



## ISO/TS16949:2002 Customer-Specific Requirements

With the release of ISO/TS 16949:2002, there came sweeping changes to the way organizations need to implement, maintain, and continually improve their quality management systems. Gone is the day when the primary emphasis was: “Say what you do and do what you say.” The new emphasis is on an organization identifying and managing a defined series of unique business processes and sub-processes effectively and efficiently so that total customer satisfaction is assured. This 2002 version of the Technical Standard is business-focused and offers an organization more flexibility in implementation.

To automotive suppliers wrestling with the requirements of ISO/TS 16949:2002, it may appear that customer-specific requirements have either gone away or are no longer applicable since they are not listed as specific elements or clauses in the standard as they were in QS-9000; however, customer-specific requirements are there in full-force.

ISO/TS 16949:2002 states: “The goal of this Technical Specification is the development of a quality management system that provides for continual improvement, emphasizing defect prevention and the reduction of variation and waste in the supply chain. This Technical Specification, coupled with applicable customer-specific requirements, defines the fundamental quality management system requirements for those subscribing to this document.”

A practical way to view the requirements listed in the ISO/TS 16949:2002 specification is to picture them as providing the framework for building your quality management system. This framework provides the guidelines and structure for creating, implementing, managing, and improving the quality management system, but is of itself, not the whole system. It is a generic system that, when properly implemented together with an organization’s specific business processes, can place that organization in a better position to meet defined customer requirements.

Many of the OEM subscribers to ISO/TS 16949:2002 realize that automobiles have many things in common yet; it is with styling and design that they are able to create market niches and competitive advantage. It is the same with quality management systems.



## ISO/TS16949:2002 Customer-Specific Requirements

All subscribers to ISO/TS 16949 have agreed to the common requirements of a quality management system; it is in those customer-specific requirements that they attempt to assure the competitive edge. Only when customer-specific requirements are coupled with ISO/TS 16949:2002 do quality management systems become complete and meaningful in meeting the requirements of a particular subscriber within the automotive industry.

Russ Hopkins, Ford Motor Co., in discussing the importance of customer-specific requirements said, “Directly competitive OEMs do not run their businesses identically, they have developed their own competitive advantages. The standards provide as much common ground as possible where no competitive advantage may be held. The most common source of poor quality is poorly or insufficiently defined customer requirements, the customer specifics reduce that lack of definition.”

If customer-specific requirements are so critical, why are they not listed in the ISO/TS 16949:2002 document as they were in QS-9000? While QS-9000 was primarily a North American automotive standard, ISO/TS 16949:2002 is indeed a worldwide automotive specification. There were three OEMs that were signatories in QS-9000: Ford, General Motors, and DaimlerChrysler, while the ISO/TS 16949 has eight OEM signatories. All have different customer-specific requirements.

Joe Bransky, General Motors, put it this way: “customer-specific requirements are those that are agreed to between the supplier and the customer. They typically fall into the following categories:

- Part-specific requirements (dimensions, materials, performance characteristics, etc.)
- Delivery requirements
- Boiler-plate requirements (typically found in the purchase order)
- General requirements (PPAP, APQP, etc.)
- Process requirements (example: heat treat)

Mr. Bransky also pointed out that, with eight OEMs participating in ISO/TS 16949:2002 and each having different customer-specific requirements, it was necessary to keep them separate from the Technical Specification. Customer-specific requirements are under constant revision and



## ISO/TS16949:2002 Customer-Specific Requirements

document control would have been quite a challenge should they have been included in the Technical Specification. He was emphatic that these customer-specific requirements be considered an integral part of an organization's quality management system.

Finding these customer-specific requirements can present a challenge. A short survey of current automotive suppliers found that a significant number did not know where to go for the latest applicable customer-specific requirements. To a registrar, let alone the OEMs, this would represent a serious problem. So what are the customer-specific requirements and where can you go to find them? A good place to start is to log-on to the International Automotive Oversight Bureau's Web page, [www.iaob.org](http://www.iaob.org), and page down to OEM Customer-Specific Requirements. You will find a hot-link to the customer-specific requirements for General Motors, Ford, DaimlerChrysler and Mercedes-Benz Passenger Car Group (MCG).

The following is a list of some of the OEMs and their customer-specific requirements. You will notice that the Web site is also included.



## ISO/TS16949:2002 Customer-Specific Requirements

### Customer-Specific Requirements Listing for ISO/TS 16949

Customer Name	Customer-Specific Requirements	Document Location (if applicable)
DaimlerChrysler	DaimlerChrysler (Chrysler Group) Customer-Specific Requirements	<a href="http://www.iaob.org/forms/DaimlerChrysler%20Customer%20Specific%20Requirements%20May%202005%20Released.pdf">http://www.iaob.org/forms/DaimlerChrysler%20Customer%20Specific%20Requirements%20May%202005%20Released.pdf</a>
DaimlerChrysler AG (Mercedes Benz and Maybach Brands)	DaimlerChrysler AG Guideline for Quality Assurance in Product Realization	<a href="http://www.iaob.org/MercedesBenzPassengerCarGroupGuidelineforQualitySeptember2004.pdf">http://www.iaob.org/MercedesBenzPassengerCarGroupGuidelineforQualitySeptember2004.pdf</a>
Ford Motor Company	Ford Motor Company Customer-Specific Requirements	<a href="http://www.iaob.org/forms/FordspecTS2nd.pdf">http://www.iaob.org/forms/FordspecTS2nd.pdf</a>
General Motors	GM Customer Specifics – ISO/TS16949	<a href="http://www.iaob.org/forms/GMCustomerSpecificsISO_TS December2003fnl.pdf">http://www.iaob.org/forms/GMCustomerSpecificsISO_TS December2003fnl.pdf</a>

**Other ISO/TS16949:2002 subscribing OEMs that may have supplemental customer-specific requirements include:**

1. BMW
2. Fiat Auto
3. PSA (Peugeot Citroen)
4. Renault
5. Volkswagen

No matter what method an organization uses to find the appropriate customer-specific requirements, effective implementation is not an optional activity. ISO/TS 16949:2002 requires that customer-specific requirements be integrated into the quality management system. These requirements must be implemented and maintained by using the process management approach.

One of many applicable requirements is that an organization needs to demonstrate their readiness for ISO/TS 16949:2002 well in advance of the certification audit. This activity is referred to as a Stage-I audit for readiness. Part of the information required in this readiness



## ISO/TS16949:2002 Customer-Specific Requirements

review is a detailed account of the customer-specific requirements applicable to the organization, including their internal document references, if applicable. This information, along with other data, is then used to plan the Stage-2 certification audit which will utilize a process audit approach.

The International Automotive Oversight Bureau (IAOB) in the United States is charged with overseeing the implementation of ISO/TS 16949 including auditing and approving ISO/TS 16949 registrars. Harold Hodder, executive director of IAOB said, “Customer-specific requirements are requirements which are outside the TS document. Had all the subscribers to the document been able to agree on these unique, very specific, company-specific requirements, then those requirements would have been written as part of the text inside TS. I cannot stress enough, the importance of the audit team receiving details of customer-specific requirements well in advance of any audit (initial, surveillance, or renewal) from the organization, using them as a basis for the audit planning process. Failure to do so is viewed as an audit failure in any witness audit.”

With the new process management and process auditing approach prescribed by ISO/TS 16949:2002, organizations will be expected to incorporate customer-specific requirements in the applicable support processes as well as the primary processes. The internal audit process should consider customer-specific requirements in the process audit planning, looking for evidence of implementation, effectiveness and efficiency. Management review should include the results of these audits as well as other data to determine if customer-specific requirements are being adequately addressed and effectively implemented.

The automotive industry worldwide is banking heavily on ISO/TS 16949 to help them achieve customer satisfaction. The harmonization of quality requirements of eight OEMs is intended to eliminate redundant audits, improve productivity, quality, and delivery in the supply-chain. ISO/TS 16949 provides a solid methodology to implement customer-specific requirements.