Written by Michael J. Eisenbise, CMRP, CPE, CPMM, P.E., Chairman of the Board, Society for Maintenance & Reliability Professionals (SMRP)
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In these tough economic times, it's important for maintenance and reliability professionals to have an edge on the competition. It also is important for companies to hire and work with qualified professionals who can support their businesses' goals while keeping costs down and ensuring efficient and safe practices.

Understanding the need for such qualifications, the Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals (SMRP) created the "Certified Maintenance and Reliability Professional (CMRP)" certification program. The purpose is to foster a high standard of ethical and professional practice through a recognized, credible credentialing program and, therefore, assure the competency of practitioners of our profession.

The SMRP Certifying Organization (SMRPCO) is a separate body formed to develop and administer the CMRP certification program. To build this program, volunteer SMRP members worked in conjunction with qualified outside experts—*including a psychometrician, a professional who specializes in translating a body of knowledge into a testable format*. The foundation of the CMRP and our Maintenance and Reliability (M&R) Body of Knowledge (developed by SMRP through an extremely rigorous process) is built on five pillars: Business and Management; Manufacturing Process Reliability; Equipment Reliability; Organization and Leadership; and Work Management.

Since its establishment, the CMRP program has become the international measure of competence in the M&R field. It also has been approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for following ISO standards for a personnel certification program (ISO 17024). We are very proud, too, that the CMRP certification program has recently been added to the U.S. Government's Department of Veterans Affairs list of certification exams for which current military personnel and veterans can be reimbursed.

Certifications are valuable to practitioners and organizations alike. Benefits (as noted by practitioners and companies, and reinforced by subsequent experience of those certified since

2001) include, but aren't limited to:

- Clearer path for career development and education
- The dmonstrated commitment to professionalism that supports promotions and higher pay-scale considerations
- Improved visibility and recognition within organization and profession
- Greater on-the-job and outside training effectiveness
- Differentiation of candidates in the hiring process

While other organizations offer similarly titled certifications in this or related subjects, the CMRP is—*as ANSI and the U.S. Government agree*—especially valuable. The CMRP program is an independent, practitioner-based, non-profit entity without ties to any commercial venture. All revenue (100%) is reinvested back into the certification program and the body of knowledge. The result is a well-maintained and updated program that ensures that the most current and quality M&R best practices and information are included on this exam.

All facilities are looking for ways to increase revenue and efficiencies. With CMRPs on your team—*and by becoming one yourself*—your operations are certain to run smoother and with less downtime, translating into greater productivity and cost savings. Today, there are more than 3600 CMRPs in over 40 countries around the globe. Don't you think it's time you joined them? Learn more about the CMRP program at www.smrp.org. **MT**

To contact Michael Eisenbise directly, telephone (409) 945-1734; e-mail: Michael.Eisenbise@BP.com.

The opinions expressed in this Viewpoint section are those of the author, and don't necessarily reflect those of the staff and management of Maintenance Technology magazine.

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