

Matthew Pavelek
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ISO/TS 16949:2002

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Introduction

How do automotive manufacturers assure that the numerous parts that they receive from suppliers are of the highest quality? How do automobile manufactures assure that suppliers provide products that manufacturers can be responsible for and are worthy of the manufacturers name? Automotive manufacturers assure quality by requiring registration to automotive quality standards that provide quality assurance. ISO/TS 16949:2002 is the latest automotive quality standard which was developed to be a new universally accepted quality standard for automobile suppliers. The ISO/TS 16949:2002 standard was developed to be an automotive standard for the customers' of automotive manufacturers and it is aligned with the ISO-9001: 2002 standard. The purpose of ISO/TS 16949:2002 was to create standardization in the quality management standards for automobile suppliers throughout the world. ISO/TS 16949:2002 is a process approach quality standard, which places requirements that assure consistent quality, throughout organizations that supply automobile manufacturers. By requiring ISO/TS 16949:2002 certifications, automobile manufacturers can be assured that all of their suppliers are adhering to a consistent set of quality standards that are strict and intertwined throughout the supplier's organization.

History

The ISO/TS 16949:2002 standard was released in March 2002, and is the replacement of the ISO/TS 16949:1999 standard, which was cancelled with the release of version 2002. The ISO/TS 16949:2002 standard was developed by an ad hoc group of automotive manufacturers and their respected trade associations. The developing group was comprised of the International Automotive Task Force, the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, and was supported by an ISO technical committee. The goal was to develop a worldwide universally accepted set of quality management standards for the automotive industry that would replace the need to have multiple certifications to serve Europe, Asia, and the U.S.

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The ISO/TS 16949:2002 standard is the consensus of international quality requirements, which consists of policies and procedures that ensures worldwide consistence with the suppliers of parts, materials, or finishing services. ISO/TS 16949:2002 is the international equivalent and combination of the QS-9000 standard, the EAQF standard, the VDA6 standard, and the AVSQ standard. Due to the fact that there are no plans to update QS-9000, VDA6, EAQF, or AVSQ, suppliers to automobile manufacturers are either required or encouraged to upgrade to ISO/TS 16949:2002. ISO/TS 16949:2002 expands beyond QS-9000 in that it focuses on the processes of the supplier's organization, rather than results, and mandates requirements in quality improvement areas where QS-9000 just makes suggestions. QS-9000 is in a state where it has reached the end of its development life, is no longer being supported by manufacturers or suppliers, and is set to expire on December 15, 2003. QS-9000 is further weakened by the fact that problem suppliers maintain registration, it

does not utilize the process approach to quality management, the credibility of the certification process is deteriorating, and the certification is not accepted worldwide. Ford, GM, and DaimlerChrysler currently recognize ISO/TS 16949:2002 and all three have notified suppliers of the impending required replacement of QS-9000 with ISO/TS 16949.

ISO/TS 16949:2002 has the goals of continual improvement, defect prevention, variation reduction, and the reduction of wastes in the supply chain. It requires suppliers to be focused on continual improvement throughout their entire organization. ISO/TS 16949:2002 has stipulations that require the continual monitoring and improvement of customer satisfaction and requires communication with suppliers and customers to assure quality. ISO/TS 16949:2002 also requires preventative action processes, improved employee training, and improved employee quality responsibilities. ISO/TS 16949:2002 provides detailed, sector specific requirements for employee competence, awareness and training, design and development, production and service, the control of monitoring and measuring devices, and measurement, analysis, and improvement. ISO/TS 16949:2002 provides the benefit of improved supplier products, improved process quality, improved global sourcing confidence, and a common, consistent quality systems approach.

Use of ISO/TS 16949:2002

ISO/TS 16949:2002 is a certification that is a beneficial and probable requirement for suppliers of automobile manufacturers. Obtaining an ISO/TS 16949:2002 registration allows U.S. suppliers to not only supply to domestic manufacturers, it also allows U.S. suppliers to become truly global and supply to manufacturers throughout the entire world. By obtaining an ISO/TS 16949:2002 registration, suppliers can avoid having to obtain the multiple registrations, which were formally necessary, based upon the region of the customer. ISO/TS

16949:2002 provides the benefit of needing only one registration, which is either recognized or required by all automobile manufacturers worldwide.

Not only does the ISO/TS 16949:2002 registration provide the benefit of allowing organizations to supply to automobile manufacturers, it also provides the benefit of improving the supplier's entire organization. By adopting a thorough quality improvement program that focuses on the organization's processes, improvement can be acquired throughout the entire organization.

Example and Information

Westcast Industries earned its ISO/TS 16949:2002 certification shortly after the release of the certification standards. Westcast Industries certified all five of its Ontario manufacturing facilities. Westcast Industries believes that ISO/TS 16949:2002 recognizes the commitment to quality and customer requirements, is a significant registration from a customer's point of view, and will increase their global presence. The CEO of Westcast Industries stated that they were "proud to receive the internationally recognized standard of quality," and that "this certification is significant to our current and future customers and will increase our global presence."

Information about ISO/TS 16949:2002 can be obtained from the International Organization of Standards, which supplies a guideline of requirements for registration. Information can also be obtained from ISO/TS 16949:2002 registrars, who not only provide registrations, but also provide detailed information on the registration process and requirements. There are currently some journal articles on ISO/TS 16949:2002 and books are currently in the publication process, but not yet available.

Works Cited

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Supplier letter from DaimelChrysler, GM,and Ford. Dated August 2002

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