Aramco Europe Supplier's Booklet

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Welcome

Dear Partner,

This booklet has been developed to help you understand, or refresh your awareness of, Aramco procedures, requirements, and expectations of all our approved suppliers. It is not product specific, neither is it aimed at technical specifications.

The focus is on:

- Supplier registration process
- Obtaining and maintaining manufacturer approval status
- Communication
- Specifics of video streaming inspections and assessments
- Practical aspects related to the inspection and release of ongoing orders
- Handling of Non-Conformances, Equipment Deficiency Reports, and Escalations

It is recommended to distribute this document to the appropriate person(s) in your organization, focusing on, but not limited to, quality personnel. Aramco Europe encourages anyone involved in Aramco orders in your company to be familiar with this document and its content.

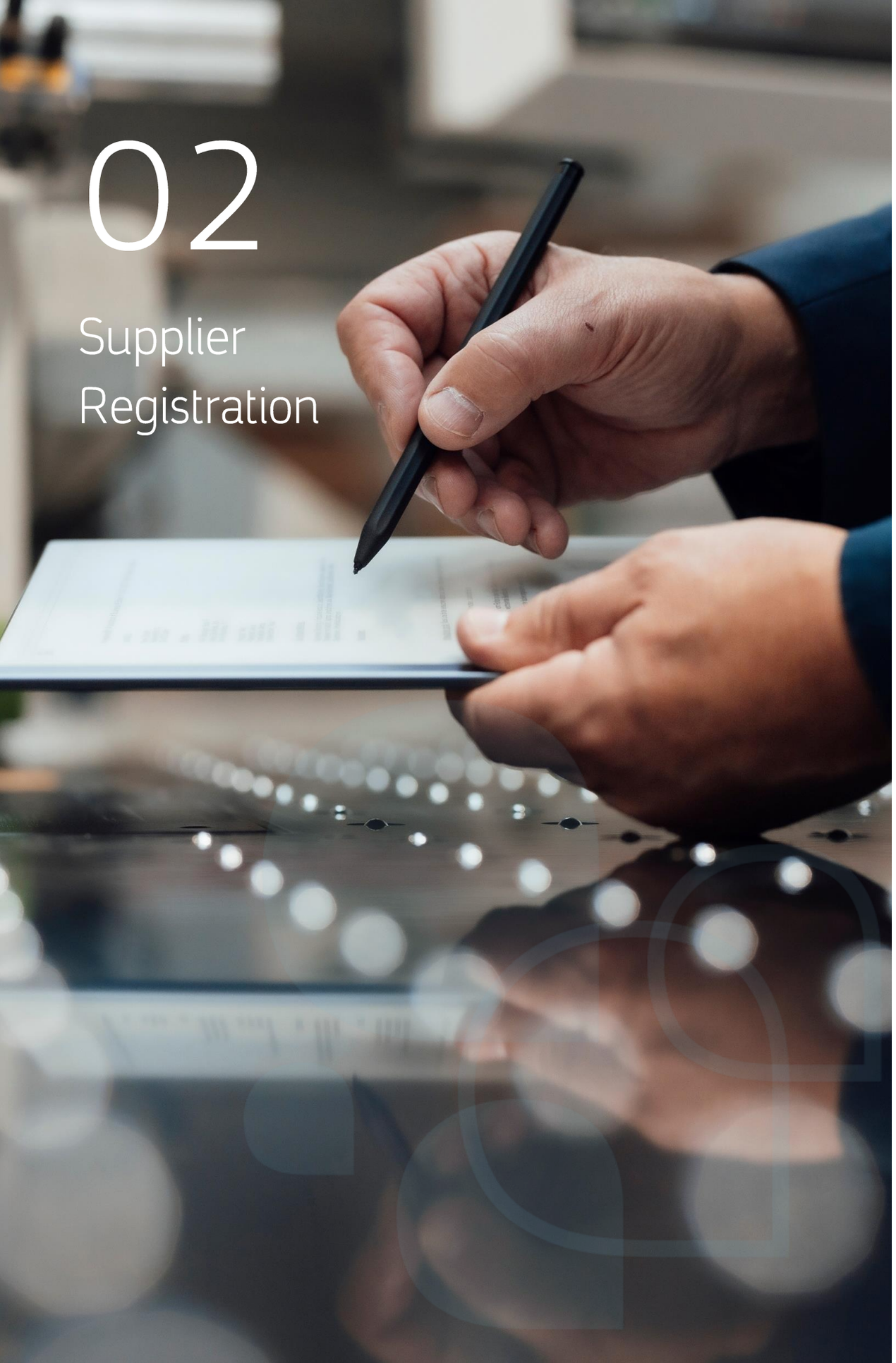
Aramco Europe hopes this will be useful and beneficial to maintain and improve your organization's performance while taking our collaboration to the next level.

Should you have additional questions that have not been covered in this material, please contact us at AOC SRM Group (SRM@aramcooverseas.com).

Aramco Europe looks forward to many years of successful partnership!

Aramco Europe Quality Management Division

Important note : This document is intended for guidance only. Approved manufacturers must fully comply with current Aramco requirements and specifications.



02

Supplier Registration

Registration

Aramco Overseas Company BV (Aramco Europe) works with best-in-class suppliers from around the world to procure a full range of materials and services that support Aramco's operations across the energy sector. Aramco Europe aims to make the process of becoming an approved materials supplier to Saudi Aramco as smooth and efficient as possible.

Applications for becoming an Aramco approved supplier of products and services, as well as for extending the list of approved materials, are done via our website: https://europe.aramco.com/en/partnering-with-us/suppliers/become-a-supplier.

Applications will be evaluated internally and processed in line with Aramco priorities and strategies. Registration with Aramco is an administrative activity; it is NOT implied that registered vendors are approved in our database. The approval for "inspectable" materials (please refer to the FAQ section) is only granted after satisfactory completion of quality and technical audits and it is formalized through a Notification. The approval status is not general; it refers to a specific manufacturing plant (address) and a specific list of approved materials.

The approval status mentioned in the Notification Letter is valid until a new succeeding letter has been issued. Manufacturers shall only engage in bidding processes for approved materials mentioned in the Notification Letter.

Manufacturing Plant Changes

Relocation / Cease of production / Change of ownership

It is the responsibility of the manufacturer to notify Aramco Europe Supplier Relations Management of changes in the name and/or address, the manufacturing location, and discontinuation of manufacturing of approved materials, in a timely manner.

In case of a plant closure, Purchase Orders for final destination Saudi Aramco, with delivery times past plant closure date shall not be accepted. All ordered materials shall be manufactured at the approved location. Prior to applying for permission for diverting any Purchase Order to a new manufacturing location, the new location is subject to the outcome of a plant approval involving technical and quality assessments.

03

Plant Evaluation

Pre-assessment Preparation

Introduction

There are three main kinds of evaluations as follows:

1. **Assessments:** intended for evaluation of new plants, relocated plants, or adding of new materials for approved plants. An audit is involved, and the auditing team consists of quality and technical assessor(s). Note that the quality and technical surveys can be conducted separately.
2. **Periodic Assessments:** Approved manufacturers are re-evaluated through either audits or desk reviews on a regular basis (typically five years intervals).
3. **Follow-up:** In addition to the periodic assessments, follow-up evaluations are initiated in case of repetitive nonconformities or equipment deficiency reports. Quality and technical evaluations can be conducted either via audit or documentation review, as appropriate.

Prerequisites

The manufacturer is requested to provide the following quality documentation (in the English language):

- Vendor evaluation questionnaire filled in with listed attachments.
- Copies of ISO certificates and/or any other certificate(s) relevant to the product / Company's Quality System (i.e. API, ATEX, ASME stamps)
- An uncontrolled copy of Quality Manual (not mandatory per ISO 9001:2015; in this case additional information will be requested)
- List of References (accomplished projects in the last 5 years)
- Production Process Flowcharts
- Additional documents may be needed on a case-by-case basis

Scheduling an Audit (if applicable)

Manufacturer will be contacted to schedule an audit. After confirmation of the date, the Lead Assessor will provide a survey plan with requested key personnel availability to the Quality Manager.

The audit can be cancelled or rescheduled in case of unforeseen circumstances by vendor or Aramco Europe, and it is expected this is communicated with priority to the counterpart.

The manufacturing facility needs to be fully operational at the scheduled date in order to allow exemplification of production of the target materials. Furthermore, the material commodity (9COM) must be manufactured at the plant to be assessed. Quality and Technical Assessors shall be informed in case of a deviation from these requirements.

Contact Details

Any communication in relation to plant evaluation schedule, activities, documentation, etc. shall be maintained with the entities mentioned below.

Quality Lead Assessor is your contact for any questions related to the evaluation and follow up on findings and recommendations. Lead Assessor's E-mail address will be provided as a main contact for the quality assessment. In addition, please copy QA general e-mail inspectionqa@aramcooverseas.com. The technical assessor will contact you separately during the preparation stages.

During the Audit

Plant Access and Safety

The assigned Aramco Europe Lead Assessor and/ or technical specialist may not be familiar with the specifics of your manufacturing environment or local safety and security requirements. Therefore, it is expected that the manufacturer will communicate the requirements for obtaining plant access and will arrange access to all the premises included in the agenda. In addition, the manufacturer shall inform the Lead Assessor and/ or technical specialist on the required PPE if this is not provided at the plant. Any potential health or safety risks must be flagged in advance. It is the manufacturer's responsibility to provide specific safety inductions before starting the meeting.

Opening Meeting

Aramco Europe recommends starting with an opening meeting to be introduced, clarify the scope and the objectives of the assessment, and to review the agenda and the required time. The opening meeting shall be attended by members of the management team from the departments involved in the audit (as per the submitted agenda). The statements of the involved personnel are considered as objective evidences during the audit; therefore, it is essential that the assigned representatives are knowledgeable and entitled to provide the requested information.

In case of a joint quality and technical assessment, sufficient personnel shall be assigned to simultaneously cover quality and technical topics.

The main scope of the plant evaluation is to collect evidences that Quality Management System is effectively implemented. Therefore, a standard audit will cover all of the operational activities (in the workshop), process review of selected activities (i.e. procurement, design, certification, customer satisfaction), and a review of the Quality Management System and its performance.

In the case of follow up evaluations, additional attention will be given to reviewing the corrective and preventive actions (CAPAs) taken as a response to the highlighted items.

Workshop Tour

The workshop tour will include, but will not be limited to:

- Incoming materials inspection and warehouse
- Machining, forming, material preparation, welding and other specific fabrication and manufacturing steps as applicable
- Assembly and final inspection
- Traceability, testing, and intermediate / final inspection (i.E. Non-destructive testing, mechanical / chemical tests hydro testing, high / low gas test, electrical tests, performance tests, functional tests)
- Painting, coating, preservation, packing, and labeling.

Quality Management System Review

The Quality Management System review requires direct access to the manufacturer's quality records and operational systems (e.g. ERP, document control system) to review the following information, please refer to assessment agenda and MPEQ attachments for further details:

- system procedures, specific instructions, drawings
- planning, manufacturing and testing records
- evaluation of sub suppliers / supplier management
- engineering (validation, verification, approvals)
- calibration
- personnel qualification records
- management review reports
- internal audits
- NCRs; CAPAs; RCAs
- statistics and data analysis to document product conformity and process performance.
- PO / RFQ review
- management of deviations to PO requirements and relevant waivers

Closing Meeting

Aramco Europe advises all key personnel participating during the audit to attend the closing meeting. The main scope of the closing meeting is to communicate verbally the auditor's findings and to ensure common understanding of the highlighted issues. The auditor will also explain the next steps in the approval process and will recommend a timeline to close all audit findings.

The closing meeting is also an opportunity to clarify open issues and to address any other business not part of the audit (depending on the availability of time).

Post –assessment Follow-up

Follow-up Process

There are three main steps to finalizing the evaluation process:

1. Review of audit results
2. Closing of findings by the vendor
3. Follow-up for verification of implementation

Review of Audit Results

Information obtained during the audit is shared with stakeholders through Aramco ERP system, internal e-mail correspondence, and (virtual) meetings, i.e. Vendor Review Committee Meetings. The evaluation reports are for internal use only and they are not shared with the manufacturers.

Closing of Findings by Vendor

Aramco Europe will formally communicate by e-mail the audit findings through a Vendor Acknowledgement Form (VA) and / or a Corrective Action Status Log (CASL), specifying the targeted completion date. Manufacturer will be requested to confirm the receipt of the form(s) and to provide the details and evidence of both root case analysis and implementation of Corrective Actions/Preventive Actions. Manufacturers have the option to provide clarification when they feel there has been a misunderstanding and in fact, no action is needed from their side. In general, the audit findings are the same as those communicated verbally during the closing meeting.

Follow-up for Verification of Implementation

Depending on the severity of the findings and based on the responses provided, including with supporting evidence, a follow up visit may be scheduled in order to verify corrective actions taken, their implementation, and their effectiveness. Failure to implement satisfactory the Corrective Actions will trigger the escalation procedure, please see "Escalation Procedure" for further details.

Approval Notification Letter

At the end of each evaluation process, Aramco Europe Supplier Relation Management will issue a Notification Letter including the latest approval status of the plant, the approval status of each specific material, and the applicable limitations (if any).

Escalation Procedure

The escalation process will be initiated if one or more of the following scenarios occur:

- Major quality/technical concern/ deficiency is identified during manufacturing or plant assessment;
- Major product deficiency is identified during site receiving inspection or during commissioning and operation;
- Lack of supplier's responsiveness to end user's requests and after-sale services.

The escalation process consists of the steps on the following page:

Escalation Notification Stage

A notification letter will be sent to the supplier's senior management, providing details of the reported deficiencies and the relevant timelines to submit and complete corrective actions. It is important to read the notification letter carefully and to comply with its requirements.

Escalation Warning Stage

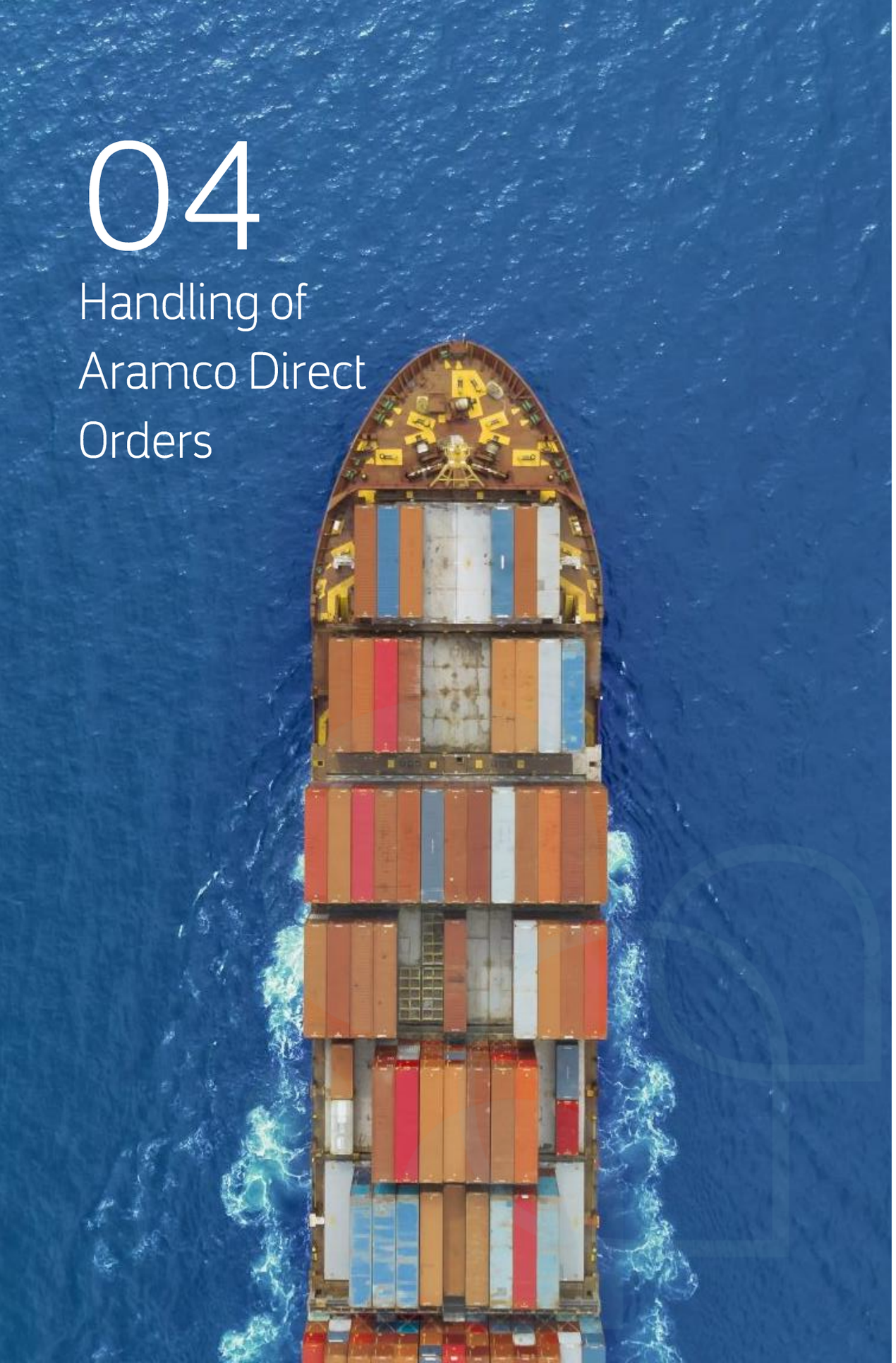
In case of unsatisfactory or lack of response, a warning letter will be sent to the supplier's highest senior management (CEO or equivalent). The letter shall specify all unresolved quality and/or technical deficiencies and advise the supplier's management to complete actions within set period of time (generally two weeks from the issuance of the letter). It is important to read the warning letter carefully and to comply with its requirements.

On Hold Stage

If a supplier fails to submit and complete suitable corrective actions within the given period, the supplier will be placed on hold. Verification of effectiveness of actions taken can be done via either documentation review or a follow-up assessment.

04

Handling of Aramco Direct Orders



Introduction – Aramco Direct Orders

Aramco Europe Quality Control Unit (QCU), as part of Aramco Europe Quality Management Division, is responsible for handling inspection activities and the Release of Saudi Aramco Direct Purchase Orders (PO). These orders are generated by either Aramco Europe or Saudi Aramco Purchasing Departments. Such orders are identified by a 10-digit SAP number starting with 450 (i.e. 450xxxxxxx). Aramco Europe QMD Quality Control Unit is involved only in inspectable orders to verify the compliance to the Aramco requirements and ensure witnessing of tests. For each inspectable material, an Inspection Release Notice is always provided after final and full acceptance of material.

Handling of inspection activities consist of the following steps:

- Assignment and Communication of Inspection Level and Inspection Agency
- Coordination and Supervision of Inspection Activities
- Reviewing Documentation
- Acceptance (Release) or Rejection of the Material

Assignment and Communication of Inspection Level and Inspection Agency

An Aramco Europe Quality Management Engineer (QME) is assigned to each inspectable PO and the level of inspection is reflected in the Inspection/Assignment Requirement letter (IA/R Letter). These letters are automatically generated by Aramco Inspection Management System (AIMS). Inspection levels can be:

- "Inspection Required" – in this case the witnessing of inspection and test is required in line with applicable Inspection Requirements 175-forms (specified in the PO). Inspection Agency is assigned to perform and witness inspection activities on behalf of Aramco. A sample inspection model may be adapted for certain orders.
- "Certificate Review" - in this case the witnessing of inspection activities is not required and the manufacturerr has to provide a digital copy of MTCs for review and acceptance by Aramco Europe QMD QCU.

Note: Shipment of material without the Inspection Release Note is not permitted.

The manufacturer is required to provide an acknowledgment using the link indicated in the IA/R Letter, following the instructions provided in the letter.

If the Purchase Order is not received, quantities are not matching, or in case of any other discrepancy, the manufacturer shall contact Aramco Europe's assigned Purchasing Representative for clarifications.

When a PO is received through a Saudi Vendor/Agent, the manufacturer shall always request and review a copy of original Saudi Aramco PO to avoid potential misalignments of requirements.

If the IA/R letter did not reach the correct person within the manufacturer's organizations, and after any personnel changes or re-organization, the manufacturer is requested to update Aramco Europe QCU immediately on the relevant contact details, in addition to any other obligatory communication.

Coordination and Supervision of Inspection Activities

Aramco Europe Quality Control Unit is the main focal point for visual inspections and witnessing of test. The Inspection test plan (ITP) aligned with an applicable 175 Form shall be submitted by the manufacturer for review and approval prior to starting the inspection activities and Pre-Inspection Meeting (PIM).

For each Witness or Hold point, the manufacturer shall forward a notification with at least 5 working days' notice to thr Inspection Agency. For Pre-Inspection Meetings (PIM) , 10 working days notification is required.

All approvals of technical documentation, technical clarifications, technical waivers and concession requests shall be forwarded to Saudi Aramco Buyer Representative (through Agent/Vendor) or Aramco Europe Buyer Representative.

Quality Documentation (ITP) approval, Material Rejections, NCRs, IA/R Letters and Acknowledgments, Material and Test Certificates (MTCs) shall be sent to the assigned QCU QME with Aramco Europe -QMD-QCU General Inbox (inspection@aramcooverseas.com) in cc.

All the Inspection Notifications, including rescheduling, shall be sent to the assigned Inspection Agency with Aramco Europe -QMD-QCU General Inbox (inspection@aramcooverseas.com) in cc.

Equipment presented for inspection must be previously checked / tested by the manufacturer's personnel who ensured full compliance with applicable requirements. Any non-conformity reported by the assigned inspector will impact the manufacturer performance score (VQI) and, potentially, its approval .

MTC and Reviewing Documentation

For all completed orders, the manufacturer is requested to provide a complete set of Material and Test Certificates (MTCs) or Manufacturer Data Book (MDB). Both shall be sent to QCU only in digital copy.

For orders assigned as "Certificate Review", Inspection Release Note (IRN) mandated prior to shipments will be provided upon successful review of the submitted MTCs.

Transmission details for MTC/MDB shall follow indications of IA/R letter.

Inspection Release Note, Rejection Notice, Non-Conformance Report, and Vendor Quality Index

In case of satisfactory completion of inspections, an Inspection Release Note (IRN) is transmitted to manufacturers, and Vendor/Agent and buyer representative for information.

Shipping of material is only allowed after IRN is received. Shipping of material without IRN is considered a violation of requirements and will be followed up by official Rejection Notice.

Releases of partial quantities are allowed; however, shipping of partial quantities are only possible if formally agreed by Aramco Europe or Saudi Aramco Buyer Representative in advance.

In case of process failure or test failure, an NCR is generated and transmitted. The manufacturer is expected to promptly review NCRs and provide a detailed Root Cause Analysis and Corrective Actions plan. If a manufacturer fails to provide a response, or the provided response is deemed unsatisfactory, the issue will be referred to Quality Assurance Unit for follow-up and potential escalation (see Escalation Procedure in section 3).

For materials that fail to comply with the requirements, an official Rejection Notice will be generated and forwarded to the manufacturer, Vendor/Agent, and buyer representative for information. The manufacturer is then required to provide an immediate correction plan to rectify the material deficiency as described in the Rejection Notice.

At the end of each order, the assigned inspector will propose a performance score based on Vendor Quality Index (VQI) criteria as follows:

1. Adequate review of the Purchase Order requirements.
2. Timeliness and accuracy of Inspection Notification
3. Effectiveness of:
    a. Receiving inspections
    b. In Process inspections
    c. Final inspections
4. Availability of:
    a. Qualified inspection personnel
    b. Calibrated measuring equipment
    c. Circular Economy Management System
5. Full Compliance of procedures related to:
    a. Safety and environment
    b. Process and product.
    c. Identification and traceability
    d. Management of purchase order deviations and non-conformities.
    e. Release and delivery of materials.

The VQI will be shared with the manufacturer so it can be used to measure the robustness of the Quality Management System and as a performance improvement tool.

Non-conformities Reported During Manufacturing of Direct POs

Any non-conformity reported by the manufacturer, the assigned inspector or Aramco Europe representative during the order execution shall be treated using a proved methodology that includes determination of the root cause, implementation of a correction for the affected equipment, and implementation of the corrective action to remove the identified cause and prevent re-occurrence. The effectiveness of the taken actions shall be verified and documented.

It is the manufacturer responsibility to conduct non-conformity analysis using statistical tools, measurements, graphs, etc., for all the issues recoded during or after delivery.

05 Handling of Aramco Project (Monitoring) Orders

Introduction – Aramco Project Orders

Aramco Quality Monitoring Unit (QMU) assists Capital and Joint Ventures (JV) Project Management Teams (PMT) in ensuring that the supplied materials or equipment meets project quality requirements. Capital Projects and Joint Ventures are typically contracted to EPC Contractors, which are responsible for the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction. As part of the procurement activities, the EPC Contractors are also accountable to Aramco for the quality of the supplied materials and equipment. In order to achieve this objective, the EPC Contractors place their purchase orders at approved manufacturers, and then inspect and release the materials or equipment prior to shipment to the construction site.

The Quality Monitoring of the EPC Contractor orders (also called Project Purchase Orders) is coordinated by the Quality Engineers from the Aramco Regional Offices and generally carried out by Inspection Agency inspectors approved for the type of equipment. The main objectives of Quality Monitoring are to:

- Support Aramco Projects and JVs to ensure that materials comply with purchase order requirements and only defect free materials or equipment are delivered.
- Streamline operational processes by preventing re-occurrence of quality issues learned from previous projects.

Note: The release of the material or equipment is the responsibility of the EPC Contractor.

Inspection Requirements

Inspection level for each commodity shall be as mentioned in the applicable purchase order document and applicable Inspection requirements 175 form.

Inspection Levels

> **Level 0:** Documentation requirements only; no vendor inspection required.
>
> **Level 1:** Only final inspection is required prior to shipping.
>
> **Level 2:** Includes pre-inspection meetings, one or more unspecified "in progress" surveillance visit/s, all witness and hold points, final inspection, and release
>
> **Level 3:** Includes pre-inspection meetings, one or more unspecified "in progress" surveillance visits, all witness and hold points, final inspection, and release for shipment. Inspections shall be on a regular basis (daily, weekly, or fortnightly).
>
> **Level 4:** Resident inspector, continually monitoring the work.

For inspection level 2 and above, a Pre-Inspection Meeting (PIM) is defined prior to the start of any manufacturing activities. For orders that require PIM, an Inspection Test Plan (ITP) shall be finalized during PIM. Revised ITP, incorporating PIM comments, shall be submitted to EPC Contractor for final review & approval. Ultimately, the EPC Contractorr shall obtain the Saudi Aramco Inspection Representatives (SAIR) approval prior to manufacturing.

The EPC Contractor is responsible for inspection coordination based on the approved Inspection Test Plan (ITP) and shall ultimately coordinate communication and confirmation of inspection attendance with all involved parties. With prior agreement, Inspection Notifications can be copied to all involved parties (EPC contractor, manufacturer, EPC contractor Inspection agency, Aramco Inspection agency, Aramco Europe).

Monitoring Inspectors shall be granted access and permission for taking photographs of the equipment that are subjected to inspection. These photographs shall form, where necessary, a part of reports submitted to Aramco for reference and records.

For any deviations from the applicable PO (including applicable Aramco standards and specifications, Data Sheets, project technical requirements, and International Codes) an official waiver / technical query shall be submitted to the EPC Contractor prior to commencement of inspection activities.

The EPC Contractor is responsible for review and will apply for necessary Aramco approvals.

Inspection and Test Plan

The vendor and/or sub-vendors shall prepare detailed ITPs for all assigned equipment and materials in accordance with all relevant Aramco inspection forms (SA 175 Forms) linked to a purchase orders and relevant applicable purchase requisitions . ITP shall provide:

- Detailed inspection activities and the required tests including, as minimum, inspection hold, witness, and review points as well as inspection frequency.
- Sampling plan criteria for inspectable bulk material, which shall be determined based on Aramco Standards and international codes.
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each inspection activity.

Handling of Non-conformities for Project Orders

When a Non-Conformity is noted during inspections, it is the EPC Contractor's responsibility to issue an NCR and officially transmit the NCR to the manufacturer. For each NCR, the manufacturer is required to identify the correction plan, the root cause, and the related corrective / preventive actions.

In case of major NCR's that are considered to have potential impact on the quality of the product and manufacturing process, Aramco QME and/ or monitoring inspector will be involved during the RCA investigation, including the follow-up on the implementation of the proposed preventive measures.

The EPC Contractor inspector and monitoring inspector should have access to the manufacturer's NCRs related to the material/equipment of the project order.

06

Handling of Equipment Deficiency Reports (EDRs)

Handling of Equipment Deficiency Reports (EDRs)

An EDR is used to report materials that prematurely failed or are found with deficiencies at Aramco premises. Such deficiencies may be observed during receiving inspection, storage, installation/ erection, or testing/commissioning before use, as well as during use.

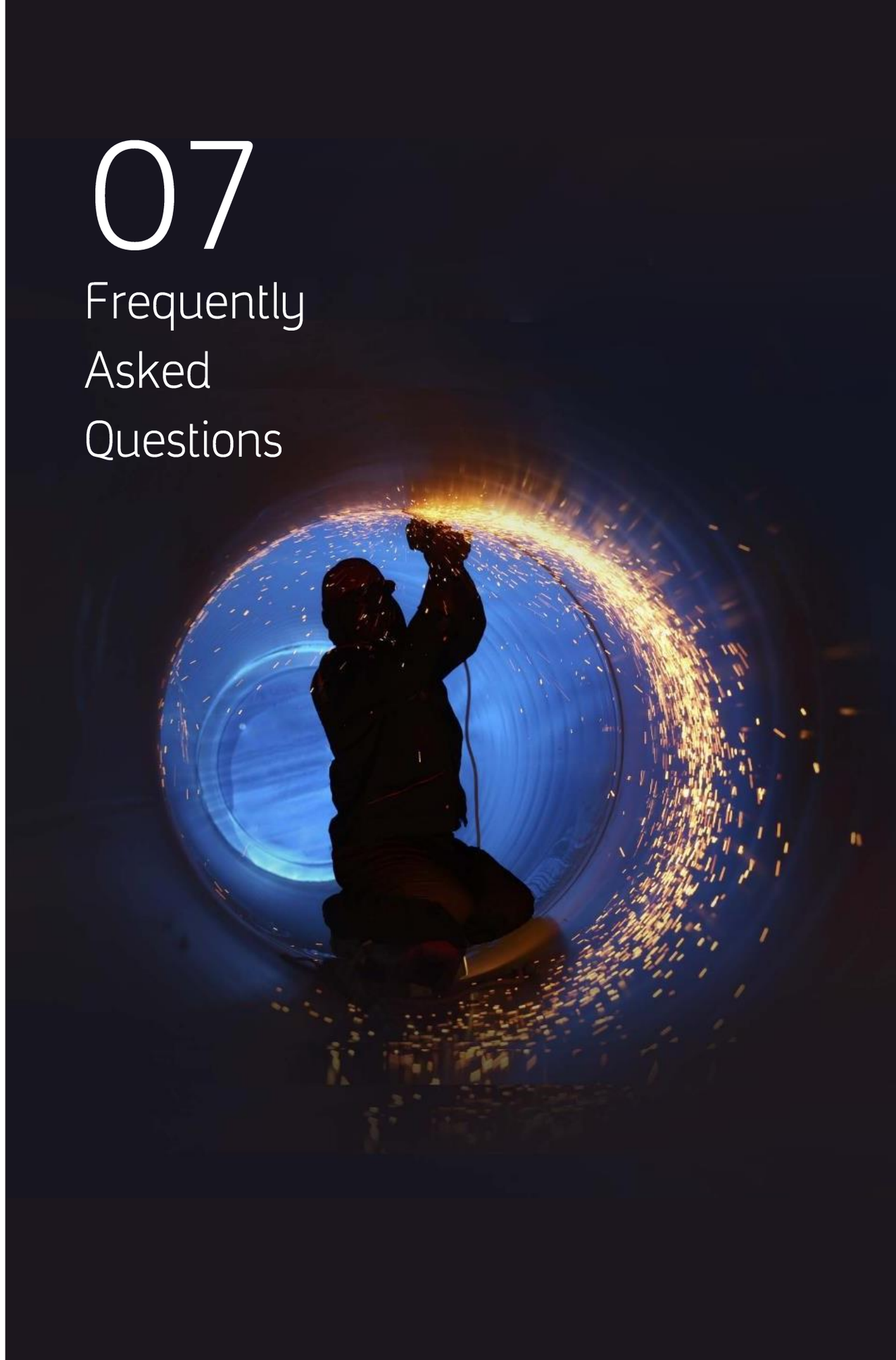
Should an EDRs be raised, it will be communicated to all relevant parties, including the manufacturer, by Aramco Europe EDR Coordinator, along with relevant templates (EDR Worksheet) and instructions. This is to enable development, review, and approval of root cause analysis, corrections, and corrective and preventive actions, together with the relevant evidence.

The RCA Worksheet, as developed by Aramco Europe, must be used by the manufacturer for EDR investigation. Time allocated for such exercise is a maximum eight (8) weeks. All manufacturers are urged to treat EDRs and investigation requests with the highest priority.

It is imperative that suppliers immediately take actions to correct the deficiency on site as well as conduct a risk analysis to assess the suitability and compliance of equipment or material that has been delivered, is in transit, or is being manufactured. In addition, the risk assessment should evaluate the need for recall, and additional measures for inspections required on site. Any inspection on site by the supplier should be documented via reports and should also be part of the EDR investigation.

07

Frequently Asked Questions



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does our approval cover all companies in our organization globally?
A: No, the approval is only valid for the specific manufacturing plant location referenced in the Notification Letter.

Q: Does our approval cover all our products, existing and future?
A: No, the approval only covers specific products determined in the process of approval, and referenced in the Notification Letter, together with any applicable limitations.

Q: What information is required to support my application for approval / continuation of approval through periodic assessment?
A: You will receive all relevant forms and requirements. Please study and complete these diligently as incomplete packages will be rejected and can slow down the approval process significantly.

Q: What happens next?
A: Once a complete pre-qualification or periodic evaluation package is received and accepted, the plant evaluation process will be initiated. This will involve both quality and technical assessments in parallel. Each assessment will have independent conclusions. For a plant to be approved, both conclusions need to be positive.

Q: What happens if we are not prepared to accommodate a plant audit?
A: Plant audits are a compulsory; if these cannot be performed, the approval process will be terminated.

Q: How long will the audit take?
A: This will depend on the size of the plant and the areas to be covered. Typically, the duration of the audit will be between 1 ½ and 2 days.

Q: What will the scope of the audit be?
A: An audit for a new plant, or to add materials to an existing approval, will cover the Quality Management System, technical capabilities, and manufacturing processes.

Q: Our company is an existing approved supplier; will a plant audit be required?
A: Yes, if you are applying to add materials to an existing approval, a plant audit will be required. Additionally, all approved suppliers are periodically re-evaluated to maintain approval. Re-evaluations are done either as a desk review or a physical visit, depending on procurement levels, activities, and quality performance. It is important that you respond to a re-evaluation requests to avoid loss of approval.

Q: What happens when I am approved for materials that are no longer in my scope of manufacture?
A: Please inform Supplier Relations Management (SRM@aramcooverseas.com) immediately and SRM will guide you through the process. Maintaining correct approval information is an important responsibility of all approved manufacturers.

Q: Will there be an agenda for the audit?
A: Yes, an agenda will be submitted to you in advance of the audit visit.

Q: Which of my personnel will need to be available for the audit?
A: The agenda will list processes and departments to be audited. Representatives of these departments need to be available during the audit visit

Q: Will the auditors need to see the manufacturing operation?
A: Yes, manufacturing activities for particular materials covered by the assessment must be taking place and will be visited during the audit. This is also applicable to inspection, assembly, and testing activities when part of an audit.

Q: Will there be an opening / closing meeting at the start of the audit?
A: Yes, an audit will start with an opening meeting and concluded with a closing meeting covering, among other items, audit summary, findings, and way forward.

Q: Will I receive an audit report?
A: No, the audit reports are internal confidential documents.

Q: How are audit findings formalized?
A: You will receive a Supplier Acknowledgement Form (SAF) to be signed and returned to us and a Corrective Action Status Log that will be used to follow up on Root Cause Analyses and Corrective Actions until complete resolution.

Q: How will we be notified of approval status?
A: You will receive a Notification Letter from AOC Supplier Relations Management (SRM@aramcooverseas.com) advising you of your approval status. The letter will include the approval status and applicable 9COM materials as well as any approval limitations as applicable (commodities).

Q. We have been approved for 9COM(s); however, have not received any inquiries for supply.
A. Please contact AOC Supplier Relations Management (SRM@aramcooverseas.com) for support.

Q: How long does the approval process take?
A: The approval process is a multi-stakeholder process and it is not possible to give an exact time frame. Outcome will be communicated by SRM , and all questions regarding the process should be directed to the provided email address.

Q: We will be relocating our manufacturing facility. Will the new location be approved?
A: No, the new location is not automatically approved. You will need to formally notify Aramco Supplier Relations Management of the relocation as soon as you your company took the decision to relocate, providing all the plans and details. SRM will guide you through the process and request the necessary documents from your company.

Q: Which significant changes in our company should we communicate to Aramco Europe ?
A: You need to, as soon as you become aware, notify Aramco Europe SRM of significant changes of manufacturing capabilities (including expansions as well as reductions), mergers / acquisitions / changes of ownership, plans to significantly reduce manpower, loss or non-renewal of any certificates / licenses / approvals, or any other significant change that may impact your business relationship with Aramco.

Q: We received an order for Aramco as the end user. Does this order require inspection?
A: Aramco has defined commodity materials (called 9COM) into "inspectable" and "non-inspectable", depending on their criticality. "Inspectable" materials are required to be controlled under a Quality Management System, inspected as per Aramco inspection forms, and supplied from an approved manufacturing plant. "Non-inspectable" materials do not require inspection, nor plant approval. Inspection forms are part of the Request for Quotations (RFQs) and Purchase Orders (POs), and these forms are also invoked by the Aramco specifications. In case of doubt, the inspectability of the 9COM shall be clarified at the time of plant approval assessments, or with the Aramco buyer, agent or contractor who placed the RFQ or PO.

Q: What kind of inspection is going to be performed for the ordered materials?
A: Inspection requirements are specified In the Purchase Order. In addition, Aramco Europe QMD will issue an Inspection/Assignment Requirement letter (IA/R Letter) specifying the inspection level assigned for each particular PO. The inspection level for Aramco direct POs (placed by an Aramco Buyer directly to a manufacturer or to registered Vendor) can be a physical inspection according to Inspection Requirements 175 Form (sample inspection may be indicated) or certification review. Your Compliance Letter will also contain inspection requirements. This letter is submitted by you during initial approval and updated during periodic evaluations and for any changes to approval scope (e.g. additional materials).

Q: Is inspection performed by Aramco personnel?
A: The majority of inspection activities are outsourced to contracted Inspection Agencies, specified in each IA/R Letter.

Q: Can production start without the presence of the inspector?
A: If physical inspection is required (indicated in the PO and IA/R Letter), none of the inspection activities for which an inspector's presence is required can be performed by the manufacturer alone. Failure to provide Notification of Inspection (NOI) may trigger rejection of test / product.

Q: At the end of the inspection can I proceed with shipment?
A: Shipment of direct orders can start only after receiving Inspection Release Note (IRN) from Aramco Europe QMD.

Q: The Agent and or Aramco End User or Buyer is confirming that the equipment shall be shipped on urgent basis with open items. Can I proceed with shipment?
A: The release of equipment for direct POs is under the exclusive responsibility of Aramco Europe QMD. Shipment of equipment without obtaining an IRN may trigger permanent rejection or the return of the equipment to the factory with consequences on the manufacturer's Vendor Quality Index (VQI) and approval status. In exceptional situations, Aramco Europe QMD may decide to issue a conditional Certificate of Inspection (COI) as a provisional basis for shipment.

Q: The product we intend to manufacture will deviate from applicable requirements. Can we proceed with the manufacture?
A: Any potential deviation from applicable requirements shall be communicated to the Buyer prior to commencement of production. Deviations or Technical Queries have to be confirmed by Aramco Technical Authority, otherwise no deviation is permitted.

Q: The specifications mentioned in the PO are referencing other norms, standards, and specifications, which in turns include references to other requirements. Do we have to consider all such requirements?
A: Yes, requirements shall be cascaded down from the applicable references.

Q: Who is providing the approval of the documents listed in the PO?
A: ITP or QCP shall be submitted for review to Aramco Europe QMD. All other documents listed in the PO requiring Aramco approval shall be submitted to the Buyer, who will ensure internal distribution within Aramco and return the documents fully signed.

Q. Can we have an inspection at a different location than the approved one?
A. No, inspection can only take place at an approved location. Notification for an inspection at an unapproved location will be rejected