

## Rautomead Business Activity Continues During Covid Pandemic

The Global Covid Pandemic has had a massive impact on global commerce as well as on the health of populations around the world. Governments continue to be faced with the almost impossible task of balancing the risks to the health of their people against the risks to their economic livelihood.

Businesses everywhere have had to adapt and develop new ways of operating to meet the unprecedented challenges that have arisen as a consequence of the pandemic. At Rautomead, a majority of the office staff (Sales, Design, Technical Support, Finance & Administration) have been working remotely from home since the end of March and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. With upgrades in our computer network and rapidly improving skills in the use of video-conferencing software, the company has now settled down to new norms of working.

Equipment assembly has continued in the factory and we have been able to **deliver new machines** to customers in China and USA during the Pandemic.



The **R&D** department has remained active throughout the pandemic, developing and testing new applications for the continuous casting process and producing samples for customers. Last month we welcomed visitors from Europe who came to witness a week-long casting campaign of their material which has since been delivered to their factory for evaluation and processing to finished product.

Strict rules are carefully adhered to among Rautomead employees in the factories and in the office, including social distancing, hand-washing and mask wearing all in accordance with Government guidelines.

**Technical service** support for customers around the world and supplies of spare parts & tooling has continued as normal, with a pattern of deliveries to customers in 15 – 20 countries each month.



International travel has been severely restricted since March, but our service engineers have provided routine **on-site support** to customers in France, Germany and Spain and we currently have two UK-based commissioning engineers in China who are on schedule to start up three new machines there before the end of the year.

Rautomead **new equipment sales department** makes use of video conferencing technology and is available to hold meetings with clients and customers at mutually agreeable times. Face-to-face meetings at a customer's factory for technical and commercial discussions will always be the preferred option, but until the restrictions and complexities of international travel can be relaxed, the video conference is a good and efficient way of maintaining dialogue, more especially when our regional agent can participate in person at a local level.

In the course of the pandemic, in July Rautomead participated in a Virtual Copper Conference and in September took a stand at the Wire Exhibition in Shanghai.

The Virtual Conference was a useful promotional tool for the designated speakers, the organisers need to improve the format to facilitate communication and interaction between the participants and thus to replicate more closely the coffee break networking opportunities of a normal conference setting.

The Wire Exhibition in Shanghai generated as many enquires and meetings with clients as would have been anticipated in a normal year. There were very few international participants, but it was encouraging to sense that the Chinese Wire & Cable Industry was getting back to pre-Covid activity levels.

