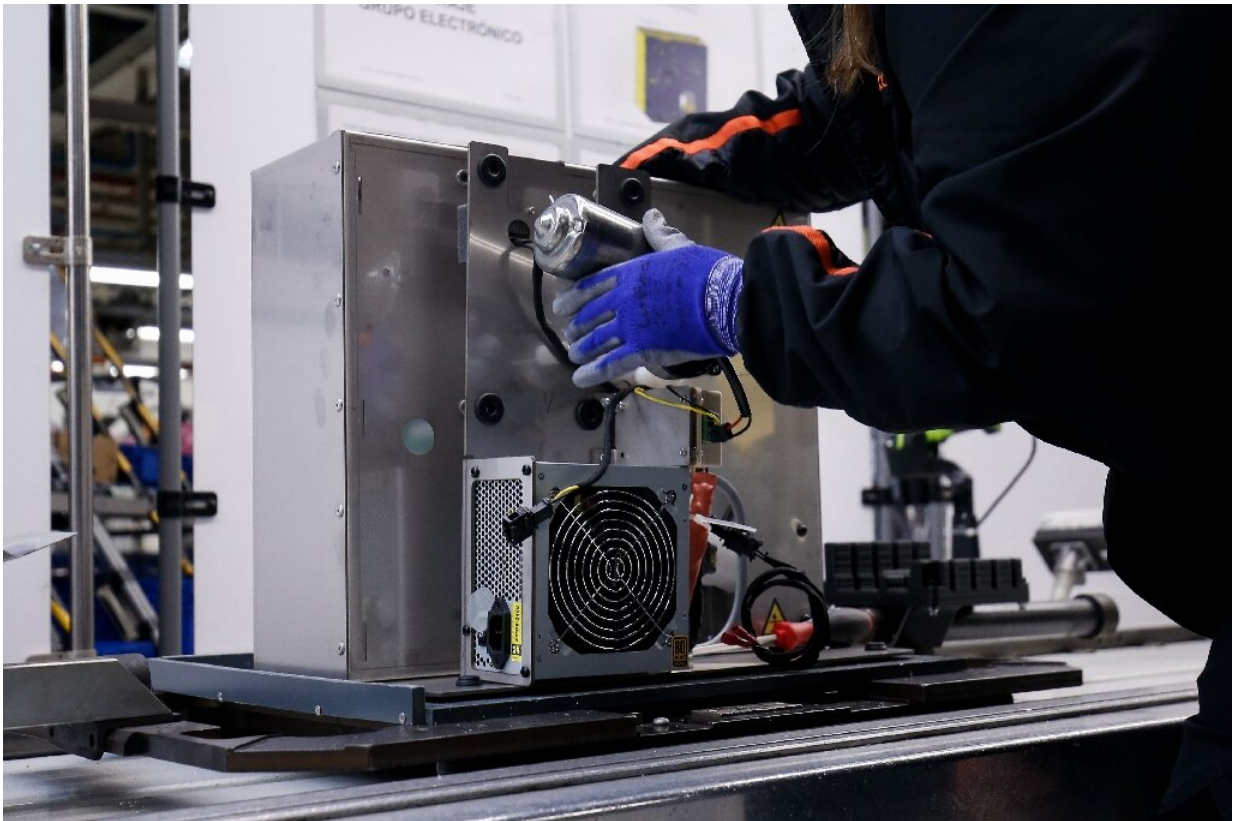


Carmaker SEAT to test all employees for virus before restarting

April 22 2020



Spanish carmaker SEAT moved quickly to help with the effort to bolster supplies of sorely-needed medical ventilators, developing a model based on a window-washer motor

Spanish carmaker SEAT, a unit of the VW group, said Wednesday it

would test all of its 15,000 employees for the novel coronavirus before gradually resuming production.

The automaker plans to resume operations on Monday, and "as part of the health and [safety measures](#), has agreed with the union representatives to conduct PCR testing to screen for the SARS-CoV-2 virus," it said in a statement.

SARS-CoV-2 is the official name for the novel coronavirus.

PCR tests, which are realised using a [cotton swab](#) to gather mucus from the nose, are one of the types of tests available to determine whether people have been exposed to the coronavirus even if they have not developed symptoms of COVID-19.

The carmaker plans to conduct more than 3,000 tests per week and began testing at three sites on Wednesday.

The anonymous and confidential tests will form the basis of a scientific study, the company said.

"Now that the most difficult phase of COVID-19 has been overcome, we face the first stage of returning to normal without letting our guard down," said the company's president Carsten Isensee in a statement.

"With SEAT's decision to invest in the PCR [test](#) programme, we are also helping the health authorities to understand the extent of the pandemic."

The company hopes it can resume normal production levels sometime in June, but realises it is dependent on the evolution of the epidemic.

SEAT was forced to shut one of its plants in mid-March due to a lack of parts.

The company has sought to help Spain, which has been hit hard by COVID-19, by developing a production line to build sorely-need ventilators using a window-washer motor.

It has also started making masks at one of its sites.

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