EAGLE Certification Group

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# The Value of Upgrading from ISO 9001 to IATF 16949 and the Role of the Certification Body

# Executive Summary

Organizations in the automotive supply chain seeking to enhance their quality management systems and gain additional automotive business often transition from ISO 9001 to IATF 16949.

This white paper outlines the key differences between the two standards, highlights the strategic value of upgrading, and explains the role a competent Certification Body (CB) plays in supporting a successful transition. For organizations already certified to ISO 9001, upgrading to IATF 16949 can strengthen quality performance, improve operational consistency, and better position the organization for current and future automotive opportunities.

# Introduction

ISO 9001 provides a robust framework for quality management across industries. Specific to the automotive industry, the International Automotive Task Force (IATF) has built the IATF 16949 standard to build on the foundation created by the ISO 9001 standard with additional requirements tailored to the automotive manufacturing supply chain. Some of these automotive-specific elements include defect prevention, traceability, and customer-specific requirements.

Implementation of a Quality Management System (QMS) that conforms to IATF 16949 requires a team approach. The team must understand their organization's customer-specific requirements and effectively use the automotive Core Tools required to elevate their IATF QMS. These tools include: Advanced Product Quality Planning (APQP), Control Plan, Failure Mode Effects Analysis (FMEA), Measurement System Analysis (MSA), Production Part Approval Process (PPAP), and Statistical Process Control (SPC). These tools, along with increased requirements for risk analysis related to product recalls, complaints, scrap, and rework, create a robust quality system that enforces the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle.

# Key Differences in IATF 16949

IATF 16949 requires that suppliers build resiliency through the development and implementation of a **comprehensive contingency plan**. The contingency plan must include recovery actions in the case of utility interruptions or cyber-security events. The intent of requiring contingency plans is to ensure that the supplier maintains shipping materials to keep their customers' supply chains filled.

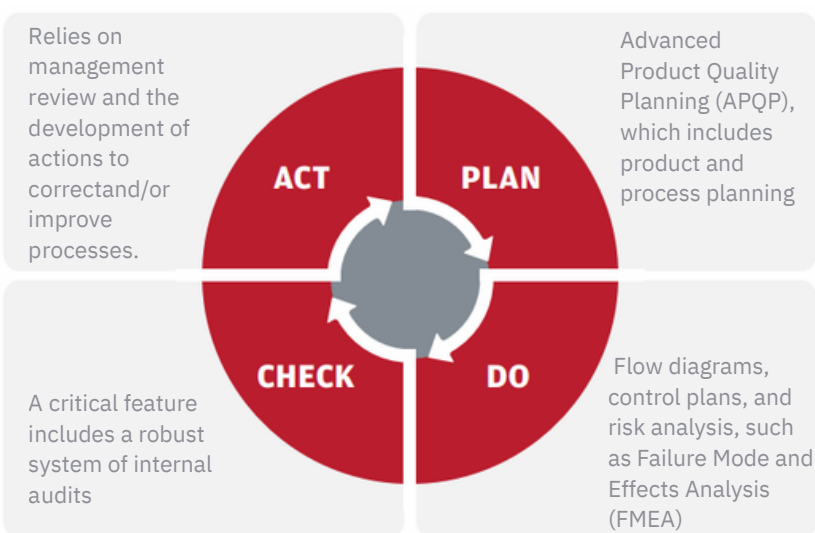
- Another source of significant requirements in IATF 16949 lies within the **control of production and service provision**. The standard requires the development of a detailed process control plan, accompanied by a process flow diagram and risk analysis, such as a Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA).
- Together, these documents comprise part of the main information submitted during the Production Part Approval Process (PPAP).
- **Internal auditing requirements** are also greatly expanded in the IATF 16949 standard compared to ISO 9001. While ISO requires an internal audit program, IATF requires a program focused on system, process, and product audits, with enhanced competency requirements for qualifying internal auditors, including knowledge of Core Tools and customer-specific requirements.
- Finally, the process of **management review** is expanded to include several inputs such as the cost of poor quality, measures of process effectiveness and efficiency, customer satisfaction (including scorecards), maintenance system performance, and potential or actual field failures. IATF 16949 also requires top management to document and implement an action plan when customer performance targets are not met.

# Key Differences in IATF 16949

**IATF 16969 greatly emphasizes the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) process.**

The ‘Plan’ stage is through Advanced Product Quality Planning (APQP), which includes product and process planning. The ‘Do’ process includes flow diagrams, control plans, and risk analysis, such as Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA). These documents are living, and must be updated when the product or process changes due to improvements or corrective actions. A critical feature of the ‘Check’ process includes a robust system of internal audits. Finally, the ‘Act’ stage relies on management review and the development of actions to correctand/or improve processes.

While ISO lays the framework for the PDCA process, IATF has more specific and rigorous requirements related to automotive parts manufacturing.



# The Strategic Value of Upgrading

Many organizations that are required by customers to upgrade from ISO 9001 to IATF 16949 only have a portion of their business dedicated to supplying the automotive industry. The percentage of this type of business may be small, and its future automotive opportunities may be unknown. As a result, ISO 9001 certified suppliers must ensure that the investment required to upgrade to IATF 16949 is allocated to the profit center aligned with the automotive business. This approach is reasonable, given the substantial resources and time required to both upgrade to IATF 16949 and maintain the system over time.

In this scenario, a cost-effective option for organizations with a smaller number of automotive products is to reallocate existing resources rather than add new ones. This can help organizations focus on preventing problems rather than reacting to them.

If the company culture is focused on handling customer complaints with little time for improvement, then the IATF 16949 standard's emphasis on prevention may serve the organization well to increase efficiency and profitability.

***Employee morale will also improve when the day-to-day focus shifts from reacting to complaints to developing and executing improvement plans.***

# The Strategic Value of Upgrading cont.

Many organizations view IATF 16949 as additional steps to help safeguard products and the automotive supply chain. This is certainly accurate – more effort is needed to support the successful launch and manufacture of products. However, organizations are often unaware that the IATF standard is a collective set of requirements based on best practices for organizational success. The IATF 16949 standard follows the ISO 9001 tradition of broad requirements, leaving it up to each organization to develop processes and apply the requirements in ways that provide the most value across the business.

Automotive products in development require APQP and the application of other Core Tools, including control plans and FMEAs. In this case, rolling out control plans and FMEAs for non-automotive products seems like a tedious, unnecessary task, especially since the customers do not require automotive quality controls.

***However, if an organization focuses on what issues exist in non-automotive products and document them using an FMEA, then the path for continual improvement across their entire business management system appears.***

Development of control plans using a cross-functional approach involving engineering, production leadership, and operators serves as an important communication tool for collecting objective data to support decision-making. This is exactly the risk-based approach and intent of both ISO 9001 and IATF 16949, ultimately driving productivity and quality improvements while lowering costs by focusing on defect prevention rather than detection.

# The Strategic Value of Upgrading cont.

IATF 16949 places significantly greater emphasis on ensuring that internal auditors are fully competent in the processes they assess, the relevant IATF Core Tools, and any applicable customer-specific requirements. Working to optimize the internal audit system is one of the best practices an organization can do to check for standardization across manufacturing lines. IATF 16949's additional requirements only serve to strengthen an internal audit system and focus on defect prevention rather than detection. **Prevention is always more cost-effective than allowing defects to reach the customer and then reacting to issues.**


Finally, assigning Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to each process and feeding top management information for decision-making and feedback on a consistent basis serves as a uniform method to further allocate resources. The information frequently helps top management make more informed decisions on capital investments, leading to more cost-effective solutions for additional business development and expansion.

# The Role of the Certification Body

## COMMUNICATION

Selecting a Certification Body for IATF 16949 is a strategic decision that directly influences the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization's certification journey. When selecting a Certification Body (CB) for IATF 16949 certification, it is important to select one that has strong and consistent communication. This is particularly important for IATF 16949 certification due to the amount of communication and information ***required*** throughout the certification and surveillance processes. The IATF Rules 6th Edition requires the submission of data from the organization to the CB multiple weeks in advance of the readiness, certification, and annual audits. A partial list of the data required includes information on new customers, revisions to customer-specific requirements, languages spoken on-site, shifts and employees per shift, the complete quality manual (including the process map), customer scorecards, customer complaints, internal audit results, and the latest management review record.

## SUPPORT LOCATIONS

Another aspect where the IATF scheme differs from ISO 9001 is the responsibility of the certified site to identify and explain support locations separately from the production site. The remote support locations are described by IATF Rules 6th Edition and include a list of 35 specific support functions, such as aftersales, calibration, management review, marketing, servicing, strategic planning, supplier management, and training. Once these support sites are described and documented within the quality manual, the CB must either audit the support sites or accept the latest audit report from their current CB (if applicable). This ensures that the quality management system's impact and efficiency across the entire organization is understood.

# The Role of the Certification Body cont.

## AUDITOR

The auditor assigned by the CB is selected based on their level of experience in the client's industry. The auditor will perform an in-depth analysis of client-submitted information to assess what processes may require additional attention during the audit. This is considered risk-based audit planning and is required in the IATF auditing scheme. Risk-based auditing is a major advantage that IATF certification adds to the organization. The auditor will spend substantial time before the audit and at the opening meeting with senior management to ensure that they receive the latest data surrounding customer satisfaction and performance of the quality management system. Underperforming processes and customer scorecards with unsatisfactory results receive more attention and audit time to ensure corrective action processes are effective. The auditor will provide a third-party viewpoint on the issues and lend expertise as it relates to the level of conformance to IATF requirements. IATF-approved auditors interpret the meaning and intent of the IATF requirements and can share some best practices that they have observed in the field.

## RELATIONSHIP

A high-quality IATF certification body must create a strong relationship with its clients to be kept aware of changes in their clients' organizations. Examples of changes that require CB notification include management and organization changes, manufacturing plant changes and expansions, and remote support and ownership. The CB will then coordinate with the assigned auditor to ensure changes are adequately covered during the audit.

# The Role of the Certification Body cont.

For multi-site organizations, the CB also works with the automotive supplier to help determine whether a corporate scheme approach to their IATF certification structure is appropriate. A corporate scheme can be applied to the certification of a multi-site organization when there are shared quality management systems, including management review, corrective action, continual improvement, and internal audit methodologies. This type of certificate structure allows for audit day reductions, streamlines the audit, and most importantly, it allows the CB's audit team to calibrate the audit approach and add value by ensuring the quality management system is consistent within each facility.

# Conclusion

Many value-added elements can be added to an automotive supplier's quality management system when upgrading an existing ISO 9001 system to IATF 16949. The value lies in the expanded requirements of IATF 16949, including contingency and resiliency planning for the organization and its supply base; implementation of a cross-functional APQP, rigorous internal auditor competency, internal audit system execution, and expanded requirements for management review. This expansion of requirements from the ISO 9001 standard adds value to an organization and greatly enhancesthe PDCA cycle.

The CB plays a key role in any upgrade to IATF 16949. Organizations must work with their CB to ensure the scope of certification is appropriate, their corporate scheme system is defined (when applicable), and to develop a robust, risk-based audit plan. The audit plan must demonstrate pertinent and timely information on the organization's performance, both internal and from the customers.

Organizations seeking to upgrade from ISO 9001 to IATF 16949 will benefit from improved planning and prevention activities and be well-positioned to eliminate variability, increase their efficiency, and ultimately supply higher-quality products through their enhanced quality management system.

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# About EAGLE Certification Group

Since 1994, EAGLE has built a reputation on providing third party auditing services that are objective and value-added. Based in Dayton Ohio, our competent, industry-experienced auditors are well-versed in helping clients ensure their quality, environmental, health and safety, or food safety management systems are robust and effective. EAGLE is ANAB-accredited and a certified, woman-owned business through the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC). EAGLE is the North American member of IQNET, a leading international association of certification bodies and fully committed to the global IAF Cert Search database, resulting in transparency and confidence that clients can trust.

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