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NNR GRANTS NUCLEAR LICENCE TO NRWDI FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF THE VAALPUTS NATIONAL RADIOACTIVE WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITY.

The National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) has announced its decision to grant a Nuclear Licence to the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute (NRWDI) for the management and operation of the Vaalputs National Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility, located in the Northern Cape Province.

This regulatory decision follows a comprehensive and systematic review of the licence application submitted by NRWDI to the NNR. "Following a robust review process, the NNR review team concluded that NRWDI application satisfied the applicable regulatory requirements in accordance with section 21 of the National Nuclear Regulator Act read with section 30(1) and (8) of the National Radioactive Disposal Institute Act" said Thiagan Pather, NNR's Designate Executive: Nuclear Technology and Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material.

The licensed activities permitted under the scope of the NNR authorisation is limited to:

- Receipt of low-level radioactive waste in approved waste packages
- Temporary storage of waste packages in shielded areas within the facility reception hall
- Transfer of radioactive materials and contaminated equipment to other authorised facilities.
- Disposal of low-level waste packages in engineered near-surface trenches.

The NNR will continue to maintain regulatory control over activities at the Vaalputs site, including inspections, audits and safety reviews to ensure ongoing compliance with all health, safety and environmental protection regulatory requirements.

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About the National Nuclear Regulator

The National Nuclear Regulator is a public entity which is established and governed in terms of Section 3 of the National Nuclear Regulator Act, (Act No 47 of 1999). The fundamental objective of the NNR is to provide for the protection of persons, property and the environment against nuclear damage through the establishment of safety standards and regulatory practices suited for South Africa. To this end, the NNR exercises regulatory control and provides assurance that activities related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in South Africa are carried out in a safe and secure manner and in accordance with international principles and best practices.