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FORT SMITH, Ark. (AP) — The Whirlpool Corp. says 400 laid-off workers at its Fort Smith refrigerator plant are being called back to work.

The company said Tuesday that production demands prompted the call-backs.

The plant now employs between 900 and 1,000 people, far fewer than the 4,600 it had in 2006 before the company moved part of its production to Mexico. After that move, the decline in demand that came with the recession further hurt job numbers at the plant.

The plant had about 2,000 workers when about 700 workers were laid off in November 2008.

Jill Saletta, company spokeswoman, said in an e-mail that a shift will be added to the production schedule by the end of January. The plant may also eventually need another 100 or more employees eventually as well, which could require new hiring.

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