

## Strike in Finland forces Finnish pulp and paper industry to take downtime

The strike in Finland's ports and other parts of the country's transport system, which began on 11 March and is scheduled to continue until 1 April, is having an increasing impact on the Finnish pulp and paper industry at the start of the third week of the strike. The companies are reporting that stocks of finished goods are filling up or are already full, or that supply of materials necessary for production is limited, and are restricting their production as a result. Entire plants or individual machines are temporarily shut down. The transport of goods to customers is becoming increasingly difficult, is being reorganised to alternative transport routes or, if possible and necessary, is being carried out from plants outside Finland.

The latest announcement on strike-related production restrictions was made by Mayr-Melnhof (MM), whose Finnish Kotkamills cartonboard and paper mill is scheduled to be temporarily idled from 26 March. This affects both the production of folding boxboard (400,000 tpy FBB) and the PM for saturating kraft paper (185,000 tpy). Cartonboard supplies to customers are to be backed up via the Kwidzyn (Poland) and Kolicervo (Slovenia) mills.

Stora Enso also announced at the beginning of the last week of March that its mills in Imatra (1.2 million tpy of packaging board, 1.3 million tpy of pulp) would temporarily suspend production. Stora Enso had previously announced the shutdown of the Varkaus mill (420,000 tpy of corrugated case material, 340,000 tpy of pulp) and paper production at the Anjalankoski site (500,000 tpy of folding boxboard, book paper, magazine paper, improved newsprint). However, board production at the Anjalankoski mill was continued, a spokesperson confirmed.

UPM had told Euwid at the end of the third week of March that its Rauma (650,000 tpy LWC),

Jämsänkoski (630,000 tpy uncoated magazine paper, label and packaging paper) and Kymi (715,000 tpy woodfree coated and uncoated paper) paper mills were at a standstill. However, PM 6 at the Jämsänkoski mill should be producing for five days from 25 March in order to be able to deliver to customers in the country.

UPM's Tervasaari (base papers for release liner) and Kaukas (305,000 tpy LWC) paper mills continued to operate.

Production was also halted at UPM's Kymi (870,000 tpy softwood and birch pulp) and Kaukas (700,000 tpy of softwood pulp) pulp mills, while the Pietarsaari pulp mill (800,000 tpy of softwood and birch pulp) was shut down.

Production was planned to continue at UPM Raflatac's Tampere mill, as well as at its sawmills and plywood mills in Finland.

Stocks at the Kaukas paper mill were filling up, so UPM planned to stop production there on 24 March, UPM said at the end of the third week, after which maintenance work was to be carried out at the mill next week.

Metsä Group had previously also announced strike-related production stoppages at its mills. Downtime was to be taken at the Simpele (300,000 tpy FBB), Kyro (190,000 tpy FBB), Tako (210,000 tpy FBB) and Äänekoski (260,000 tpy FBB) board mills and was scheduled to start on 25 March. The factories can be restarted as soon as raw material is available and product shipments begin, the company said about the possible restart of the plants.

Previously, production had already been shut down at the Metsä Group's pulp and kraftliner mill in Kemi (1.5 million tpy of softwood and hardwood pulp), the pulp and BCTMP mills in Joutseno (690,000 tpy) and the BCTMP mill in Kaskinen (390,000 tpy). The Rauma, Vilppula, Renko and Lappeenranta sawmills are also affected. □

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