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Female Regulatory Inspectors at Nuclear Power Plants: A Constant Challenge and Opportunities

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The South African National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) was established in 1999 to provide for the protection of persons, environment and properties from the harmful effects arising from ionizing radiation produced by radioactive materials.

It is the responsibility of the licensee to have in place the necessary safety measures and resources in order to protect the public, workers and the environment against possible harmful effects of ionizing radiation caused by the operations of the Nuclear Power Stations.

To fulfill its mission, the NNR employs 61 females with scientific and engineering qualifications to support and perform compliance assurance activities at the Nuclear Power Plant in accordance with the National Nuclear Regulator Act, 1999 (Act No. 47 of 1999). This Act describes the following in terms of duties of an inspector: 'An Inspector may carry out inspections and use any applicable equipment during such inspections at any of the nuclear installations, sites or places and conduct such investigations as are necessary for the purpose of monitoring or enforcing compliance with this Act'.

The Regulator has two offices, the Head office is located in Pretoria and the Site office is located in Cape Town. Regulatory Inspectors at the Site Office are responsible for performing compliance inspections at Nuclear Power Plant. Women at the Site office play an important role in fulfilling the mandate of the NNR, 3/5 inspectors are women. One is The Chief Inspector responsible for executing the compliance assurance program and one of the female Inspectors is the South Africa Lead Representative at the International Atomic Energy Agency Waste Safety Standards Committee (IAEA-WASSC).

This poster addresses the following challenges:

- Plant facilities and personnel protective equipment
- Environment created by historical male domination
- Overcoming conscious and unconscious biases against women (by both genders)

Country or International Organization

South Africa

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