

Cummins Starts Hiring Freeze After Slower Sales

The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ind. (AP) — Engine maker Cummins Inc. said it has instituted a global hiring freeze for at least the rest of this year with an uncertain impact on announced expansions of its Indiana operations.

The move by the Columbus-based company comes after seeing a recent drop in sales in some of its markets in North America, China and Brazil.

"We are taking necessary steps (to) manage growth while reducing costs, which includes implementing a hiring freeze throughout the enterprise," the company said Wednesday in a statement to The Republic (<http://bit.ly/QbG4C9> [1]).

Cummins has seen substantial growth in recent years — with a nearly 80 percent jump in profits for 2011 — and says it has a record worldwide workforce of 46,200 people, including some 7,800 in Indiana. But the company reported its second-quarter net income slid 7.1 percent as international demand for diesel engines slowed.

Steve Green, president of the Office Committee Union at Cummins, said it isn't surprising that the company's growth pace would slow down.

The union, which represents Cummins' technical, support and clerical workers in southern Indiana, has about 1,300 members, Green said, up from fewer than 800 in 2008.

"We've had unprecedented growth ... in the last two years," Green said.

Company spokesman Jon Mills said hiring exceptions could be made in some areas but that he couldn't discuss how the freeze would affect expansions of its Columbus offices or a \$219 million project to expand its Seymour factory for production of a new high-speed diesel engine.

Cummins announced the Seymour expansion in April, saying it could add 290 jobs at the factory in the next few years.

The company unveiled its new 4,000-horsepower high-speed diesel engine last year. It is 8 feet high and 14 feet long, and is designed to power locomotives, boats, mining trucks and offshore oil and gas platforms.

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