiar with the communication technology and can use it to navigate to find information requested and that sound and video work, including for auditees working remotely.
- 1.6 The audit team conduct a successful technology test session with the client prior to the audit for all technology types to be used in all environments, facilities and locations planned for the audit. This includes all areas on the manufacturing floor as applicable (audit planning should include possible contingencies for possible trails, recognizing that some specific individuals identified for the audit may not be needed during the audit due to contingencies).
- 1.7 The audit team ensures they have backup equipment in case of mobile device power loss or other failure.
- 1.8 The audit team and the client follow the guidance outlined in IAF ID 12 (Principles on Remote Assessment) and MD 4 (Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Auditing/Assessment Purposes):

[IAF ID 12 \(Principles on Remote Assessment\)](#)

[IAF MD 4 \(Use of ICT for Auditing/Assessment Purposes\)](#)

## **2.0 During an IATF remote audit**

The certification body shall:

- 2.1 Conduct the audit using methods and approaches to replicate an onsite audit as much as possible.
- 2.2 Require the client to ensure that all necessary and relevant client personnel are present in the opening meeting and ensure that all participants in the meeting are identified, ideally using a camera to see each person.
- 2.3 Require the client to ensure that the auditees are available during the audit and connected prior to speaking with the auditor.
- 2.4 Require the audit team and the auditees to activate their camera(s) to capture as much of the body language as possible when auditing. If bandwidth limitations occur in a group meeting, ask all other attendees to turn off their video when one person is being audited.
- 2.5 Ensure that for each day the client has backup devices and / or fully charged back up batteries / portable battery chargers.

- 2.6 Ensure that regular short breaks are taken to avoid screen fatigue.
- 2.7 Ensure the audit team follows all confidentiality and data transmission protocols agreed with the client.
- 2.8 Ensure that the audit team maintains full control of the audit steps and discussion to ensure:
  - a) The coordinator is not responding for the auditees;
  - b) If a mobile camera is used to show evidence or a location, the audit team chooses where to look, not the person holding the camera;
  - c) Verbal communication is clear between the audit team and all participants in the audit, repeating and clarifying questions or instructions, if needed; and
  - d) If the audit team needs to see something close-up that the technology can support the required image resolution, including use of a different device to take and send pictures as applicable.

## CONTACTS



### ANFIA

Contact: Marco Mantoan  
Corso Galileo Ferraris, 61  
10128 Torino  
Italy  
Tel: +39 011 545160  
E-mail: [m.mantoan@anfia.it](mailto:m.mantoan@anfia.it)  
Site: [www.anfia.it](http://www.anfia.it)



### SMMT

Contact: Niall Kealey  
2680 Kings Court  
Birmingham Business Park  
Birmingham B37 7YE  
United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 121 717 6600  
E-mail: [nkealey@smt.co.uk](mailto:nkealey@smt.co.uk)  
Site: [www.smtoversight.co.uk](http://www.smtoversight.co.uk)



### IAOB

Contact: James S. Bruin  
26200 Lahser Road, Suite 320  
Southfield Michigan 48033  
USA  
Tel: +1 248 836 7314  
E-mail: [james.bruin@iaob.org](mailto:james.bruin@iaob.org)  
Site: [www.iaob.org](http://www.iaob.org)



Qualitäts Management Center  
im Verband der Automobilindustrie

### VDA QMC

Contact: Norbert Hass  
Behrenstrasse 35  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
Tel: +49 30 8978 42 - 240  
E-mail: [norbert.hass@vda-qmc.de](mailto:norbert.hass@vda-qmc.de)  
Site: [www.vda-qmc.de](http://www.vda-qmc.de)



### IATF France

Contact: Eric Canu  
28 Rue Bretonnerie  
95300 Pontoise  
France  
Tel: +33 6 81847019  
E-mail: [eric.canu@iatf-france.fr](mailto:eric.canu@iatf-france.fr)  
Site: [www.iatf-france.fr](http://www.iatf-france.fr)