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Advancing Safeguards One Person at a Time: Developing "Safeguards Champions"

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Success in nuclear safeguards implementation depends on many factors, from trained staff to an effective regulatory framework to availability of necessary equipment and many other typical infrastructure-related aspects. Often, however, that success depends on long-term commitment and advocacy by a dedicated individual, or a 'champion.' While there exists ample literature and technical guidance on safeguards infrastructure, much less has been written on a role of safeguards champions. Who are they? What does it mean to be a safeguards champion? What are the circumstances that lead to the emergence of such champions? What is their impact on building and sustaining effective safeguards in an organization, or even country?

As such individuals retire or pursue other assignments, they leave a void not only in technical knowledge, but also in their unique ability to keep safeguards on the radar of their respective organizations and governments. The constrained resources of most training providers limit their ability to maintain frequent and long-term engagement in countries and necessitate increased reliance on trusted individuals within an organization. These "champions" are equipped not only with technical knowledge but also political and management savvy as well as personal buy-in to promote and sustain safeguards. Rather than relying on luck and chance, a concerted effort to recognize and then develop safeguards champions would help the global community address a critical gap in succession planning and sustainability.

In the past several years, the concept of "organizational champions" has been getting popularized by the organizational development experts and embraced by industries seeking innovative leadership models to advance their causes in an environment of competing priorities and rapid change.

This collaborative paper will explore the leadership concept of a "safeguards champion" and how it can be applied in safeguards-focused teams or organizations globally. The authors will examine existing government and industry practices and gather practical information from influential safeguards leaders in the Asian region. The information in this paper could serve as the basis for future training by national and international training providers, including the IAEA, who aim to address the succession planning and sustainability in partner countries.

Which "Key Question" does your Abstract address?

SGI4.3

Which alternative "Key Question" does your Abstract address? (if any)

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Topics

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