



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**The Arntz Optibelt Group is taking action to adjust to the coronavirus.**

**Höxter, 20 March 2020. The coronavirus reached Höxter a few days ago. The Höxter-based Arntz Optibelt Group has also been affected by it and is taking appropriate action.**

The coronavirus is a major challenge for the whole of society and to each and every one of us. To slow down the spread of the virus and to allow the health care system to cope with increasing numbers of infections, public as well as private life must be reorganised. At the same time, this is also a major challenge for every company and its employees. 'We have never seen a crisis like this ever before', says Mr Mühlbeyer, CEO, adding, 'Every individual, every employee in our group of companies is called upon to behave calmly, and also sensitively and to look after themselves and the people around them by following the regulations'.

Despite this market environment, the Arntz Optibelt Group is working hard to sustain the procurement, production and logistics activities as well as our relationship with our many customers as best as possible. Given the unpredictable and constantly changing development of the supply chains, this is a tremendous challenge. Management is meeting every day, analysing the changes and making adjustments to the entire organisation as necessary.

'We have to constantly coordinate with each other – also with the other sites – react flexibly and quickly as an organisation and with each other, and also plan and prepare for possible bottlenecks – this is the order of the day. So far, we have managed to do this by joining forces. But at the end of the day, it is only a momentary snapshot in time. We are working extremely hard to expand on this as much as possible', says Konrad Ummen, Managing Director.

The Arntz Optibelt Group has introduced a raft of measures to safeguard our employees as far as possible and to keep the company processes as much as we can. This includes:

- Stepping up mobile working which involves shifting work to the home office wherever possible from a technical, professional and organisational point of view. The aim is to give employees a chance to better balance personal and company interests.
- Taking advantage of flexitime, holidays and flexible working time models to cushion the effects of day-care centres, kindergartens and schools being closed down.
- Increasing flexible working hours to accommodate the respective interests.
- Reviewing short-time employment schemes to adapt the respective interests to changing circumstances.
- Temperature measurements when entering the company premises to detect any suspected cases at an early stage.

Rules have also been established to minimise social contact between employees and with external parties:

1. Meetings and the number of participants have been reduced to a bare minimum. A check is first made to see whether a telephone or video conference could serve the same purpose.
2. Should a meeting be unavoidable, large meeting rooms are to be used so that the recommended minimum distance between participants is maintained.
3. Meetings with business partners and business trips are to be avoided and should only be carried out in exceptional cases.
4. The canteen in Höxter has been closed.
5. Employees returning from an area where a travel warning has been issued must observe a company quarantine of 14 days, and those returning from any other foreign country seven days. During this period, they are not permitted to enter the company premises, and personal business contacts must be suspended.

The current conditions in each country and region are also constantly taken into account and evaluated and, if necessary, further steps are agreed. The measures taken are reviewed on a daily basis and adjusted as required.

The current coronavirus crisis represents an unprecedented challenge for the Arntz Optibelt Group and its employees. Mr Mühlbeyer has this to say: 'All those involved (employees, employee representatives and managers) deserve great credit for the sensitivity and solidarity shown in responding to this situation - particularly in light of the necessary regulations.'

We aim to continue our business operations as best we can and to serve the interests of our customers and our staff with the proper level of professionalism.

**About Optibelt**

The Arntz Optibelt Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of high-performance drive belts and develops sophisticated drive solutions for use in mechanical engineering, the automotive industry, the agricultural machinery sector, the household appliance industry and the medical sector. The family-run company controls eight production sites in six countries from its headquarters in Höxter and maintains its own logistics and sales centres in Europe, North and South America, Southeast Asia and New Zealand. Worldwide more than 2300 employees provide an ideal service, excellent customer proximity and high quality and safety standards.

[www.optibelt.com](http://www.optibelt.com)

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