



MEDIA RELEASE

Upington International Airport leads the way in equipping women with firefighting skills

Upington, 7 November 2018 - Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) on Friday celebrated 15 women candidates that will take part in the company's Firefighters Skills Development Program that has been launched to train women in the critical skill of firefighting for the benefit of Upington International Airport.

The program is fully funded by ACSA as part of the company's Socio-Economic Development (SED) program and is targeted at providing scarce skills to young females in the Upington area. The programme takes place over a four-month period and commenced on 5 November 2018 in Greytown, KwaZulu Natal.

The women will receive an internationally accredited National Fire Protection Association 1001 certificate endorsed by the International Fire Services Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and the South African Emergency Services Institute (SAESI). The qualification will ensure that the candidates are equipped to secure employment with any firefighting organisation, anywhere in the world. In addition to the qualification, they will also receive a code 10 driver's license to be able to operate firefighting trucks.

Encouraging the candidates, Upington International Airport Regional Airport Manager, Nongo Dibete congratulated the women for making it to the programme and encouraged them to work hard to make their communities and families proud of their achievements. She mentioned that the decision to focus on this programme was motivated by the need to close the skills gap among women in the male dominated industry of firefighters.

The recruitment process was very extensive, and it included physical fitness exercises as well as interviews. The top 15 were selected from over 200 applicants.

Speaking at the launch of the programme at Upington International Airport, Mr Reginald Alexandra from the Dawid Kruiper Local Municipality, applauded ACSA for initiating such an

impactful programme, particularly focusing on upskilling women who are breadwinners in most South African households.

Airports Company South Africa's Socio-Economic Development (SED) focus areas are education, environmental sustainability, youth and women empowerment as well as the support for the disability sector.

The firefighters Skills Development Programme is in addition to the Nature Guides programme that the company is doing in partnership with Birdlife South Africa, and the Construction and Building Skills Development programme in partnership with False Bay and North Link Colleges in Cape Towns. All programmes are targeted at addressing the skills shortage among youth in the country.

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More about Upington International Airport

Upington International Airport received international status in 1993 and has enjoyed an eight percent annual increase in passenger figures in recent years. Although small, the airport has three runways. In addition to this, the airport is a gateway to Upington and neighboring areas connecting people to possibilities and is a catalyst for growth in the regional .

<http://www.airports.co.za/airports/upington-international/the-airport/about-upington>



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