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WHITEPAPER

The Performativity Gap in Asset Management

How practice theory exposes the limits of static standards – and why measuring performance matters more than measuring conformance

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8	27	5	8	39
DIMENSIONS (GARPI™ SCOPE)	MONTHS (ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY)	MATURITY TIERS (CLASSIFICATION)	ISO 55001 CLAUSES (STANDARDS ALIGNED)	GFMAM SUBJECTS (LANDSCAPE ALIGNED)

Abstract

This paper argues that asset management, as practised in asset-intensive organisations, is fundamentally performative – it is constituted through the ongoing, situated performances of organisational participants rather than through the static frameworks that describe it. Drawing on Callonian performativity theory and a 27-month ethnographic study within a major oil and gas company (Moyo, 2018), I identify a structural gap between what standards like ISO 55001 measure (management system conformance) and what determines operational outcomes (everyday performances). I term this the *performativity gap*.

The paper demonstrates that existing measurement instruments – maturity assessments, metrics-based benchmarks, and consulting-led evaluations – each address only one side of this gap. The Global Asset Reliability & Performance Index (GARPI™) is positioned as the first instrument designed to bridge it: measuring both what assets deliver and how organisations are structured to sustain that delivery, across eight weighted dimensions on a repeatable annual cycle. The theoretical framework developed here draws on the concepts of felicity and infelicity conditions (Austin, 1962; Brisset, 2016), framings and overflows (Callon, 1998; D'Adderio and Pollock, 2014), and the co-performation of routines and strategy (Moyo, 2018) to explain why static measurement has structural limitations and why longitudinal, performance-oriented benchmarking is both theoretically grounded and practically essential.

Keywords: performativity, asset management, ISO 55001, ISO 55001:2024, GFMAM, GARPI™, routine dynamics, strategy-as-practice, benchmarking, felicity conditions, climate resilience, digital capability

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SECTION 01

Introduction – The static promise and the dynamic reality

Asset management standards promise transformation but deliver documentation. ISO 55001 has been transformative in establishing requirements, yet the discipline struggles to demonstrate measurable improvement in actual asset performance. The standard describes what a management system should contain; it does not measure whether those arrangements are producing the intended performances. This is not a criticism of the standard – it is a recognition that standards and benchmarks serve fundamentally different purposes.

The Global Forum on Maintenance and Asset Management (GFMAM) Asset Management Landscape extends ISO 55001's clause structure across 39 subject areas in six groups – from Asset Management Policy and Strategy through to Stakeholder Engagement. Organisations invest substantial resources to align themselves with these frameworks, and two organisations with identical maturity scores across the GFMAM's 39 subjects can achieve radically different operational outcomes. One delivers reliable assets at competitive cost; the other struggles with unexpected failures and escalating maintenance budgets. Taxonomy is not performance. The gap between documented conformance and enacted performance is the subject of this paper.

Every asset-intensive organisation operates under the same fundamental tension. Physical assets – platforms, pipelines, turbines, processing plants, rail networks, water treatment facilities – are the productive core of the enterprise. They generate revenue, carry safety obligations, and underpin regulatory compliance. Yet when the board asks "How does our asset management compare to our peers?", the honest answer in most organisations is: we do not know. Not approximatively. Not directionally. We do not know, because no standardised instrument exists to provide the answer. We have rich bodies of standards, frameworks, and maturity models. Each advances the discipline in important ways. None produces a benchmark.

The fundamental concept underlying this paper is performativity – drawn from Callon (1998, 2007) and applied to asset management. In performativity theory, models are not merely descriptive; they are engines that seek to transform the settings they describe. ISO 55001 is such a model. Every standard, every maintenance strategy, every CMMS configuration is a model that seeks to performatively constitute the organisation's relationship with its physical assets. But this transformation is neither deterministic nor guaranteed – it is mediated by what I term felicity conditions: the underlying requirements that enable a model to successfully transform the setting and achieve its objectives. When these conditions are absent or compromised, performativity fails.

Of particular relevance is Moyo's (2018) 27-month ethnographic study within a major oil and gas company, which demonstrated through detailed empirical evidence that the performativity of asset management is temporary and fragile – forever being threatened by future overflows and continual reconfiguration within the setting. This has profound implications for how we measure asset management: any measurement that captures only a single point in time captures a framing, not a performance.

The paper's contribution is to introduce the concept of the *performativity gap* – the structural distance between the framing of asset management (as codified in standards, policies, and procedures) and its ongoing performance (as enacted through daily routines, decisions, and practices). I argue that closing this gap requires an instrument designed to measure performance rather than conformance – and that GARPI™ is that instrument.

SECTION 02

Performativity theory and the limits of models

2.1 Callonian performativity: models as engines, not cameras

Michel Callon's key insight is deceptively simple: models do not merely describe reality – they actively shape it (Callon, 1998, 2007; MacKenzie, 2006). Callon originated this concept through studying the Black-Scholes equation in financial markets, but the logic applies equally to organisational settings. In asset management, every standard, every maintenance strategy, every CMMS configuration is a model that seeks to performatively constitute the organisation's relationship with its physical assets.

Kornberger and Clegg (2011) extended this logic to organisation studies, and subsequent scholarship by D'Adderio and Pollock (2014), Aggeri (2017), and Ligonie (2017) has developed the concept across diverse empirical contexts. The performativity approach recognises that models are not passive representations – they are agencies that do work in the world. They perform the reality they purport to describe.

The GFMAM Asset Management Landscape, with its 39 subject areas, extends the framing further by decomposing asset management into granular components: policy, strategy, lifecycle delivery, asset information, organisational structure, and risk management. Each subject area represents an element of the intended framing – a shape the organisation should assume. But decomposition does not guarantee performation. The act of making the model work in practice – ensuring that the policy is not merely documented but actively shapes decision-making, that the strategy drives resource allocation, that lifecycle processes are not merely defined but actually executed – this is performation. And performation is where the gap emerges.

In this view, ISO 55001 is itself a model – an organisational arrangement implemented to achieve specific objectives. As with all models, its implementation gives rise to a performativity space where the interplay of felicity and infelicity conditions determines the extent to which the standard's framings are realised in practice (Moyo, 2018).

2.2 Felicity and infelicity conditions

Drawing on Austin (1962) and Brisset (2016), performativity is not automatic – it requires conditions to be met. – FELICITY CONDITIONS are the underlying requirements for a model to successfully transform the setting and achieve its objectives. Infelicity conditions are those that result in performativity failures – where the model fails to constitute the intended reality.

From Moyo's (2018) doctoral research, felicity conditions in the asset management setting include pressures from ambiguity driving adaptation; pressures of rework and inefficiencies driving improvement; synthesis, adaptation and improvisation; and truces, accommodations and negotiations among competing interests. Infelicity conditions include creating new uncertainty, contradictions and tensions, apathy and ambivalence, and conflict and antagonism.

The distinction is critical. An organisation can implement ISO 55001 faithfully – adopt the clauses, document the processes, establish the governance – and still fail to performatively constitute effective asset management if the felicity conditions are not present. Conversely, an organisation lacking formal standards but blessed with strong felicity conditions – experienced operators, strong peer networks, clear alignment between maintenance and production objectives – may achieve superior asset performance through informal mechanisms.

2.3 The performativity space

Moyo (2018) introduces the performativity space framework to conceptualise this dynamic. At the core is the mutual constitution between the planned change model and felicity conditions (Feldman and Orlikowski, 2011). Within the zone where felicity conditions predominate, the verisimilitude of the model increases – the model successfully performs the reality it promises. Beyond this zone, performative struggles shape and reshape the model. At the limits, performativity failures occur.

This framework shifts the lens from "is the standard implemented correctly?" to "are the felicity conditions present for the standard's objectives to be realised?" It acknowledges that the performative success of a model is not a property of the model itself but of the interplay between the model and the setting in which it is deployed.

2.4 The fragility of strict performativity

A key finding from Moyo (2018) is that strict performativity – where outcomes align closely with intentions – is temporary and fragile; forever being threatened by future overflows and continual reconfiguration within the setting (D'Adderio and Pollock, 2014). The term "overflow" comes from Callon (1998): it describes the moments when the model fails to contain reality, when unexpected consequences or unintended performances emerge that the model did not anticipate.

Organisations respond to overflows through reframing: they adjust the model, revise procedures, recalibrate expectations. But this reframing is itself temporary. The setting continues to evolve – staff turnover, equipment ageing, regulatory changes, technology shifts, market pressures – and new overflows emerge. This is not failure; it is the inherent dynamics of sociotechnical systems. But it has a profound implication for measurement: outcomes are iterative cycles of framing, overflows, and reframing. Any measurement that captures only a single point in time captures a framing, not a performance.

Consider a hypothetical oil company that implements ISO 55001 and achieves certification in month one. The framing is locked in place. But over the subsequent months, equipment ages, pressure to reduce cost leads to deferred maintenance, experienced technicians retire and are replaced by less experienced staff, and a new production target creates tension with the maintenance schedule. By month twelve, the certified framing no longer reflects operational reality – but the certification remains valid. The performativity gap has widened, yet the standard's snapshot measurement cannot detect it.

> **Key principle: Static measurement of dynamic processes**
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> The performativity perspective reveals why static measurement – certification at a point in time – is structurally inadequate for capturing the ongoing performance of asset management. The setting is not static; it is continuously configured and reconfigured through the ongoing performances of organisational participants. Measurement must therefore be longitudinal to capture this dynamic.

This dynamic interplay is the foundation for understanding why GARPI™ runs on an annual cycle. A single measurement captures one framing. Annual measurement over three or more years captures the trajectory – whether the organisation is progressing, plateauing, or regressing, and across which dimensions this is occurring.

The references that underpin this section – Austin (1962), Brisset (2016, 2017), Callon (1998, 2007), D'Adderio (2008, 2010), Feldman and Orlikowski (2011), Gherardi (2012), Kornberger and Clegg (2011), Ligonie (2017), Aggeri (2017), MacKenzie (2006), Moyo (2018), and Battilana and D'Aunno (2009) – collectively establish performativity as a robust framework for understanding how organisations enact the models that guide them.

SECTION 03

ISO 55001 and GFMAM as framing devices

3.1 The standard as an intended framing

ISO 55001 (BSI, 2014; revised BSI, 2024) and its companion ISO 55002 (BSI, 2018) represent a comprehensive framing of what an asset management system should contain. The standard spans Clauses 4–10: context, leadership, planning, support, operation, performance evaluation, and improvement. The 2024 revision is significant: it explicitly integrates climate change and sustainability requirements into Clause 4 (organisational context), strengthens stakeholder engagement obligations, introduces circular economy principles for lifecycle management, and formally addresses digital transformation and data-driven decision-making. Organisations certified under ISO 55001:2014 must recertify under the 2024 revision by 2027, marking a structural shift in what the framing requires. Critically for this paper's argument, the 2024 revision strengthens rather than undermines GARPI™'s relevance: Dimension 4 (Asset Information & Digital Capability) and Dimension 8 (Risk Management & Strategic Resilience) directly address the two most significant new requirements – digital capability and climate resilience – that the updated standard now explicitly demands. The Global Forum on Maintenance and Asset Management (GFMAM) Asset Management Landscape v3.0 (2024) further extends this framing, incorporating enhanced digital and data management guidance, stronger linkages to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and updated competency frameworks that align with ISO 55001:2024's requirements.

The GFMAM Landscape v3.0's six interconnected category groupings span the full scope of asset management practice. **Group 1 – Strategy & Planning** encompasses Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy & Objectives, Demand Analysis, Strategic Planning, Asset Management Planning, and Capital Investment Decision-Making. **Group 2 – Decision-Making** covers Operations & Maintenance Decision-Making, Life Cycle Value Realisation, Resourcing Strategy, and Shutdowns & Outage Strategy. **Group 3 – Lifecycle Delivery** is the largest category, including Technical Standards & Legislation, Asset Creation & Acquisition, Systems Engineering, Configuration Management, Maintenance Delivery, Reliability Engineering, Asset Operation, Resource Management, Shutdown & Outage Management, Fault & Incident Response, and Asset Decommissioning & Disposal.

Group 4 – Asset Information addresses Asset Information Strategy, Asset Information Standards, Asset Information Systems, and Data & Information Management. **Group 5 – Organisation & People** covers Procurement & Supply Chain Management, Asset Management Leadership, Organisational Structure, Organisational Culture, and Competence Management. **Group 6 – Risk & Review** encompasses Risk Assessment & Management, Contingency Planning & Resilience Analysis, Sustainable Development, Management of Change, Asset Performance & Health Monitoring, Asset Management System Monitoring, Management Review Audit & Assurance, Asset Costing & Valuation, and Stakeholder Engagement.

The Institute of Asset Management (IAM) has developed maturity assessment frameworks aligned to these 39 subjects, using a consistent scale from Level 0 (Innocent – no formal processes) through Level 1 (Aware – processes ad hoc), Level 2 (Developing – processes defined), Level 3 (Competent – processes implemented and monitored), Level 4 (Optimising – processes improving continuously), to Level 5 (Excellent/Beyond – leading-edge practice). This maturity taxonomy has become the standard reference for asset management capability assessment globally.

In performativity terms, ISO 55001 and GFMAM together constitute a model – an organisational arrangement implemented to achieve specific objectives. It performs a particular vision of how asset management should be structured: with clear governance, explicit strategy, documented processes, and measurable performance evaluation. As with all models, its implementation gives rise to a performativity space where the interplay of felicity and infelicity conditions determines the extent to which the standard's framings are realised in practice.

3.2 What certification measures – and what it does not

ISO 55001 certification is a pass/fail assessment at a point in time. It measures *management system conformance* – whether policies exist, whether processes are documented, whether governance structures are in place. It does not measure operational performance. An organisation can achieve a gold-standard certification score on management system maturity while its assets underperform. Conversely, as noted in GARPI™ Whitepaper WP-2026-01 (Moyo, 2026a), an operation can deliver strong availability figures through reactive heroics – experienced operators improvising solutions in the moment – rather than systematic management. The standard is insensitive to both possibilities.

Gap assessments against the GFMAM's 39 subjects provide more granularity than certification alone. Rather than a binary pass/fail, they score each subject area against the five-tier maturity scale. An organisation might score Level 2 on Maintenance Delivery (processes defined but not fully implemented), Level 3 on Reliability Engineering (processes implemented and monitoring in place), and Level 4 on Asset Information Systems (systems continuously improving). This granular approach is substantially more sophisticated than certification alone. Yet it remains fundamentally a snapshot of the framing – capturing what the organisation can demonstrate at one moment in time, not whether demonstrated capabilities are enacted in daily practice, producing intended outcomes, or sustainable over time.

3.3 The snapshot problem – static analysis in a dynamic setting

This is the central argument: ISO 55001 certification captures a framing at a point in time. But asset management, as Moyo (2018) demonstrates, is characterised by ongoing cycles of framing, overflow, and reframing. The setting is in continuous flux (Burnes, 2009; Dawson and Andriopoulos, 2014; Feldman, 2000). The nature of planned change within a setting must therefore never be taken as fixed or stabilised – contextual factors will continue to shape the model (Moyo, 2018, p. 208).

The implication is direct: measuring asset management only through periodic certification snapshots is structurally inadequate. It captures the framing (what the standard requires) but not the performance (what the organisation is actually doing). This gap – between the intended framing and the enacted performance – is what this paper terms the performativity gap. It is the distance between what the standard says the organisation should do and what the organisation is actually doing on the ground, every day, across its asset portfolio.

> **Certification and performance are orthogonal**
>
> ISO 55001 certification is a necessary condition for systematic asset management – it establishes the framing. But it is not a sufficient condition for operational performance. An organisation must be both certified AND performing effectively in the operational sense. The performativity gap makes this visibility impossible without a complementary instrument.

SECTION 04

Asset management as practice

4.1 The practice turn: from system to performance

Asset management is not merely a management system – it is a practice (Nicolini, 2012; Schatzki, 2001). It is constituted through the daily, situated activities of maintenance engineers, reliability analysts, operations managers, planners, and frontline technicians. What matters is not what the strategy document says but what practitioners actually do – and why they do it (Whittington, 2006). From a strategy-as-practice perspective (Golsorkhi et al., 2015), organisations are not bearers of strategies; they are sites where strategies are enacted and continuously modified through the everyday work of participants.

This practice lens reframes asset management from a top-down implementation challenge ("communicate the strategy to the workforce") to a performative constitution challenge ("what everyday performances are producing asset management outcomes?"). The question shifts from compliance (are people following the procedure?) to capability (are people, with the tools and knowledge they have, capable of producing the intended outcomes?).

4.2 Routines and their dynamics

Routine dynamics theory (Feldman and Pentland, 2003; Feldman, 2000; D'Adderio, 2008, 2010) draws a distinction between the *ostensive* aspect of a routine – the abstract idea of the routine, how it is documented – and its *performative* aspect – how it is actually enacted by specific people at specific times. The ostensive is what the standard describes; the performative is what GARPI™ measures.

Moyo's (2018) ethnographic study of the Planned Maintenance Change Request (PMCR) routine within a multinational oil and gas company (here called "GasCo") tracked this distinction in detail. The PMCR routine was the organisation's mechanism for developing and changing maintenance procedures and method statements for physical assets. The study tracked the evolution of this routine over 27 months as a planned change model was implemented. The ostensive routine – the documented procedure – remained relatively stable. But the performative enactment of the routine – how maintenance engineers actually used it, adapted it, improvised within it, and sometimes circumvented it – was constantly shifting in response to changing pressures and contexts.

4.3 The co-performation of routines and strategy

Moyo (2018) develops what he terms the Model for the Co-performation of Routines and Strategy. This model demonstrates that strategy implementation produces two forms of adaptation: adaptation due to strict performativity (where intended outcomes are realised) and adaptation due to performativity struggles and overflows (where outcomes diverge from intentions). Both are ongoing; both require measurement; neither is captured by a snapshot assessment.

This model reconceptualises asset management improvement not as a linear journey from current state to target state, but as an ongoing process of mutual shaping where the strategy is itself being shaped by the setting even as it shapes it. The measures and objectives for success should therefore also be changing as the model changes to account for the revised model (Moyo, 2018, p. 209). This is radically different from traditional programme management, which typically locks objectives at the beginning and measures success against those fixed targets.

The implications for GARPI™ are significant. Rather than a fixed-point certification that measures conformance to a predetermined standard, GARPI™ is designed as a continuously updated benchmark that measures the trajectory of performance against a peer cohort that is itself evolving. The benchmark moves because the discipline moves. The comparison is always current because the setting is always in motion.

SECTION 05

Defining the performativity gap

5.1 The gap defined

The *performativity gap* is formally defined as the structural distance between the framing of asset management (as codified in standards, policies, procedures, and management system documentation) and the ongoing performance of asset management (as enacted through daily routines, operational decisions, resource allocation, and the dynamic interplay of human and material participants).

It exists because models and settings are not perfectly aligned. The model is abstract, intended to be general enough to apply across diverse contexts. The setting is concrete, specific, shaped by local history, personalities, constraints, and possibilities. The performativity gap is not a failure of implementation; it is a structural feature of how models work in complex sociotechnical systems.

5.2 Three manifestations of the gap

1. The conformance-performance gap: An organisation can be ISO 55001 certified and still have assets that underperform – because certification measures the framing, not the performance. The governance structures may be in place, the procedures documented, the roles defined. Yet the assets still fail, production stops, costs escalate. This gap arises when felicity conditions are absent – when the people responsible for asset management lack the knowledge, tools, authority, or incentives to translate the documented procedures into effective operational outcomes.

2. The intention-realisation gap: Following Moyo (2018), intended outcomes and realised outcomes lie on a spectrum between non-performativity (complete failure) and full performativity (perfect alignment between intention and realisation). The gap between intention and realisation is not a failure of implementation but a structural feature of how models are enacted in complex settings. Pressures from ambiguity, competing objectives, and resource constraints all create conditions where realised outcomes diverge from intended outcomes.

3. The temporal gap: Certification captures a single moment – the audit date. But as Moyo (2018) shows, strict performativity is temporary and fragile, forever threatened by overflows and reconfiguration. The gap between the certified state and the current state widens from the moment the audit concludes. By the time the organisation undergoes re-certification three years later, the original certified state may bear little resemblance to current operational reality.

5.3 Why traditional measurement misses it

Drawing on GARPI™ WP-2026-01 (Moyo, 2026a): standards-based assessments measure the system but not outcomes; metrics-based benchmarks measure outcomes but not the system; consulting-led assessments are rigorous but not comparable across peers; industry surveys provide breadth but lack depth. None of them measures the dynamic interplay between framing and performance over time. The performativity gap is invisible to all existing instruments because no existing instrument is designed to see both sides simultaneously and longitudinally.

Recent cross-industry organisational research (McKinsey & Company, 2026) provides empirical validation that the performativity gap is not unique to asset management but represents a structural challenge across industries. McKinsey's State of Organizations 2026 found that three-quarters of organisations fail to translate documented systems and certified frameworks into high-performance cultures, despite substantial investment in their development. This pattern – organisations possessing the framing but failing to achieve the performance – is precisely the conformance-performance gap identified in Section 5.1. The evidence suggests that the problem is not sector-specific negligence but a fundamental feature of how complex organisations enact the models they adopt. Asset management's version of this gap is the performativity gap; GARPI™ is designed to make it visible and measurable.

This is not a criticism of those instruments. Each serves a purpose. But their collective blindspot – the performativity gap – is real, measurable, and consequential for investment decisions, regulatory oversight, and professional development in the asset management discipline.

5.4 What a performativity instrument requires

Identifying the gap is not sufficient – a measurement instrument capable of making it visible must meet four distinct requirements. First, it must measure both framing *and* performance simultaneously: governance, policy, and strategy on one side; operational outcomes, execution quality, and workforce capability on the other. Second, it must be longitudinal, capturing change over time rather than a single audit snapshot, because strict performativity is temporary and the gap widens and narrows continuously. Third, it must enable peer comparison across a cohort: knowing your own framing-performance distance is useful; knowing how that distance compares to organisations facing similar challenges and conditions is transformative. Fourth, it must be theoretically grounded in contemporary organisational dynamics, so that its architecture reflects how management models actually work in complex sociotechnical settings. No existing instrument satisfies all four requirements. That is precisely why GARPI™ was designed and developed.

SECTION 06

GARPI™ as a performativity instrument

6.1 Bridging the gap: measuring performance, not just conformance

GARPI™ was designed – from the ground up – to measure both sides of the performativity gap simultaneously. It integrates operational performance measurement (what assets deliver) with management system maturity assessment (how organisations are structured to sustain that delivery) across eight weighted dimensions in a single composite score (Moyo, 2026a).

In performativity terms, GARPI™ measures both the framing (governance, strategy, risk management, digital capability) and the performance (operational outcomes, maintenance execution, workforce behaviour, supply chain readiness). The integration of these two dimensions in a single instrument is not merely a design choice – it is a theoretical necessity. The performativity gap cannot be closed by measuring framings and performances separately; it can only be made visible by measuring them together, across the same cohort, on the same timescale, using the same methodology.

This is why GARPI™ is positioned as a *performativity instrument* rather than as a maturity assessment, metrics benchmark, or consulting tool. It is designed specifically to illuminate the relationship between how organisations are structured and what they are actually achieving; between the intended and the enacted; between the framed and the performed.

6.2 The eight dimensions through a performativity lens

Dimension 1 – Asset Performance Outcomes: Direct measure of performative outcomes – what the assets actually deliver in terms of availability, reliability, and production stability. This is the operational reality against which all other dimensions are assessed. Aligned to GFMAM Subjects 35 (Asset Performance & Health Monitoring) and 8 (Life Cycle Value Realisation).

Dimension 2 – Asset Management Governance: The framing architecture – how the organisation structures its intended performativity. This includes clarity of roles, authority and accountability, executive sponsorship, and alignment between asset strategy and business objectives. Aligned to GFMAM Subjects 1 (Asset Management Policy), 2 (Asset Management Strategy & Objectives), 27 (Asset Management Leadership), and 37 (Management Review Audit & Assurance); ISO 55001 Clauses 4–5.

Dimension 3 – Asset Operations & Maintenance Strategy: Where governance meets execution – the co-performation of strategy and routines. This measures the coherence between the documented maintenance strategy and its actualisation in the work that maintenance teams perform daily. Bridges GFMAM Subject 7 (Operations & Maintenance Decision-Making) and Subjects 15–17 (Maintenance Delivery, Reliability Engineering, Asset Operation).

Dimension 4 – Asset Information & Digital Capability: Material artifacts and their agency – the sociomaterial assemblage (Moyo, 2018). CMMS systems, asset registers, data structures, and analytics platforms are not neutral tools; they shape what information is visible and therefore what decisions can be made. This dimension measures both the technical adequacy and the organisational capacity to leverage digital systems effectively. Aligned to GFMAM Subjects 22–25 (Asset Information Strategy, Standards, Systems, and Data & Information Management) and ISO 55001:2024's explicit digital transformation requirements. The rapid evolution of digital asset management capabilities (2024–2026) has elevated Dimension 4 from a systems adequacy assessment to a strategic capability measure. AI-driven predictive maintenance, digital twins, and real-time condition monitoring are no longer experimental – they represent core competitive differentiators between organisations that are genuinely realising their performative potential from digital investment and those that are merely generating unused data. GARPI™'s assessment directly captures this distinction: whether the digital infrastructure is enabling better decision-making and closing the performativity gap, or whether it constitutes expensive framing that produces no corresponding performance improvement.

Dimension 5 – Asset Investment & Lifecycle Value: Financial framing – whether reliability has a seat at the investment table. Many organisations optimise operational costs while sacrificing long-term value through deferred maintenance. This dimension measures whether investment decisions are informed by lifecycle cost analysis and whether the organisation is structured to make trade-offs between short-term cash flow and long-term asset health. Aligned to GFMAM Subjects 6 (Capital Investment Decision-Making), 8 (Life Cycle Value Realisation), and 12 (Asset Creation & Acquisition).

Dimension 6 – Workforce Capability & Organisational Culture: The human participants in the agencement – the people who perform asset management. Strategy is only as effective as the people who execute it. This dimension measures both technical competence and the cultural factors that enable or inhibit the performance of effective asset management (knowledge retention, psychological safety, collaboration across functions). Aligned to GFMAM Subjects 28–30 (Organisational Structure, Organisational Culture, Competence Management) and Subject 18 (Resource Management).

Dimension 7 – Supply Chain & Materials Readiness: The material infrastructure that enables or constrains performativity. Spares availability, supplier reliability, logistics responsiveness – these material conditions shape what maintenance teams can actually accomplish. An organisation with inadequate spares management may have a documented maintenance strategy that cannot be performed reliably. Aligned to GFMAM Subjects 26 (Procurement & Supply Chain Management) and 9 (Resourcing Strategy).

Dimension 8 – Risk Management & Strategic Resilience: Forward-looking capacity – whether the organisation is building structural resilience or optimising only for today. This measures the adequacy of risk identification and mitigation, the effectiveness of scenario planning, and the robustness of contingency arrangements for critical asset failures. Aligned to GFMAM Subjects 31–34 (Risk Assessment & Management, Contingency Planning & Resilience Analysis, Sustainable Development, Management of Change) and ISO 55001:2024 Clause 4, which now explicitly requires climate risk assessment as part of organisational context. The integration of climate change considerations into ISO 55001:2024 reflects the reality that climate resilience is no longer optional for asset-intensive organisations. Physical risks – extreme weather events, temperature excursions, flood exposure – directly threaten asset availability and operational continuity. Transition risks – decarbonisation regulations, carbon pricing, stranded asset exposure – require fundamental rethinking of asset investment strategies and lifecycle assumptions. Dimension 8's assessment of strategic resilience specifically evaluates whether organisations are building climate-adaptive capacity or optimising asset management within assumptions that may no longer hold. This forward-looking assessment distinguishes organisations preparing for performative success under changing conditions from those optimising within a framing that climate and regulatory change may soon overflow.

> **Why eight dimensions?**
>
> The eight dimensions are aligned to ISO 55001's eight informative annexes and GFMAM's Asset Management Landscape structure, ensuring GARPI™ is recognisable to practitioners already engaged with these frameworks. But the selection is also theoretically grounded: each dimension represents either a framing element (how the organisation intends to manage assets) or a performative element (what the organisation is actually achieving), and the composite score bridges both. No dimension is purely about conformance; all measure the operational consequence of management choices.

Industry developments in asset management practice (2024–2026) confirm a growing recognition that traditional 'best practice' benchmarking is structurally insufficient. Leading organisations increasingly seek peer cohort comparisons that account for operating context – sector, asset type, regulatory environment, organisational maturity – rather than universal maturity benchmarks that treat a water utility and an offshore oil operator as equivalent. There is a parallel movement toward emphasising performance trajectories rather than static point-in-time scores, and a growing recognition that maturity is not synonymous with performance: an organisation can achieve top-quartile maturity scores while delivering below-average operational outcomes. This shift in the industry's benchmarking philosophy validates GARPI™'s design: the benchmark must move because the industry moves; comparisons must reflect not just where organisations are, but where they are heading and at what rate.

6.3 Longitudinal measurement and the dynamics of change

GARPI™ runs annually on a fixed methodology. This is not merely a practical convenience – it is theoretically essential. Moyo's (2018) model shows that outcomes are iterative cycles of framing, overflows, and reframing. A single measurement captures one moment in this cycle. Annual measurement captures the trajectory. Three or more cycles reveal whether the organisation is progressing, plateauing, or regressing – and across which dimensions this is occurring.

This directly addresses the temporal gap identified in Section 5. For Ligonie (2017), the realisation of performativity requires that theoretical concepts and their associated social features travel across time and space to reach their audience and produce effects. GARPI™'s annual cycle provides exactly this temporal tracking mechanism. The benchmark does not stand still; it moves because the discipline moves. An organisation that was merely average three years ago may now be leading – not because the standard changed, but because the organisation's performance trajectory and the peer cohort's performance have evolved.

The compounding value of longitudinal data (Moyo, 2026a) is also a performativity argument. A single GARPI™ cycle produces a benchmark – "here is your score relative to peers." Multiple cycles produce a dataset – "here is the distribution of scores across your sector." Three or more cycles produce trend data with predictive value – "organisations following this trajectory tend to experience failures in these dimensions" or "this improvement pattern predicts subsequent resilience to disruptions."

This mirrors the longitudinal nature of the ethnographic methodology that underpinned the original performativity research (Moyo, 2018). Ethnography works precisely because time allows patterns to emerge – what appears as individual decisions on day one reveals itself as routine by month six; what seems like isolated incidents become systemic on month twenty-seven. GARPI™'s annual cycle embodies the same principle: the benchmark is a longitudinal study of how asset management is performed across the industry.

Furthermore, the annual cycle provides regulatory and professional bodies with a leading indicator of asset management risk. A regulatory inspector can now ask "what is your GARPI™ trend?" and gain insight into whether the organisation is moving toward or away from effective asset management – information that a single audit snapshot cannot provide. Professional development bodies can identify which skills and capabilities correlate with higher performance. Investors can assess whether asset-intensive organisations are building or depleting their asset management capacity.

> **The moving benchmark principle**
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> GARPI™ is designed as a moving benchmark – the peer comparison changes annually as participating organisations' performance evolves. This may seem counterintuitive (shouldn't benchmarks be fixed?), but it is theoretically sound. Asset management is not a static target state; it is an ongoing practice. A moving benchmark reflects this reality and ensures comparisons remain current and actionable. An organisation cannot succeed by matching last year's leading practice; it must continuously improve to stay ahead of the moving cohort.

SECTION 07

Implications for practice

7.1 For asset owners and operators

Building on Moyo's (2018) concept of the "equipped context" – drawing on Gherardi (2012) – practitioners can focus on the morphology of the social agencements within the setting to facilitate their objectives. An agencement is the concrete arrangement of people, materials, competences, and authorities that perform specific work. GARPI™ provides the diagnostic instrument that makes this practical and visible.

An organisation that understands where its performativity gap is widest – which dimensions show the greatest distance between framing (governance scores) and performance (operational outcome scores) – can target its interventions accordingly. If governance scores are high but operational outcomes are weak, the gap suggests that the problem is not strategic intent but execution capability or resource constraints. If framing is weak – poor governance, unclear strategy – but somehow operational outcomes are adequate, the organisation is relying on heroic improvisation, which is unsustainable.

This diagnostic clarity enables asset owners to move beyond generic "improve your asset management maturity" exhortations and toward targeted, evidence-based interventions. Invest in digital capability if the gap is in information access and quality. Invest in workforce development if the gap is in execution capability. Invest in governance restructuring if the gap is in strategic alignment.

The performativity framework also reframes the relationship between certification and improvement. ISO 55001 certification is not the destination – it is one framing among many within the performativity space. GARPI™ provides a continuous measure of whether that framing is being performed, and whether performance is being sustained over time. Certification is the beginning, not the end.

Investment decisions made without understanding the gap between framing and performance lead to systematic misallocation. An organisation might invest heavily in new maintenance management systems, digital asset registers, and documented procedures, achieve excellent maturity scores, and still fail to improve asset availability because the investment addressed only the framing side of the gap. The systems sit unused because the organisation lacks the workforce capability, the decision-making culture, or the clear incentives to use them effectively.

False confidence from certification creates a further risk. Board members and executives see ISO 55001 certification and assume asset management is under control. But certification does not measure outcomes. An organisation with excellent conformance but mediocre asset performance is in a riskier position than one that is honest about the gap and actively working to narrow it. Cultural stagnation can result from over-reliance on compliance frameworks: when asset management is defined as conformance to standards, organisations optimise for that conformance – they document, audit, and certify – but may not develop the adaptive capability needed to respond to changing technical, business, and environmental conditions. GARPI™ measurement, by emphasising performance trajectory and peer comparison, incentivises organisations to stay ahead of the curve rather than merely complying with existing standards.

7.2 For standards bodies and regulators

The performativity gap has implications for how standards bodies and regulators assess asset management maturity. Current approaches rely on periodic inspections (point-in-time snapshots of conformance) and self-reported compliance metrics. A global, annually benchmarked performance index provides regulators with a leading indicator of asset management risk – not as a replacement for existing oversight, but as a complementary evidence base.

A regulator can now ask sophisticated questions: "Is this organisation's GARPI™ trend improving, stable, or declining?" "How does its performance on operational outcomes compare to its governance scores?" "Is the performativity gap widening or narrowing?" These questions are impossible to answer with current tools. GARPI™ makes them answerable, enabling regulators to deploy oversight resources more effectively toward organisations showing deteriorating asset management capacity.

GARPI™ data also directly serves the standards development process. Standards bodies develop standards based on theory, best practice research, and expert judgement. But little empirical data exists on the actual relationship between the 39 GFMAM subject areas and operational outcomes. GARPI™ measurement over multiple years will reveal which subject areas are most predictive of strong asset performance, which are often implemented but deliver limited value, and which require evolution to remain relevant in a changing operational landscape. This evidence base will inform the next revision of both ISO 55001 and the GFMAM Asset Management Landscape, grounding standards development in observed practice rather than theoretical consensus.

7.3 For the asset management profession

The profession has grown significantly since PAS 55 (BSI, 2008) and ISO 55001 (BSI, 2014), yet it lacks the empirical data to answer fundamental questions about its own maturity (Moyo, 2026a). Performativity theory suggests this is not incidental – it is structural. The profession has invested heavily in framings (standards, frameworks, qualifications, maturity models) without investing commensurately in measuring whether those framings are actually being performed.

GARPI™ addresses this imbalance. It provides the empirical foundation for evidence-based professional development. Which certifications correlate with better performance? Which practices predict sustainability of improvements? What is the relationship between investment in different asset management capabilities and operational outcomes? These questions can now be answered through longitudinal GARPI™ data.

Furthermore, GARPI™ provides the profession with a shared language and methodology for discussing asset management performance. Rather than each organisation using different metrics and consultants using different frameworks, the profession can converge on a common benchmark and build collective understanding of what drives excellence in asset management. This is the foundation for the profession's maturation from a collection of techniques and standards toward a discipline with a shared empirical base.

This maturation requires profession-wide commitment. GARPI™ is most powerful when a critical mass of organisations participate, when benchmarking data is credible and comprehensive, and when professional development focuses on closing the performativity gap. Individual organisations that use GARPI™ gain competitive advantage; the sector that adopts it gains resilience and learning capacity.

SECTION 08

Conclusions

Asset management is a practice, not a document. It is constituted through the ongoing, everyday work of organisations' participants – maintenance engineers who make decisions about whether to repair or replace equipment; planners who allocate resources across competing maintenance demands; operators who report problems and workarounds; managers who set budgets and define priorities. ISO 55001 provides a valuable framing for how this work should be organised, but the framing is not the performance.

The performativity gap – the structural distance between what standards describe and what organisations do – is real, measurable, and consequential. It is invisible to existing measurement instruments because they measure either framings (standards-based assessments, maturity models) or performances (reliability metrics, availability data), never both together and never over time. The result is that asset-intensive organisations have rich information about whether they are compliant and fragmentary information about whether they are performing – but no integrated picture of the relationship between the two.

GARPI™ is the first instrument designed specifically to bridge this gap. Its architecture – eight dimensions spanning both operational outcomes and management system maturity, annual longitudinal measurement, peer cohort comparison, and explicit ISO 55001 and GFMAM alignment – is not accidental. It is the practical expression of a theoretical necessity identified through rigorous academic research and validated through ethnographic observation within operating asset-intensive organisations.

Moyo (2018, p. 209) writes: "The measures and objectives for the success of planned change implementation should be changing as the model changes to account for the revised model." GARPI™'s annual cycle embodies this principle. The benchmark moves because the discipline moves. The peer cohorts evolve because participating organisations evolve. The comparison is always current because the setting is always in motion. This is not benchmarking in the traditional sense – measuring compliance against a fixed standard. It is a performativity instrument for a performative discipline.

The invitation to asset-intensive organisations is clear: participate in GARPI™ not to prove you are compliant, but to understand whether your compliance is being performed – whether your framing is producing the outcomes you intend. Participate to join a global cohort of organisations committed to evidence-based asset management. Participate to be part of building the empirical foundation for the next phase of the discipline's maturation.

Participate in GARPI™ 2026 at optimal.world/garpi

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Dr Leslie L. Moyo CEng MIMechE MIAM DipOSH is Director of Optimal®, a specialist asset performance management consultancy with registered offices in Aberdeen (UK) and Johannesburg (South Africa).

Dr Moyo holds a DBA from Strathclyde Business School (specialising in routine dynamics and organisational change), an MBA in Oil & Gas Management from Robert Gordon University, and an MSc in Safety, Risk & Reliability Engineering from Heriot-Watt University. He is a Chartered Engineer registered with the Engineering Council UK and holds the IAM Diploma in Advanced Asset Management.

His doctoral research on performativity theory and routine dynamics within asset-intensive organisations provides the theoretical foundation for the GARPI™ programme. Dr Moyo has spent over two decades in asset management roles across oil & gas, mining, and utilities sectors, combining rigorous academic research with operational experience in some of the world's most complex asset environments.

Dr Moyo's research applies contemporary organisational theory – strategy-as-practice, performativity theory, and routine dynamics – to asset management practice, bridging the often-significant gap between academic analysis and industry application.

About Optimal®

Optimal® is a specialist asset performance management consultancy focused on helping asset-intensive organisations measure, understand, and improve the reliability and value of their physical asset portfolios.

Optimal's services span five core practice areas: Advisory & Optimisation (ISO 55001 implementation, strategic roadmaps, criticality analysis); Operations & Maintenance (maintenance strategy development, MIE assessments, maintenance planning); Digital Engineering & Data Management (asset tagging, CMMS structuring, spares optimisation, Optimal360™ platform); Operational Readiness (commissioning support, RAM modelling); and Asset Accounting & Governance.

The firm operates across asset-intensive industries globally – oil & gas, mining, power generation, manufacturing, utilities, and nuclear – with client-side expertise and independence from software vendors or delivery partners. Optimal is accredited to ISO 9001:2015 (Bureau Veritas) and all senior consultants hold advanced qualifications in asset management, reliability engineering, or related disciplines.

GARPI™ is Optimal®'s contribution to the global asset management profession: a rigorous, independently validated benchmark that makes the performativity gap visible and actionable. Through GARPI™, organisations can measure and improve the structural coherence of their asset management systems, track their trajectory against peer organisations, and build the adaptive capability required to sustain reliable asset performance in an environment of continuous change.

Website: optimal.world | **GARPI™:** optimal.world/garpi | **ARaaS®:** optimal.world/araas

This whitepaper is part of the GARPI™ series. Whitepaper #1, *Measuring What Matters: The Global Asset Reliability & Performance Index* (GARPI™-WP-2026-01), introduces the benchmark framework and its application. Subsequent whitepapers address specific dimensions and case studies demonstrating GARPI™'s use in asset-intensive organisations.