

South African engineers off to Japan courtesy of the Hitachi-DST Scholarship

Thursday, 16 September 2010 - Hitachi Power Africa and the South African Department of Science and Technology (DST) will today bid farewell to three electrical engineers from Eskom who are this year's recipients of the Hitachi-DST Scholarship Programme for South African Engineers at a reception to be held in Pretoria tonight.

Mufunwa Mandavha, Rendani Munzhedzi and Sicelimpilo Zuma will be jetting off to Japan at the end of September as part of a five-month training programme aimed at transferring know-how and improving the competencies and capacity of South African engineers who are involved in utilities.

Now in its second year, the scholarship programme – a joint initiative between Hitachi and the DST – will expose the trainees to the former's extensive operations in Japan and in the company's research and development operations, environmental activities; productivity and efficiency enhancing technologies. They will gain an overview of the Japanese electric market and get an opportunity to analyse the differences and similarities with South Africa.

Further, they will learn about basic and advanced technologies for transmission and distribution grids; advanced technology for thermal power and hydro power plants and obtain insights on energy saving from Hitachi's measures to reduce CO₂ emissions associated with the company's products.

In addition to training-on-the-job at Hitachi's operations, trainees will visit Japanese Power Stations and substations to gain first-hand knowledge about how they are operated and maintained.

"The most important aspect of this programme is its emphasis on co-learning as it is tailored in such a way that the South African engineers share experiences and make comparisons between the field of operation, maintenance, environmental management and technology of the South African utility with the experts and peers from the utilities they visit in Japan," Idi Sotaro Okada, GM Hitachi Ltd, noted.

“Hitachi looks forward to welcoming them in Japan and to transferring skills which will be invaluable to Eskom’s new build programme.”

Hitachi Ltd is represented in South Africa by the Power Division’s subsidiary, Hitachi Power Africa, which is currently executing the Boiler Works Contracts for Eskom’s new build projects – the Medupi and Kusile Power Stations in Limpopo and Mpumalanga respectively.

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About Hitachi Power

Hitachi Power is the leading supplier in Europe for both bituminous and lignite coal fired boilers in the range of 600 – 1100MWe while its local subsidiary, Hitachi Power Africa is managing local content comprising the manufacturing, supply, construction and commissioning of fossil fuel-fired boiler plants and steam and gas turbines in the Southern Africa region. The company also supplies air quality control systems, combustion systems and components including coal mills, feeders and deashers.