

REVISION 7

Dated 1 February 2022



International Automotive Task Force

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

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

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

The 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**

REVISION 6

Revision 6 – dated 1 June 2021

The sixth Revision incorporates the following updates:

- Two new Frequently Asked Question (FAQs) were added: FAQs no. 10 and no. 11
- Best Practices for remote audits were added
- Minor clarifications were introduced on several pages

REVISION 7

Revision 7 – dated 1 February 2022

This seventh Revision incorporates the following updates:

- Revised requirements to clarify that time shall be applied to remote audit planning and that certification bodies are required to add time to the remote audit days
- New requirements added to clarify that the certification decision following a recertification or transfer audit shall be made prior to the original expiration date of the existing certificate
- New requirement added to clarify when to cancel certificates that were granted a global six (6) months extension
- Clarified the audit days reduction for a subsequent remotely conducted stage 2 audit after the issuance of a Letter of Conformance as a result of a remote initial audit
- Clarified throughout the text that Stage 1 is a Readiness Review
- Added new FAQ 12
- Clarified in Annex A, for remotely conducted audits, which topics are incremental to an onsite audit opening meeting agenda
- Requirements previously contained within Revision 4 of this document are no longer available in this Revision 7 of the document but have been moved to a separate document for historical reference. This separate document is available through the following link: [IATF-Measures-Coronavirus-Pandemic-COVID-19-REVISION-4_historical_reference](#)

All changes to the previously communicated Revision 6 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, 5th 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, 5th 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 3RD 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, 5th 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 (including for audits conducted subsequent to a remote audit):

- 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, 5th 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 **readiness review** 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.
 - In cases where the stage 2 audit is performed remotely and results in the issuance of a letter of conformance (LoC), the maximum reduction of 50% possible in audit days for the subsequent stage 2 audit is not permitted (see IATF Rules 5th Edition 5.14.3 and 5.14.4).
- 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, 5th Edition section 5.2.

The certification body shall calculate 10% of the total audit days, but no more than a maximum of ~~four (4) 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, section 1.7 „Planning steps prior to an IATF remote audit“ for details).

Effective 1st April 2022 the certification body shall increase the audit days by five (5) percent to ensure an effective and robust audit process due to the time needed to retrieve and display information, connect necessary participants, address any technology issues, and allow for breaks to avoid screen fatigue (refer to Annex A – IATF Remote Audit Requirements, sections 2.0 - 2.9 „During an IATF remote audit“ for details).

The increase in audit days shall be no less than (one) 1 hour. The increased audit time shall be determined after all permitted reductions have been applied, and after rounding per IATF Rules 5th Edition, clause 5.2.

REMOTE AUDIT PLANNING

The certification body shall comply with all requirements for establishing the audit team as defined in the IATF Rules, 5th 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 3rd 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 3rd 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.

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.

CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

The certification decision shall be made within a maximum of 120 calendar days from the last day of the recertification or transfer audit and shall be made before the original expiration of the previous certificate (not including the global extension of six (6) months, i.e., 183 calendar days). Pre- or post-dating the certification decision date is not permitted. If the certification decision timing is exceeded, the client shall start over with an initial certification audit (stage 1 readiness review and stage 2).

CERTIFICATE CANCELLATION

If the recertification audit was not conducted in accordance with the timing requirements in section 5.1.1 of the IATF Rules 5th Edition, the certification body shall cancel the client's certificate no later than 8 days after the certificate's original expiration date (not including the global extension of six (6) months, i.e., 183 calendar days).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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

The fifth Revision of the document introduced 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 **FAQ 4 is obsolete and moved to the “Historical Reference Document”**

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 **FAQ 6 is obsolete and moved to the “Historical Reference Document”**

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 \(Use of ICT for Auditing/Assessment Purposes\)](#)

9 **FAQ 9 is obsolete and moved to the “Historical Reference Document”**

1 0 **Can a blended audit approach be used where one auditor is onsite at the organization’s site and other audit team member(s) are remote for the same audit, for reasons directly related to COVID-19?**

Yes. The audit team needs to operate as if they were all onsite, auditing processes during the same period. The audit team leader must be onsite. The audit team members onsite are expected to audit the manufacturing processes and may audit other onsite processes. Other audit team member(s) can audit remotely. The audit team leader ensures the audit plan identifies which processes are audited onsite and which ones are audited remotely. There will be one opening meeting and one closing meeting for the audit. A blended audit is recorded, with justification, as a remote audit in the IATF database and in the audit report.

1 1 **If the stage 2 audit (following a stage 1 readiness review) was conducted remotely, can the audit team carryover to the subsequent recertification audit required the following year?**

Yes. Per this document, for a remotely conducted or blended Stage 2 audit (following a stage 1 **readiness review audit**), the validity of the certificate shall not exceed 12 months and the subsequent audit shall be a recertification audit. In this case, all or some of the Stage 2 auditors may conduct the subsequent recertification audit and surveillance audit cycle.

New FAQ

1 2 **Can two consecutive audits be conducted remotely?**

Yes. Per this document, **two consecutive audits can be conducted remotely since each 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“.**

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 1.9 below.
- 1.2 The certification body may decide to prevent one (or more) of its auditors from auditing onsite if the certification body determines that the auditor's safety could be at risk by being onsite.
- 1.3 The certification body shall have a standard 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.
 - g) Technology test, including a short mock audit session for each environment to test the operation and effectiveness of the remote audit.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 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, including the use of a mock audit test. 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).
- 1.8 The audit team ensures they have backup equipment in case of mobile device power loss or other failure.
- 1.9 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 Use standard list of topics to cover during the opening meeting, to ensure coverage of all required steps. **The following topics (2.3 through 2.9 below) are likely unique to remote audits and should be included with any standard list of topics used by the certification body auditor for the opening meeting for a remote audit, over and above those topics normally included in the opening meeting for an onsite audit.**
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Require the client to ensure that the auditees are available during the audit and connected prior to speaking with the auditor.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 Ensure that for each day the client has backup devices and / or fully charged back up batteries / portable battery chargers.
- 2.7 Ensure that regular short breaks are taken to avoid screen fatigue.
- 2.8 Ensure the audit team follows all confidentiality and data transmission protocols agreed with the client.
- 2.9 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, including panning the area for an overall view, not controlled by 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, with use of noise cancelling headphones/microphones 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: Giuseppe Principato
Corso Galileo Ferraris, 61
10128 Torino
Italy
Tel: +39 011 545160
E-mail: G.Principato@anfia.it
Site: 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
Site: 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
Site: www.iaob.org

VDA QMC

Verband der Automobilindustrie
Qualitäts-Management-Center

VDA QMC

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



IATF France

Contact: Liborio Salemi
28 Rue Bretonnerie
95300 Pontoise
France
Tel: +33 658 780 676
E-mail: liborio.salemi@iatf-france.fr
Site: www.iatf-france.fr