

Guidance for Monitoring CB Auditor Performance

Purpose: The Code of Practice for **TL 9000 Certification Bodies** (COP) has a requirement for Certification Bodies (CBs) to have a process to assure that their auditors are using TL 9000 audit finding categories and definitions. The purpose of this guidance document is to offer considerations for the types of issues that a CB might include in their process for monitoring their auditors' performance in this area. While it is up to the CB to decide how they will do this, it is expected that some evaluation of the quantity and type of audit findings will be performed.

Factors: When evaluating individual auditor performance regarding the correct application of the nonconformity (NC) and OFI definitions, the following factors should be considered:

- Quantity and type of findings per audit day
- Number and type of audits (Certification/Recertification and Surveillance) conducted
- Statistics reported by QuEST Forum on findings per audit day by type of audit
- Stability of the Quality Management System of the organizations being audited
- Complexity of organizations being audited (e.g., size, number of locations, TL 9000 specialties, number of product categories)
- Major organizational changes that impact the Quality Management System including process, personnel, management, legal and commercial (i.e., significant changes with strategic customers, outsourcing of manufacturing)
- Acquisition activity affecting the Organizations audited

AB Oversight:

Oversight of a CB's documented processes, including auditor monitoring is a responsibility of the Accreditation Body (AB). QuEST Forum, in turn, has oversight of the AB through its recertification process.

Below are a set of questions and answers related to this requirement:

Questions and Considerations:

What happens if an auditor does not have any findings after multiple audits?

The CB's process must consider the scenario where an auditor does not have any findings over a period of time. The CB's process should address how this situation is managed.

What happens when there is an audit team where the lead auditor determines the severity of findings?

In this situation the CB may have a process wherein the individual auditor's findings can be captured. If this is not the case, the CB's process may choose to only review findings where the auditor is the lead or they could choose to use all audits as it would be expected that the auditor should stand behind the audit results for audits he/she was involved with. Regardless of how the CB chooses to operate, their process needs to define how they do their evaluation. And remember, not all auditors will be in teams and the performance is captured over time.

How are contractors monitored?

Individual contractor's performance is required to be monitored over a period of time as well. For all intents and purposes, contractors are treated the same as employees as it pertains to the CB's obligation to monitor auditor performance.

What is unacceptable performance?

The performance criteria are set by the CB. For example, the CB may use the average number of findings by severity type per audit day among its auditors or QuEST Forum reported CB quarterly statistics. If an auditor's performance falls outside expectations, after considering the factors noted above, then action would be taken by the CB to remedy the situation.

What types of action can a CB take?

The CB should follow its documented corrective active action process, understanding the root cause of the discrepancy and taking appropriate action.