May 1, 2020

**Back to work planning underway: Manufacturing**

(Windsor, Ontario)

Return to work guidelines are on our radar and underway – ahead of the announcement by the Province of Ontario Thursday.

It’s clear that manufacturing is focussed on the next 90 days and that reparing for new health & safety standards in the workplace is important. The main concern for employers is that 43% of workplaces report not having sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) specific to the prevention of virus spread. Work is underway to identify the exact nature of the shortages and to develop supply chains to find PPE.

With a ramp up rapidly approaching and workplace safety practices & requirements changing daily, planning for this is underway.

The weekly surveys by Automate Canada and the Canadian Association of Moldmakers (CAMM) have painted a picture of a manufacturing sector in Ontario that was initially hit hard by COVID-19 and is now focused on planning for resumption of operations at production facilities.

The Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program tops the list of programs being accessed by manufactures, based on this week’s results. The data shows that temporary layoffs have slowed significantly, while “furloughs” have increased, effectively retaining employees with government assistance. Knowing that the mold, tool, die & industrial automation industries are looking near term to supporting the ramp up of major manufacturers, employee retention is critically important.

The results are from the sixth week of surveys from the Canadian Association of Moldmakers (CAMM) & Automate Canada.

“Clearly some workplaces are getting ready and in search of PPE. We are looking to see how we can assist and connect them as requested to sources for these items,” says CAMM Board Chair Mike Bilton. “These surveys are helping not only us in our advocacy work but also making a difference for our members and this industry.”

Shelley Fellows, Chair of Automate Canada, says data does rule in terms of getting the attention of government and even others in the industry. “We are starting to see trends and we can also work to provide help where we see needs.”

Financial concerns continue to weigh heavily on respondents, which represent primarily the mold, tool & die industry as well as industrial automation sector. CAMM and Automate Canada have been assisted in the distribution of each week’ survey by the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association (CTMA).

On Tuesday, April 28, CAMM & Automate Canada hosted an “Ask Us Anything” webinar to deliver detailed information on financial programs for manufacturers from the government as well as banking, with an expert panel comprised of BDC (Business Development Bank of Canada), EDC (Export Development Canada), RBC (Royal Bank of Canada, KPMG Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade.

CAMM and Automate Canada have also launched a bi-weekly “deep dive” study into the cash flow concerns expressed in the surveys. Results for the first financial study will be released soon.

FACT SHEET

Responses this week were primarily from the Southwestern Ontario region, which has a significant manufacturing, moldmaking and industrial automation cluster.

Key Points:

* The number of employees out of the workplace due to isolation or quarantine is up this week - up to 73 in total (compared to 58 last week).
* The number of employees laid off decreased this week, declining to a total of 90 employees laid off temporarily, compared to 143 in week 5.
* In the past 7 days, there were a total of 515 “furloughed” employees, up from the 395 reported as furloughed last week.
* This week, respondents reported hiring 8 new employees.
* Requests for quote, or RFQs, are up at a level higher than temporary delays and almost equal to cancellations, which is good news.
* Almost half of our respondents predicted they will be at over 90% of full operations by the end of this week.
* 43% of our respondents said they do not have sufficient PPE in their workplaces.
* It looks like only a handful of companies are getting calls for clarification from Service Canada and none of the applications will be declined.

**What Next?**

A COVID-19 Impact survey from CAMM and Automate Canada will go out weekly based on the feedback we are receiving. The questionnaire for the Financial Study was released on April 16th.

Our surveys will be released each week for the next several weeks in order to gather data on the impact COVID-19 is having on the Canadian manufacturing sector.

***CAMM is a not-for-profit industry driven association focusing on the Canadian mold making sector of Canada. Automate Canada is a not-for-profit industry driven association focusing on the industrial automation and advanced manufacturing technology sectors of Canada. Both are based in Windsor, Ontario and are affiliated with the Auto Parts Manufacturers Association (APMA) in Canada and Automation Alley in Michigan, USA.***

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