



CMRP or ISO 55001? They Are Not Alternatives

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Search for the two together and you will find comparison pages written by people who sell one of them, and at least one site whose business is selling exam dumps. What follows is what each one actually certifies, what neither proves, and how to tell which you need.

The category error

A certificate answers a question. The two certificates answer different questions.

- **The CMRP answers:** does this individual command the body of knowledge of maintenance and reliability?
- **ISO 55001 answers:** does this organisation run a management system that meets the requirements of the standard?

One is a personal credential, carried by the practitioner and portable between employers. The other belongs to the organisation, is tied to a defined scope and set of sites, and expires on a cycle. They are not substitutes in either direction, and holding one tells you nothing about the other.



Sources: The ISO Survey of Management System Standard Certifications 2024, ISO/CASCO, September 2025, and ISO 55001:2024.

What the CMRP certifies

The Certified Maintenance & Reliability Professional is awarded by the Society for Maintenance & Reliability Professionals. It attests that a practitioner commands the five pillars of the SMRP Body of Knowledge.

Business & Management	Translating business objectives into maintenance and reliability activity, and justifying it.
Manufacturing Process Reliability	The reliability of the process itself, not only of the equipment that serves it.
Equipment Reliability	Failure modes, condition, and the decisions that follow from them.
Organization & Leadership	People, structure, competence and the way work is organised.
Work Management	Planning, scheduling, execution and the loop back into the record.

It is a practitioner's credential, not an academic one. The examination does not test what you have read; it tests whether you can decide, prioritise and justify. Eligibility depends on experience rather than on qualification alone: five years in maintenance or reliability for a secondary qualification, three years with a university degree, one year with a master's or above.^[1]

What ISO 55001 certifies

ISO 55001 states requirements for an asset management system. Certification against it is granted to an organisation, for a defined scope, by a certification body that is itself accredited. It runs on a three-year cycle with surveillance audits in between.

The requirements run from clause 4 to clause 10: the context of the organisation and its decision-making framework, leadership, planning, support including data and knowledge, operation including life cycle management, performance evaluation, and improvement including the predictive action that the 2024 edition introduced.^[2]

No individual is certified by this process. A person can be trained and examined as a Lead Implementer or an internal auditor, and that is a personal credential too, but it is not the same thing as the organisation's certificate.

Side by side

	CMRP	ISO 55001
Subject	A person	An organisation, for a defined scope
Awarded by	The SMRP	An accredited certification body
Assessed by	An examination	An audit, against documented evidence
Portable	Yes, it follows the holder	No, it stays with the organisation and the scope
Prerequisite	Field experience	A system that exists and produces evidence
Appears in a public register	Through the awarding body	Yes, with the edition of the standard shown

Where they touch

A caution before the mapping below.

The five pillars and the seven requirement clauses were not written to correspond to each other, and no official crosswalk exists between them. What follows is our own reading of where the subject matter overlaps. It is useful for deciding what to work on first. It is not a compliance mapping, and it should not be presented to an auditor as one.

- **Business & Management** meets clause **4.5**, the decision-making framework. Both ask the same thing: on what criteria do you arbitrate, and can you show it.

- **Work Management** meets clause **8.1**, operational planning and control including life cycle management. Planning, scheduling, execution, and the record that closes the loop.
- **Equipment Reliability** meets clause **10.3**, predictive action, which now requires processes that determine optimal intervention points and relate asset condition to performance, risk and cost.
- **Organization & Leadership** meets clauses **5** and **7.2**, leadership and competence.
- **Manufacturing Process Reliability** has no direct counterpart. ISO 55001 is deliberately sector-neutral; it does not prescribe technique. This pillar is where the CMRP goes somewhere the standard does not.

That last line matters more than the four before it. The standard tells you what must be demonstrable. It does not tell you how to make a pump last longer. The two bodies of knowledge are complementary because they operate at different altitudes, not because they cover the same ground in different words.

So which do you need?

Three situations, and the answer differs in each.

You are a practitioner. The CMRP is the credential that travels with you and that an employer can read without knowing your previous organisation. ISO 55001 certification is not available to you as an individual.

Your organisation is asked for ISO 55001 by a client, a regulator or a funder. Then the organisation needs the certificate, and no number of certified individuals substitutes for it. What certified individuals do is make the system worth auditing.

You want your maintenance to actually improve. Then start with people. A management system built by people who have not mastered the body of knowledge produces documentation, passes an audit, and changes nothing on the shop floor.

What neither of them proves

This is the part that the pages selling either one leave out.

A CMRP does not make your organisation compliant. It is a personal credential. Ten certified practitioners in an organisation with no documented decision framework, no specified data and no predictive processes will fail an ISO 55001 audit, and they will be right to fail it, because the system does not exist.

An ISO 55001 certificate does not make your people competent. Clause 7.2 requires competence to be determined and evidenced, but a certificate on the wall says nothing about the depth of the individuals behind it.

And a certificate does not say what you think it says unless you read the edition. Between now and 31 July 2027, every ISO 55001 certificate is either on the 2014 edition or the 2024 one, and the difference is substantial. We read three real certificates in their issuers' public registers, and [one of them expires 228 days after the deadline that withdraws it](#).^[3]

A note on our position. MARAMM trains for both: preparation for the CMRP examination, and Lead Implementer and internal auditor training on ISO 55001. We do not award the CMRP, which is the SMRP's, and we do not certify organisations against ISO 55001, which is an accredited certification body's role. That separation is why this comparison can be written honestly.

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HOW TO CITE THIS ISSUE

Ben Ali, S. (2026). CMRP or ISO 55001? They Are Not Alternatives. *MARAMM Studies*, Issue 6. MARAMM, Rabat.
<https://maramm.org/cmvp-or-iso-55001-what-each-one-certifies/>

Publication details

MARAMM Studies, Issue 6. ISSN pending.

First published on September 14, 2026

<https://maramm.org/cmvp-or-iso-55001-what-each-one-certifies/>

Publisher : MARAMM, Moroccan Association of Reliability, Asset, Facility & Maintenance Management, a Moroccan non-profit association.

Registered office : Rue Moulay Ahmed Loukili, Imm. 30, Hassan, Rabat 10020, Maroc.

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