ISO/TS 16949 becomes IATF 16949 – Transition Strategy

IATF has released an **official press release on August 9, 2016** which confirms that the new revision to ISO/TS 16949 will be published in October 2016. The new revised industry standard will be called **IATF 16949**. As was with the previous and the current revision ISO/TS 16949:2009, IATF 16949:2016 will be aligned with and refer to the most recent revision of ISO 9001:2015.

On August 10, 2016, IATF published an **IATF 16949 Transition Strategy** for transitioning from ISO/TS 16949:2009 to the new IATF 16949. While the "Transition Strategy" has outlined requirements for customers, certification bodies and auditors, what is given below are **key items that affect customers** the most. We would like to ask you to pay attention to the following and study eveything carefully as there are some changes to the previous communication from IATF.

Transition Timing Requirements

All ISO/TS 16949:2009 certificates will no longer be valid after **September 14, 2018**.

All audits **after October 1, 2017** shall be conducted to **IATF 16949**. This includes initial, surveillance, recertification & transfer audits.

a) While it is not clear what the expectation is for audits starting in September 2017 but end on or after October 1, 2017, the safe option is to conduct these audits to the new IATF 16949.

b) The initial communication from the IATF had a provision for conducting a transition audit outside the normal surveillance and recertification audit cycle (option 2 in the IATF April 2017 transition presentation). **This option is no longer available.**

The transition audit should be in line with the current audit cycle (i.e. at the surveillance/recertification audit) according to the **new timing requirements** (IATF Rules 5.11). For example:

- If a customer's **annual surveillance** is due in October 2017 (-3 months/+1 month), the surveillance audit shall be conducted to the new IATF 16949. It means that if the surveillance audit is scheduled for September 2017, it shall be conducted to the new IATF 16949.

If for some reason this timing cannot be met, then the CB will need to initiate the decertification process (IATF Rules 8.1 e). Whenever the on-site surveillance audit is conducted, the audit will be conducted to IATF 16949. The audit of course has to be conducted within the allowable decertification days (IATF Rules 8.4).

- If the customer's **recertification** is due in October 2017 (-3 months/+0 month), the recertification audit shall be to IATF 16949. It means that if the recertification audit is scheduled for September 2017, it shall be conducted to IATF 16949.

If the CB is unable to conduct the transition audit according to the timing given in the IATF Rules 5.11 (and the decertification process given in section 8.4), the customer needs to start all over again with an initial audit to IATF 16949.

However, if the initial audit to IATF 16949 is done **within 18 months** from the last on-site audit to ISO/TS 16949:2009, then no stage 1 audit is required. And the CB does not need to request a waiver from the oversight office (VDA). However, if the audit is beyond the 18 months from the last on-site audit to ISO/TS 16949:2009, an on-site stage 1 is needed.

c) In the "transition strategy" document, IATF has also clearly mentioned that a **transfer** to a new certification body **is not permitted during the transition audit**.

Transition Audit Requirements

IATF has communicated that the number of days for the transition audit will be equivalent to that of a recertification audit as given in IATF Rules, Table 5.2.

a) The initial communication from the IATF had a requirement that an **additional 0.5 - 1 day** was to be added to the transition audit. **This requirement has been withdrawn** with the following condition:

- An off-site documentation review needs to be done prior to the transition audit. This off-site review at a minimum needs to cover the QMS documentation (i.e. quality manual & procedures), including evidences of conformity to IATF 16949 requirements.
- If the customer does not provide the required information for us to conduct an effective off-site review, the audit plan needs to include a minimum of 0.5 additional days on-site to review the missing information.
- This additional 0.5 days minimum will be carried out prior to the preliminary meeting that is required by the IATF Rules.

b) The "transition strategy" document also confirms that **all supporting functions (on-site or remote)** need to be included in the transition process in line with the current ISO/TS 16949:2009 audit cycle.

The document seems to recommend that the transition audits for remote supporting functions should be done prior to the transition audit of the relevant manufacturing site. This could pose a significant challenge.

- The document has made a provision for "exceptional" cases for remote supporting functions. In such "exceptional" cases where the remote supporting function is not in a position to complete the transition to IATF 16949 prior to the audit of the relevant manufacturing site, the customer needs to conduct a full gap analysis according to IATF 16949 requirements. The gap analysis report and detailed action plans, if any, have to be made available at the transition audit of the relevant manufacturing site.
- If the gap analysis report & related action plans cannot be provided at the transition audit of the relevant manufacturing site, then the audit at this site is to be declared as "failed" & this site will have a full initial audit.

Initial Certification to IATF 16949

a) **Upgrades from ISO 9001:2015** to IATF 16949 using upgrade days (**max. 30% reduction** from the initial stage 2 days) are possible, provided the CB that does the IATF 16949 audit is the same CB that does the existing ISO 9001:2015 audit.

If the customer decides to transfer their ISO 9001:2015 certification to a new CB, the new CB needs to conduct at least one surveillance audit to ISO 9001:2015 before undertaking the upgrade audit to IATF 16949.
Upgrade discounts are not possible for customers with a valid ISO 9001:2008 certificate. Full initial stage 2 audit days will be needed in this case.

b) **Upgrades from VDA 6.1 & ISO 9001:2015** are possible with a **max. of 50% reduction** from the initial stage 2 days. Upgrade discounts are not possible for customers with a valid VDA 6.1 & ISO 9001:2008 certificate. Full initial stage 2 audit days will be needed in this case.

The "transition strategy" document is silent on the need to conduct at least one surveillance audit to VDA 6.1 & ISO 9001:2015 prior to the upgrade to IATF 16949, if a client decides to transfer their VDA 6.1 & ISO 9001:2015 to a new CB. For the moment, we will consider that the rule that applies for ISO 9001:2015 transfers also applies for VDA 6.1 & ISO 9001:2015 transfers.

c) In the above 2 cases, if the scope is expanded, 100% of the required stage 2 audit days will apply.

d) For an organization that has an existing **"letter of conformance"** to ISO/TS 16949:2009, 100% of the required stage 2 audit days will apply for the IATF 16949 audit.

e) In all cases, an **on-site stage 1 audit is a requirement**.

The "transition strategy" document contains other requirements for transition audit team, audit report content, NC management & certification issuance. These requirements are only important to a CB and will be communicated separately at the end of August 2016.

The **IATF Press Release** of August 9, 2016 and the **IATF 16949 Transition Strategy** of August 10, 2016 are both available on the official IATF website.