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## How to determine if 2 locations are 1 site for ISO/TS 16949

### SQA Advisory Number 16

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#### Introduction:

Certificates are issued only to a single site but how many individual buildings or addresses can be represented as a single site? The answer to this question determines the number of certificates issued to those locations and more importantly, the number of audit-days required for certification.

#### Discussion:

A site, according to the definition in the standard, is a "location at which value-added manufacturing processes occur". Manufacturing processes are also defined. This literally means that if two sites are right next to each other they have to be addressed separately for certification. While this interpretation is the rule-of-thumb, there may actually be circumstances when two locations are a single site. In other words, two separate locations may be considered one site whether they are adjacent to each other or a thousand miles apart. When two locations are considered one site, the employees are essentially added together and the audit-day requirement is based on the total. Conversely, if two locations are considered two sites, their employee levels are treated as separate and audit-days are determined on a separate basis.

#### SQA Position:

SQA Position (i.e., Automotive Position): To determine when two or more locations constitute one site the following questions must be asked. A negative response (i.e., "no") to any of these questions means that there is more than one site involved.

1. Is the additional location simply another "department" of the company?
2. Do they have the same QMS?
3. Do they have the same management representative?

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4. Do they have a common scope of certification (i.e., participate in the production of common products)?
5. Do they have the same site manager/management?
6. Do they have one financial statement, one set of financial "books"?
7. Is there only one supplier code from the customer for the locations?
8. Do they ship to the customer from only one of the locations?

**EXAMPLE-1** (two locations = one site): Raw material is received and partially processed in Chicago. The partially finished parts are then sent to Mexico for a polishing operation. Once polished, the same parts are shipped back to Chicago where they are further processed, packaged and shipped to the customer. In this case, the Mexican operation is within the product manufacturing stream and the operation is transparent to the customer.

**EXAMPLE-2** (two locations = two sites): Raw material is received, processed and shipped from each location. In this case, regardless of any other circumstance (e.g., proximity of locations to each other, the number of applicable supplier codes, similarities in processes and procedures, etc.), each location fully meets the definition of a single site and must be audited as such.

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