

Italy: FCA and unions define health and safety conditions ahead of sites reopening

Planet Labor, 10 April 2020, n°11829 - [www.planetlabor.com](http://www.planetlabor.com)

**On Thursday 9 April the Fiat Chrysler Automobiles group (FCA) and all the Italian trade unions, including FIOM-Cgil, signed an agreement on guidelines to prevent the spread of coronavirus, which will have to be applied when the government gives the green light for business to resume. This comprehensive protocol of measures has been greeted favourably by leading Italian virologists.**

The agreement signed by FCA and the unions FIM-Cisl, FIOM-Cgil, Uilm, Fismic, UGL Metalmeccanici and AQCF will “guarantee maximum health safety for every worker in the group” when production resumes, FCA commented in a statement. The Italian automotive group stresses that the comprehensive and effective nature of the measures have been “confirmed and validated by the main Italian virologists”, including Roberto Burioni, considered one of the most prominent Covid-19 specialists in Italy. According to Pietro Gorlier, FCA’s chief operating officer for the EMEA region, the measures that were adopted at the beginning of the pandemic will be reinforced, “with the use of the most advanced prevention tools” and a significant “commitment to the training” of staff to ensure that those tools are applied. It should be noted that the government has not yet indicated the date from which non-essential production activities will be able to recommence.

**Access to production sites monitored and premises disinfected.** Strict checks, including workers’ temperatures checked by specialised and medical personnel, will be carried out at the entrance to each site. Specific “access flows” will be organised, with “respect of individuals’ security and confidentiality”. All steps to disinfect premises that were carried out at the beginning of the pandemic will be repeated before plants reopen and then on a regular basis. Procedures will be in place to avoid crowds in the canteen, changing rooms, and at the entrance and exit of sites. All work and rest areas will be equipped with disinfectant gels and surface cleaning kits.

**Informing employees of protective measures.** Before an activity can resume, each worker will be informed by WhatsApp and email about the specific measures in their department, such as the safe distance of one meter, hand washing methods, use of water dispensers, the canteen and lifts, and how meetings should be held. All necessary information will also be provided on how to manage possible symptoms of Covid-19 among workers. Once the activity has resumed, employees will continue to receive training and information. In addition, each worker will be given a kit with two masks and a pair of gloves for each working day, and one pair of goggles per month. Employees will be required to clean their workstations personally, in addition to the cleaning carried out by specialised personnel. Specific measures will be taken for people with existing illnesses that make them vulnerable.

**New organisation of work.** Remote working will continue to be adopted by all persons who are able to do so. On production sites, movement between the various departments will be limited as much as possible. To guarantee a safe distance between people, the layout of workstations will be revised and protective barriers will be put in place. Collective breaks will be timed according to departments and spread over the entire working day, while canteen hours will be extended and workers will be able to eat their meals at the end of their shifts. All guidelines will have to be implemented in consultation with worker representatives on workplace health and safety. As the trade unions point out, under the agreement the factories will reopen in a staggered manner, on the basis of consultation between management and employee representatives. Initially, only 10,000 workers would be affected, according

to a report from *Il Sole 24 Ore* on 10 April. Since not all employees will return to work at the same time, the unions have obtained a principle of rotation in how the so-called *Cassa Integrazione* (technical unemployment) is applied.

**Workers and jobs protected.** The trade unions unanimously welcomed an agreement that allows for a combination of safety and work. FIM welcomed the agreement as “unique in the Italian industrial landscape”, while the FIM union welcomed the fact that, amid the health emergency, “science, worker knowledge and collective bargaining have guided the negotiations”. According to Gianluca Ficco, Uilm’s national secretary, “the agreement represents a fundamental step, because what happens at Fiat has always been a point of reference for everyone”.

**Planet Labor, 10 April 2020, n°11829 – [www.planetlabor.com](http://www.planetlabor.com)**

Par Hélène Martinelli