



IATF

Certification Body Communiqué

CB COMMUNIQUE # 2026-005

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	YES	NO
CONFIDENTIAL		X
MANDATORY CONTENT	X	

SUBJECT: Consistent Application of IATF CMS Complaint Handling

The purpose of this CB Communiqué is to provide supplemental guidance to support consistent, independent, and risk-based decision-making for IATF OEM customer performance complaints through the IATF Complaint Management System (IATF CMS). Certification Bodies are expected to apply the following expectations consistently when assessing IATF OEM performance complaints.

This Communiqué is supplemental guidance to IATF Rules, Section 8.0, and Rules Sanctioned Interpretations SI 22–26.

IATF CMS Stage II – CB Assessment (Rules 8.2 / Rules 8.3)

The following expectations apply to the Certification Body's initial assessment and decision-making process upon receipt of a performance complaint.

1. Review applicable IATF OEM CSR and/or IATF OEM Quick Reference Guide documents, where appropriate, to understand and correctly apply all relevant scorecard report(s) details and to be able to retrieve all necessary information concerning the customers' performance requirements.
2. Obtain customer scorecard report(s), supporting information, relevant internal performance data, and any special circumstances within the required timeframe from the client.
3. Review the currently active and any previous IATF OEM performance complaints (from the past twelve (12) months) to understand if this is an isolated event or evidence of a broader, systemic quality management system failure.
4. Evaluate current and previous complaints, customer performance data, and internal metrics to identify recurring issues, systemic QMS weaknesses, and cumulative risk.
Note: Cumulative risk shall consider frequency, duration, severity, customer impact, recurring complaints, previous certification decisions, and evidence of ineffective systemic corrective actions.
5. Make a timely decision to suspend or not suspend the certification based on available objective evidence described above.
6. Maintain an independent suspension decision and notify the Oversight Office of any attempt to influence the decision by outside parties.
7. Base certification decisions on current evidence rather than projected future performance or expected scorecard improvements in coming months.

Note 1: The possibility of adding audit time during a future audit shall not be used if a performance complaint is filed in the IATF CMS.

Note 2: A customer-approved action plan does not constitute evidence of effectiveness and should not be used as a basis for decision making at this stage of the complaint.

8. A decision not to suspend the certification can be made if there is evidence that:
- the performance complaint or performance issue was rescinded or corrected by the customer;
 - the client is transferring to another Certification Body;
 - the certificate will be cancelled, withdrawn, or will expire and no new certificate will be issued within 30 days; or
 - the performance complaint was filed against the wrong client (i.e., due to an incorrect supplier code in the IATF Database or multiple manufacturing sites sharing the same supplier code).

Note 1: The certification body must contact the relevant Oversight office if the decision is not to suspend due to the client transferring to another CB.

Note 2: A no suspension decision closes the complaint, and no further action will be required.

9. Document clear, evidence-based justification for all suspension and non-suspension decisions, including the risks evaluated and rationale used.

IATF CMS Stage III Client Self-Assessment and Stage IIIa (Rules 8.4)

The following expectations apply to the evaluation of the client's root cause analysis and systemic corrective action plan.

1. Review the client's submitted response to ensure the root cause(s) are identified, the systemic corrective action(s) address the root cause(s) and the necessary changes to the client's QMS including addressing the detection or prevention failure(s).
2. Reject corrective actions that are incomplete, superficial, do not address systemic causes, fail to identify timing, do not identify responsibility or how effectiveness of the systemic corrective actions will be verified.

IATF CMS Stage IV CB Final Analysis (Rules 8.4 / 8.5 / 8.7)

The following expectations apply to onsite special audit execution, final analysis, and certification decision-making. The certification body is responsible for:

1. Ensuring auditor assignment does not create a conflict of interest and supports an impartial evaluation.
2. Providing auditors with the most recent performance complaint details from the IATF Database, supporting documents (available in the complaint or received outside of the complaint), and previous audit results (i.e., last 3 audit reports and any special audits) before the onsite special audit.
3. Ensuring auditors review all available information and use it to plan a focused, risk-based onsite special audit. Auditors must upload the CRN into the CARA special audit report.

4. Instructing their auditors to use additional sampling and audit trails to confirm implementation and effectiveness of corrective actions and identify recurring issues or systemic risks.
5. Maintaining an independent decision to reinstate or withdraw the certificate and notifying the Oversight Office of any attempt to influence the decision by outside parties.
6. Reinstating certification by lifting the suspension only when:
 - a. Effective containment is supported by objective evidence that nonconforming products have been identified, controlled and prevented from reaching the customer, and
 - b. Implementation of effective systemic corrective actions, and
 - c. There is sustained compliance with customer performance metrics, and
 - d. Any (100%) resolved action item(s) are found to be progressing as planned according to documented timing and supported by objective evidence.

Note: Reinstatement of certification based on future projections or expectations of when the customer performance metric will improve is not acceptable.

7. Withdrawing certification in case of ineffective containment, root causes that are not addressed, corrective actions that are ineffective or incomplete, 100% resolved action item(s) that are not progressing as planned, performance issues that continue after the performance complaint was filed, or systemic improvement that is not evident.
8. Documenting clear, detailed, and evidence-based justifications for all reinstatement and withdrawal decisions.

Consistent application of these expectations is essential to maintaining the integrity of the IATF certification process and ensuring confidence across all stakeholders.

If you have any questions, please contact your respective [Oversight Office](#).