

# REVISION 1

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Dated 9 April 2020



International Automotive Task Force

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

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# CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Initial Release	4
Revision 1	4
General Remarks	5
Affected IATF 16949 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Audits	7
Nonconformity Management	10
Auditor Assignments	11
Certification Body Internal Audits	11
IATF 16949 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Auditor Waivers	12
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	13
Contacts	14

## 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 and subsequent revisions will be posted on the IATF Global Oversight website:

<https://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

This 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.

All changes to previously communicated requirements 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, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. This extra time will allow for a certain flexibility and prolongation of activities for affected audits and certification activities.

## IATF 16949 CERTIFICATES

The IATF has approved a global extension to all currently issued and valid IATF 16949 certificates.

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 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY 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 ninety (90) calendar days to commence the stage 2 audit.

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 ninety (90) calendar days to commence with a maximum reduction of 50% in the stage 2 audit days 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 eighty (180) 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 “re-apply for another letter of conformance”, the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence with a maximum of 50% reduction in the stage 2 audit days after the expiration date of the letter of conformance.

In situations where the remote supporting location cannot be audited prior to the manufacturing site, as required as per the IATF Rules 5th Edition section 5.5, the IATF-recognized Certification Body shall submit a waiver to the relevant IATF Oversight Office for consideration of approval.

## Surveillance audits:

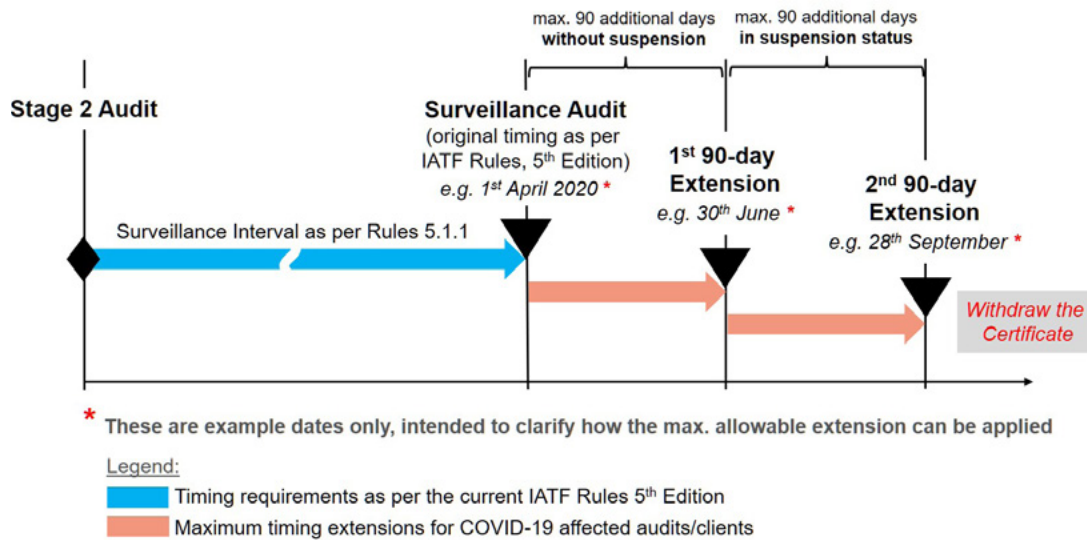
In cases where the required surveillance audit cannot be conducted within the allowable intervals and timing as per the IATF Rules, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (Table 5.1: Surveillance interval), the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence with the surveillance audit without initiating the decertification process. When this additional timing cannot be met, the decertification process shall be initiated in accordance with IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 8.1 e).

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*NOTE: during the suspension period the certificate remains valid and is still recognized by the IATF.*

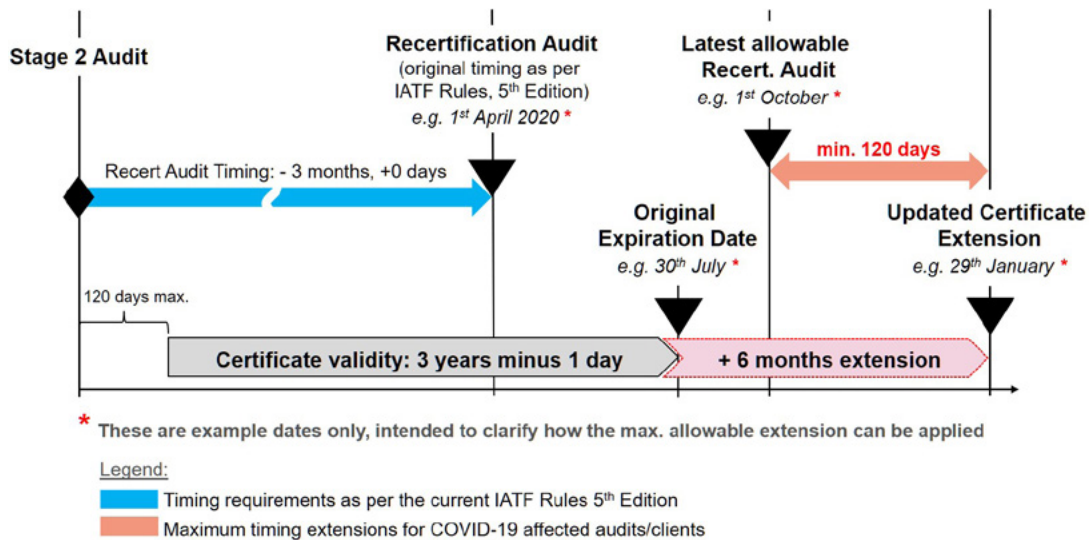
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In cases where the decertification process has already been initiated prior to 27 March 2020 as per IATF Rules, 5th Edition, section 8.1 e), the IATF-recognized Certification Body shall lift the already imposed suspension and follow the timing requirements in the paragraph above.



**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 recertification audit shall be completed no later than 120 calendar days prior to the prolonged expiration date of the relevant IATF 16949 certificate.





### Transfer audits:

In cases where a transfer audit is planned to take place at the planned recertification audit timing (see IATF Rules, 5th Edition section 7.1.1), the transfer audit shall be completed no later than 120 calendar days prior to the prolonged expiration date of the currently valid IATF 16949 certificate.

In cases where a transfer audit is planned to take place during the surveillance audit cycle, the new IATF-recognized Certification Body is still permitted to transfer the client as long as the global waiver conditions for not conducting the surveillance audit are met.

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*NOTE: if transfer requests were rejected during this extraordinary situation in the semi-automated transfer audit process of the IATF Database (refer to IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 7.1.1), the IATF-recognized Certification Body is requested to contact the relevant IATF Oversight Office.*

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### Special audits:

In cases where a (required) on-site special audit cannot be conducted, the IATF is granting an additional extension of ninety (90) calendar days to commence with the special audit.

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*NOTE: the impact of the Coronavirus may affect the site or certification process at different timing periods; for a special audit to close the major nonconformity with extended timing, please see "NONCONFORMITY MANAGEMENT"*

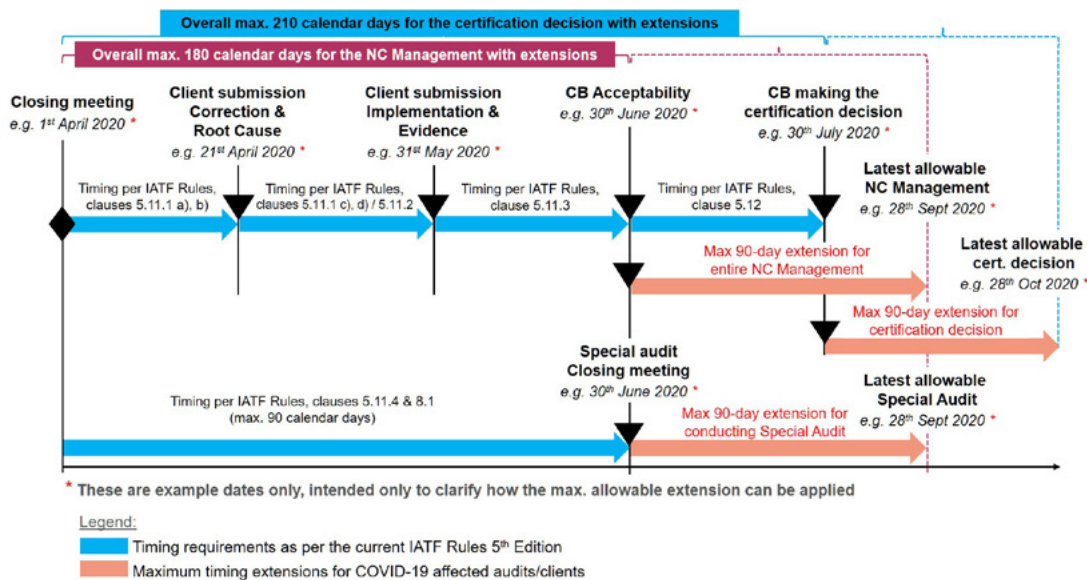
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The IATF is also aware that an extension to conduct a required special audit will result in situations where a certificate suspension will exceed 110 calendar days. Also, in these situations the suspended certificate still remains valid and is still 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.

# NONCONFORMITY MANAGEMENT

In cases where the client is unable to submit required documentation as per the timings of the IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 5.11.1, 5.11.2, the IATF is granting an additional extension of a maximum of **ninety (90 calendar days)** for all the relevant required steps **to be completed** (including the timing requirements of the IATF Rules 5th Edition, section 5.11.3), as applicable. The additional extension is to be understood as a maximum potential extension to the overall process and not to be understood as a potential extension for every single step. This results in an overall extension of a maximum of ninety (90) calendar days to resolve the corrective action process.



As described in the above sections “Special audits” and “Nonconformity management”, the IATF is granting an additional extension of **ninety (90) calendar days** for submitting data and conducting a special audit. **Subsequently the IATF is granting an additional maximum extension of ninety (90) calendar days** can be applied to making a certification decision.

## AUDITOR ASSIGNMENTS

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

## CERTIFICATION BODY INTERNAL AUDITS

### Internal System Audits:

The IATF is currently discussing requirements and criteria for potential alternative methods for conducting internal system audits.

### Internal Witness Audits:

In cases where the relevant client audit has to be postponed which was planned for a CB 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 extension of ninety (90) days is granted to the internal witness audit timing.

# IATF 16949 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY AUDITOR 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 deactivate the auditors credentials. The above-mentioned requirements will be globally waived for the 1st half of the year 2020.

## **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 IATF-recognized Certification Body shall submit a waiver to the relevant IATF Oversight Office for approval.

## **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 will apply an appropriate extension to this timing requirement.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

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

The IATF does currently not allow any remote auditing. Instead the above mentioned global waivers for extending certificate expiration dates and additional flexibility for postponing audits were approved.

### **2 If the client is ramping up again and conducting an audit is possible with special measures for all involved persons, but the client is working part-time with a very small team, how should the audit days be calculated?**

There is currently no change to the requirements of current 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 currently not actively involved in the on-site activities of the client.

### **3 During this crisis the conducting of internal 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.

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