Vehicle Manufacturer Certification

Audit Scorecard

A 15-point compliance assessment for manufacturer registration, self-certification, VIN requirements, compliance labels, defect reporting, and safety standard readiness

Dealer / Center Name	
Dealer Code	
Region / Zone	
Auditor Name	
Audit Date	
Cycle / Period	

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How to Use This Scorecard

This scorecard evaluates Vehicle Manufacturer Certification compliance across 15 criteria grouped into 4 categories. For each criterion, circle a score from 1 (not in place) to 5 (fully embedded and sustained). Do not rate where you aspire to be — rate what you observe on the day.

Score Scale

Score	Level	What it means
1	**Not in place**	Standard does not exist or has never been implemented at this dealership.
2	**Attempted**	Some effort made but inconsistent — visible gaps remain in most areas.
3	**Defined**	Standard is documented and partially followed. Some areas compliant, others not.
4	**Managed**	Standard is followed consistently. Minor exceptions occur.
5	**Fully Sustained**	Fully embedded. Evidence of ongoing compliance between audits without prompting.

RAG Status Guide

Status	Overall Score	Action
Green	60–75 (80–100%)	Compliant. Maintain current standards.
Amber	38–59 (50–79%)	Improvement required. Structured action plan within 30 days.
Red	0–37 (0–49%)	Non-compliant. Priority intervention. Escalate to regional management.

AutoSmart Tip: Vehicle manufacturer certification under US NHTSA/FMVSS is a self-certification system — the manufacturer carries the full legal liability for every compliance declaration made, with no government pre-approval of the certification. This places the burden of evidence entirely on the manufacturer's own documentation. Ensuring that self-certification evidence is current, correct, and immediately retrievable is not an administrative task; it is the organisation's primary legal defence in any NHTSA enforcement action or product liability proceeding.

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Scorecard

Circle a score 1–5 for each criterion. Record observations in the Notes column.

No.	Criterion / Question	1	2	3	4	5	Notes
MANUFACTURER REGISTRATION & SELF-CERTIFICATION							
1	Is the manufacturer registered with NHTSA as required under 49 USC Chapter 301 — with current registration details on file and any changes to the manufacturer's legal entity or address notified to NHTSA promptly?	○	○	○	○	○	
2	Is the self-certification framework understood at an organisational level — specifically that the manufacturer (not a government body) certifies compliance with each applicable FMVSS, and that this certification carries legal liability?	○	○	○	○	○	
3	Is a documented self-certification process in place, covering how compliance with each applicable FMVSS is established, evidenced, and recorded for each vehicle model produced or imported?	○	○	○	○	○	
4	Is the self-certification evidence for each model and model year retained for the period required by 49 CFR Part 573 (minimum 5 years from the date of certification), in a retrievable format?	○	○	○	○	○	
VIN REQUIREMENTS & COMPLIANCE LABEL							
5	Is a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) assigned to every vehicle produced or imported, conforming to the 17-character format and content requirements of 49 CFR Part 565?	○	○	○	○	○	
6	Is the VIN permanently marked on the vehicle in the required locations (instrument panel, door jamb, and as required by 49 CFR Part 565) with the correct character format and legibility?	○	○	○	○	○	
7	Is the manufacturer's WMI (World Manufacturer Identifier) code correctly assigned by SAE International and used exclusively for vehicles manufactured by the registered entity — with no WMI assigned to a different manufacturer used on any vehicle?	○	○	○	○	○	
8	Is the certification label (49 CFR Part 567) affixed to every vehicle — accurately stating GVWR, GAWR for each axle, certification to FMVSS, month and year of manufacture, and country of final assembly?	○	○	○	○	○	
DEFECT REPORTING & RECORDS							
9	Is a defect monitoring process in place — covering field reports, warranty data, early warning data, and engineering feedback — allowing the organisation to identify a potential safety defect within a timeframe that supports the 5-working-day reporting obligation under 49 CFR Part 573?	○	○	○	○	○	

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10	Is the defect reporting obligation under 49 CFR Part 573 understood — including that reporting is required when the manufacturer decides a safety defect or noncompliance exists, not only when NHTSA opens an investigation?	○	○	○	○	○	
11	Are defect investigation records maintained — covering the issue identified, investigation findings, remedy developed, and notification plan — with records retained for the period required by regulation?	○	○	○	○	○	
SAFETY STANDARD READINESS & GOVERNANCE							
12	Is the organisation prepared to initiate a safety recall within the required timeframes if a safety defect or noncompliance is identified — with a documented recall plan covering customer notification, remedy supply, and NHTSA reporting?	○	○	○	○	○	
13	Is a named person designated as responsible for NHTSA regulatory compliance — with authority to initiate a defect report, coordinate a recall, and interface with NHTSA on the organisation's behalf?	○	○	○	○	○	
14	Are FMVSS and VIN compliance obligations reviewed when new models, variants, or equipment changes are introduced — confirming that all new configurations are assessed before production or importation begins?	○	○	○	○	○	
15	Is vehicle manufacturer certification compliance included in the annual governance calendar, reviewed by senior management with evidence of current registration, self-certification status, and open recall obligations presented?	○	○	○	○	○	
OVERALL SCORE →		/ 75 =		%			

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Category Summary & RAG Status

Transfer category totals from the scorecard. Assign RAG status and record the priority action for each category.

Category	Score	%	RAG	Priority Action
Manufacturer Registration & Self-Certification	/20			
VIN Requirements & Compliance Label	/20			
Defect Reporting & Records	/15			
Safety Standard Readiness & Governance	/20			
OVERALL SCORE	**/75**			

Sign-Off

Auditor Name	
Auditor Signature	
Date	
Compliance Manager Name	
Compliance Manager Signature	
Next Audit Date	

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Action Plan Tracker

Vehicle Manufacturer Certification — Gap Closure Framework

A structured four-stage workflow to assign, track, verify, and close Vehicle Manufacturer Certification non-compliances

Dealer / Center Name	
Dealer Code	
Region / Zone	
Audit Cycle / Period	
Tracker Owner (ASM / ZSM)	
Date Opened	
Target Close Date	

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How to Use This Tracker

This tracker is designed to be completed immediately following a Vehicle Manufacturer Certification audit. Every non-compliance recorded must be logged here as an action item and progressed through all four stages before it is considered resolved.

Four-Stage Workflow

1. PENDING	2. IN PROGRESS	3. COMPLETED	4. APPROVED
Finding assigned. Owner & date set.	Work underway. Evidence being gathered.	Dealer submits evidence for review.	Auditor verifies and closes the item.

Stage Rules

Stage	Actioned by	Required action	Evidence required
PENDING	ASM / Auditor	Assign a named responsible party. Set a close date. Log the non-compliance description.	No evidence required at this stage.
IN PROGRESS	Vehicle Manufacturer Certification / Dealer Team	Begin remediation. Update status. Upload progress evidence as work is completed.	In-progress photos, supporting documents, records.
COMPLETED	Compliance Manager	Mark item complete and submit for review. Evidence must be attached before submission.	Photo of rectified item, signed procedure, supporting evidence.
APPROVED	ASM / ZSM / Auditor	Review evidence. Verify compliance on next site visit if required. Approve and close.	Auditor sign-off. Date of verification recorded.

Tracker Summary

Fill in after completing each audit cycle.

Stage	Description	Count	Notes
PENDING	Not yet started		
IN PROGRESS	Work underway		
COMPLETED	Awaiting approval		
APPROVED	Verified & closed		

AutoSmart Tip: With AutoSmart Audit, every non-compliance is automatically converted into an action item at the point of audit — with owner assignment, close dates, evidence upload, and a four-stage approval workflow built in. No spreadsheets. No manual follow-up.

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Action Plan Tracker

Log every non-compliance from the audit below. Progress each item through all four stages before closure.

STAGE — PENDING						
Ref	**Non-Compliance / Gap Description**	**Category**	**Responsible Party**	**Target Date**	**Status**	**Evidence / Notes**
P-01						
P-02						
P-03						
P-04						
P-05						
P-06						
P-07						
P-08						
P-09						
P-10						

STAGE — IN PROGRESS						
Ref	**Non-Compliance / Gap Description**	**Category**	**Responsible Party**	**Target Date**	**Status**	**Evidence / Notes**
I-01						
I-02						
I-03						
I-04						
I-05						
I-06						
I-07						
I-08						

STAGE — COMPLETED						
Ref	**Non-Compliance / Gap Description**	**Category**	**Responsible Party**	**Target Date**	**Status**	**Evidence / Notes**
C-01						

C-02						
C-03						
C-04						
C-05						
C-06						

STAGE — APPROVED						
Ref	**Non-Compliance / Gap Description**	**Category**	**Responsible Party**	**Target Date**	**Status**	**Evidence / Notes**
A-01						
A-02						
A-03						
A-04						
A-05						
A-06						

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Cycle Sign-Off

To be completed once all action items in this cycle are Approved. Both the Compliance Manager and the Regional Auditor must sign.

Dealer Principal Name	
Dealer Principal Signature	
Regional Auditor / ASM Name	
Auditor Signature	
Date of Review	
Next Review Date	

Cycle Notes

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