

Certification Maintenance in New Zealand

Overview

And as most of you should know it is now necessary to undertake a Certification Maintenance Program if you wish your APICS qualification to be recognized. I have developed a generic practical approach on how you can achieve the required number of points, no matter where you live in New Zealand. (Well, at least to the age of 62, when you become certified for life - one way or another.) This article explains the reason for undertaking certification maintenance and how to go about it.

What is the purpose of it, why is it important?

APICS have stated that the introduction of the Certification Maintenance followed several years of careful consideration and intense market research. The surveys showed not only was certification maintenance standard amongst comparable organizations, but also individuals overwhelmingly support some form of ongoing requirements for maintaining the integrity of their professional credentials.

But there is more to it than this! We have a responsibility to ourselves to continue learning throughout our lives – which is captured in the APICS vision *Lifelong Learning for Lifetime Success*.

The requirements for maintaining certification can be met through multiple sources and a variety of professional development activities intended to help you prepare for the challenges ahead and maintain your professional edge by

- Preserving the currency of your hard earned certification credentials
- Expanding your knowledge of the latest industry practices
- Exposing you to new technology solutions
- Reinforcing your skills
- Improving your job performance

How the program works

Every five years, following initial certification, you need to obtain points; 75 for CPIM and 100 for CFPIM. There are four categories for obtaining these points

- I. Continuing education
- II. Presentations, publications and educational development
- III. Service to resource management profession
- IV. Professional membership

Here are some of the ways you can do this. When you think about it, you will be surprised how often you do some of these things, as part of your day-to-day job. You just need to recognize them as contributing to your maintenance program and record them.

I. Continuing Education

One point per instructional hour (half hour increments for 0.5 points) for attending any educational program or course that directly relates to resource management

- Conference, workshop or symposium
- CPIM/CIRM review course
- A course offered by a degree granting institution of higher education (you have to pass of course!)
- A training program offered by your company
- Independent study
 - A college/university course
- PICS Conferences (6 points per day)
- APICS CPIM/CIRM exams – 10 points each

Many of us will attend a workshop or undertake some form of training relating to our job during the course of a year. This could range from an ERP system to managing people.

II. Presentations, Publications, and Educational Development

Two points per instructional hour (1 point for half hour increments) for conducting programs directly related to resource management:

- Course (including certification review)
- Tutorials
- Workshops

Many of you could do this within your own companies. For example you could hold a workshop for staff on stock takes, cycle counting, inventory accuracy, maintaining BOM integrity. You could use the material from the review courses as instructional material.

N.B. Points are only awarded once per year on the same topic, and the time to prepare is not eligible for points. There is a limit of 60CPIM points and 80CFPIM points in this category.

You could also obtain two points for an article/contribution to the NZPICS magazine on subject matter directly related to resource management. (I know this one would particularly please Kerry!) And it is not as difficult as it seems. You all have developed your own approaches to addressing resource management issues in your companies. Sometimes it is a help to clarify your own thinking by putting it on paper. You do not have to do this on

your own, but jointly with another colleague. Please make sure you have cleared it with senior management before submitting it though!

III. Service to Resource Management Profession

In New Zealand you would earn 5 points per year for being President of NZPICS, and 2 points per year for serving on the committee. We would always welcome anyone who would like to volunteer his or her time to help the organization. However, it is unlikely that most of you will be in a position to do this for one reason or another.

IV. Professional Membership

Membership of NZPICS will provide points each year

Membership of APICS will provide 6 points per year. Some of you may consider the annual subscription worthwhile, however once it is unlikely that most of you would wish to consider this unless paid for by your company.

Suggested Certification Maintenance Plan options

Remember at this stage it is your responsibility to maintain your own Professional Journal. So it is important to keep a good on-going record, perhaps in your diary. Otherwise it will be difficult to complete the required paperwork when you are ready to submit it. So the aim is 15 points a year for CPIM and 20 points per year for CFPIM. For help with this see the website diary of past events which records events and their points value. (http://www.nzpics.org.nz/~nzpics/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53&Itemid=65)

For those of you living out of Auckland

I. Continuing education

- Conference, workshop or symposium
 - A one-day workshop a year would contribute 6 points
- Consideration is being given to run the Maintenance Course we have developed in other centers. This would provide 6 points per topic.
- CPIM/CIRM review course
 - There have been requests to hold review courses as a refresher for people who have already taken and passed the exam. Participants would then have the choice as to whether to sit the exam. This would provide 30 points for the course, and additional 10 points for the exam. (I have plans to hold a Basics of Supply Chain Management Courses in Napier, Rotorua, Dunedin and New Plymouth in the New Year.)
- A course offered by a degree granting institution of higher education (you have to pass of course!)

- A training program offered by your company
 - Many of you would get the opportunity to attend at least one day of training per year, which would contribute 6 points per day.
- Independent study
 - A college/university course

So there are a number of options. As a minimum a one day workshop and one day of training would provide 12 points per year. Alternatively attending one review course in 5 years, gives the equivalent of 6 points per year.

II. Presentations, publication and educational development

- a. Workshop – presenting a two-hour workshop once a year would give the equivalent of four points per year
- b. Writing an article for the NZPICS newsletter will provide 2 points

IV. Professional membership

Being a member of NZPICS will give you points per year

For those of you living in Auckland NZPICS regularly organizes site visits, which will contribute 1 point per hour. This could provide you with perhaps 10 points per year. If people were interested it would be possible for us to help you coordinate some site visits in other centers. I have already discussed this with people from Napier. One visit a year could provide those couple of additional points needed. And the interaction with other member is always fun. However remember that points in this category relate to *instructional hours*, so I am not so sure we can claim drinking wine at the AGM under this category!

So the last thing we need to consider is the cost of maintenance. Currently NZPICS membership is \$40 p.a. +gst. The cost of attending a review course will vary depending where it is held, the materials provided, and whether you take the exam. Currently the cost of submitting your maintenance application to APICS is subsidized by NZPICS, and costs \$150. You need to decide the value of this in helping you have *Lifelong learning for lifetime success*.

I hope this article provides a better understanding of how to undertake certification maintenance so that is not such an erroneous task. If you require any further assistance do not hesitate to contact us

John Marson