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The Automation Paradox

Automated software and routines aim to replace the human operator manual control. As the Australian Synchrotron increases reliable automation, the paradoxical issue whether automation is a benefit or hindrance has risen.

This paper discusses the ways in which automation may actually magnify problems rather than eliminate them. The more reliable and advanced the automated system is, the less the human operator can contribute to the success of that system. This results in less human operator interaction with the system, and inherently decreases familiarity in the system. Thus, the contribution of the human operator becomes more crucial to the successful operation of the system.

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