



IATF Oversight Certification Body Communiqué

**CB COMMUNIQUE # 2020-001
REVISION 01**

	YES	NO
CONFIDENTIAL		X
MANDATORY CONTENT	X	

ISSUE DATE: February 2020

Re-ISSUED: March 2020

SUBJECT: Coronavirus 2019-nCoV – IATF approved global waivers in response to manage related extraordinary events

The purpose of this Certification Body Communiqué is to advise all IATF-recognized certification bodies (and subsequently all affected certified organisations and other stakeholders) that the IATF has approved **additional** global waivers in response to the outbreak of the recent coronavirus, affecting certification activities **globally**. **The below described 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.**

Additional comments, waivers and measures in this revised CB Communiqué are highlighted in blue text.

Due to this extraordinary event certification bodies may temporarily be unable to carry out specific certification-related activities, mainly but not limited to on-site audits.

The IATF-recognized certification bodies need to establish (in consultation with certified clients) a reasonable planned course of action outlining the steps they will take in the event an IATF 16949 certified organization is affected by this extraordinary event.

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 certification body is required to document the justification and all related information in the following cases internally.

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, 5th Edition. This extra time will allow for a certain flexibility and prolongation of activities for affected audits and certification activities.

Affected certification-related activities:

1. On-site audits

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 sixty (60) calendar days to commence the stage 2 audit.

cont. Stage 2 audits:

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 sixty (60) calendar days to commence with the 50% reduction in the stage 2 audit 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 fifty (150) 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 “reapply for another letter of conformance, the IATF is granting an additional extension of sixty (60) calendar days to commence with the 50% reduction in the stage 2 audit after the expiration date of the letter of conformance.

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 starting the decertification process. In these situations, the decertification process has to be initiated only if the additional allowable timing is exceeded.

In Cases where the decertification process has already been initiated as per IATF Rules, 5th Edition, clause 8.1 e) and the rescheduled surveillance audit cannot be conducted within the ninety (90) calendar days from the suspension of the certificate, the IATF is granting an additional extension of **ninety (90) calendar days** to commence with the rescheduled surveillance audit.

Recertification audits:

In cases where the required recertification audit cannot be conducted within the allowable interval and timing as per the IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 5.1.1, the IATF is granting an additional extension to commence with the recertification audit **within thirty (30) calendar days after the expiration date of the recent/last valid IATF 16949 certificate**. While an extension to the certificate cannot be applied, these **late** recertification audits can be conducted without additional requirements. The IATF is aware that this might result in a time without a valid IATF 16949 certificate until the positive certification decision is made.

Transfer audits:

In cases where the required on-site transfer audit timing cannot be met (see IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 7.1.1), the IATF is granting an additional extension to commence with the transfer audit latest prior to the expiration date of the currently valid IATF 16949 certificate. While an extension to the certificate cannot be applied, the transfer audit can be conducted without additional requirements. The IATF is aware that this might result in a defined period without a valid IATF 16949 certificate until a positive certification decision is made.

In cases where a transfer audit is planned to take place during the surveillance audit cycle, the previous certification body will apply the above described global waiver conditions for not conducting a surveillance audit in time (IATF is granting an additional extension of sixty (60) calendar days without starting the decertification process).

Special audits (and potentially affected certification decision):

In cases where a (required) special audit on-site cannot be conducted, the IATF is granting an additional extension of sixty (60) calendar days to commence with the special audit. The IATF is aware that this might affect e.g. situations to investigate performance complaints or to verify effective implementation of corrective actions. A subsequent extension of a maximum of sixty (60) calendar days is therefore granted in situations where a certification decision could not be made based on a postponed on-site special audit.

The IATF is also aware that an extension to conduct a required special 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.

2. Nonconformity management

In cases where the client is unable to submit required documentation as per the timings of the IATF Rules 5th Edition, the IATF is granting an additional extension of a maximum of sixty (60) calendar days for the relevant required steps. [This includes a potential extension of a maximum of sixty \(60\) calendar days for late certification decision as a consequence of the late submission of the required documentation.](#)

3. Certification decision

As described in the section “Special audits” [and](#) “Nonconformity management” above, the IATF is granting an additional extension of sixty (60) calendar days for making a certification decision in situations where a certification decision could not be made based on a postponed on-site special audit [and/or the late submission of required documentation.](#)

4. Auditor assignment

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

5. Certification Body internal witness audit

In cases where the relevant audit has to be postponed which was planned for an internal witness audit, the IATF is granting an extension to the required timing(s) for conducting an internal witness audit. It is recognized that the planning of a new internal witness audit might take additional time, therefore an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days is granted to the internal witness audit timing.

6. IATF witness audits and office assessments

The IATF will also be required to cancel or postpone IATF witness audits or office assessments. The IATF is taking into consideration situations in which countries are imposing different measures, e.g. travel restrictions. Additionally, we are aware of situations where organizations have imposed their own restrictions to limit the access for visitors and certification bodies are limiting travel activities of their auditors. Nonetheless, it is in the interest of all stakeholders to keep up the normal processes (including the monitoring activities of the IATF) where possible.

7. IATF 16949 3rd party auditor related global waivers

Audits:

In cases where auditors are unable to meet the current requirements of the IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 4.5.1 (a minimum of one (1) IATF 16949 audit per quarter which might also be resulting in fewer than ten (10) audit days per year), the IATF will not require an individual waiver. The above-mentioned requirements will be globally waived for the 1st half of the year 2020 resulting in no deactivations based on those situations.

ADP Proctored Events:

The IATF cancelled several ADP Proctored Sessions due to the outbreak of the virus and will continue to do so whenever needed. In cases where auditors are affected by such a cancellation, the certification body shall contact the relevant IATF Oversight Office for an individual waiver. The IATF will grant up to a maximum of six (6) months of extensions to the auditor's current expiration date.

Initial qualifications:

The IATF cancelled several initial qualification events due to the outbreak of the virus and will continue to do so whenever needed. In situations where the auditor candidates are unable to meet the full qualification within the required 12 months due to cancellations of events, the IATF Training Organizations can apply an additional extension up to six (6) months to this timing requirement.

The IATF continues to closely monitor the situation and will decide on further adjustments if needed. If you have any questions, please contact your relevant IATF Oversight Office.

Stay safe and healthy.