

Manufacturing update 7: A 'call to arms' to manufacturers – produce desperately needed PPE



Unite has today (Friday) called on the government to show real leadership and step up to the challenge of getting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all who need it. **In a call supported by the doctors' union the British Medical Association, Unison, the Royal College of Nursing and industry federations, we are demanding government issue a 'call to arms' to manufacturers furloughing workers or running under capacity to switch to producing desperately needed PPE.**

We've all seen the shocking scenes of frontline health workers and social care staff working without proper PPE, doing their best to save lives and ensure the elderly and vulnerable are given the dignity they deserve. We've also seen the warehouse workers and delivery drivers, street sweepers, engineers, assembly and retail workers, bus drivers - millions of people working on through this pandemic so that we can continue with our lives in these unprecedented times. It's time for us to step up and support those supporting us!

We're at war with an invisible enemy, it's killing thousands here and across the globe and I know that you'll want to join a manufacturing army responding positively to this call.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING YOU TO DO

You will know better than anyone else what capabilities you have in your workplaces to step up to the challenge; if not already furloughed with plant laying idle - what excess capacity you have, tooling and materials alongside the skills, knowledge and experience we hold and the will of our people to do whatever it takes to do their bit.

Raise now with your employer your thoughts and ideas for what we can do at this time of national need; **can we produce hand sanitiser, visors, face-fit masks, gloves, goggles and medical gowns...**

- ⇒ If furloughed, **can we reopen our sites and put our skills, equipment and materials to use.** Do you have 3D printers, rolling, milling or injection moulding equipment that can be put to use.
- ⇒ If furloughed and unable to reopen; **is there PPE, hand sanitiser, cleaning materials and other equipment locked away that could be redistributed** and put to immediate use elsewhere.
- ⇒ With a positive response from government to **coordinate and distribute blueprints, materials and equipment what could our engineers and design teams do** to put them to use.
- ⇒ Can we help in any other ways; by **opening our car parks to emergency workers and canteens to provide hot meals** for the vulnerable, self-isolating and children at home from school.
- ⇒ Can our members who have been furloughed **volunteer in our communities.**

We are clearly in unprecedented times and it's difficult to picture exactly when we will come out of it, but we will. When we do, **we'll all want to know that we did our bit to help at a time of national emergency.** I'm confident that when we look back we'll be able to hold our heads up high, knowing that we did our best to **protect our members and the businesses that we need to return to as well as coming together as a society to do our bit for each other.**

Thanks for all you do and all I know you will do over the coming days and weeks.

In solidarity

Steve Turner

Assistant General Secretary

