

To:

VDA QMC Certification Bodies recognized by the IATF
and IATF Stakeholders

Date
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Issuance of (major) nonconformities at IATF 16949 3rd Party Audits

Dear VDA QMC Certification Bodies recognized by the IATF, and IATF Stakeholders,

Please note that the IATF Oversight Office at the VDA QMC would like to emphasize the definition(s) of the IATF (International Automotive Task Force) for classifying a nonconformity as a minor or major nonconformity.

All VDA QMC Certification Bodies recognized by the IATF, and their auditors are requested to pay special attention to the definition of a major nonconformity when identifying weaknesses of a client's quality management system at any audit.

As per the IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 10.0, a major nonconformity is to be issued if one or more of the following exist:

- The absence of or total breakdown of a system to meet an IATF 16949 requirement. A number of minor nonconformities against one requirement can represent a total breakdown of the system and thus be considered a major nonconformity.
- Any noncompliance that would result in the probable shipment of nonconforming product. A condition that may result in the failure or materially reduce the usability of the products or services for their intended purpose.
- A noncompliance that judgment and experience indicate is likely either to result in the failure of the quality management system or to materially reduce its ability to ensure controlled processes and products.

While in some situations the likelihood for issuing a major nonconformity is greater than in other situations (due to the nature of the identified weakness), the Certification Bodies and their auditor(s) are still required to always evaluate all available information including risks associated with the situation before deciding on issuing a nonconformity and determining its classification.

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Example: if during an IATF 16949 audit the organization cannot provide objective evidence of back-up/alternative infrastructure equipment, the auditor(s) shall review and evaluate beside other information as a minimum the following information provided by the organization:

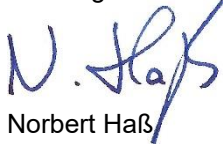
- the identified internal and external risks to all manufacturing processes and infrastructure equipment essential to maintain production output (see the requirements of IATF 16949, clause 6.1.2.3 a) and c) incl. revised SI no. 3);

NOTE: the above site-specific risk analysis typically includes an assessment of the likelihood and the potential impact of a failure of the infrastructure equipment;

- the defined contingency plans for the failure of infrastructure equipment according to the result of the above risk analysis (IATF 16949, clause 6.1.2.3 b);
- alternative contingency measures implemented by the organization to ensure continuity of supply (e.g. backup infrastructure equipment or appropriate service contracts, safety stock, auxiliary sources, etc.);
- compliance with customer and customer specific requirements.

Based on the consideration of all available information, the auditor(s) shall decide in the above example on the issuance of a nonconformity against IATF 16949, section 6.1.2.3, and determine its classification to be either a minor or major nonconformity based on the criteria stated in the IATF Rules, 5th Edition, section 10.

Best regards / Mit freundlichen Grüßen,



Norbert Haß
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