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## Downsizing deals - ThyssenKrupp Nirosta inks pact to cut hours

*Thursday, 10 Sep, 2009*

The executive board and general works council of ThyssenKrupp Nirosta AG have concluded a general plant agreement to safeguard the future.

This agreement will be valid until December 31st 2012 and includes various flexibilization measures to strengthen the stainless steel producer's competitiveness and at the same time take account of demographic changes.

Central to the agreement is a change in shift patterns and an associated reduction in the number of weekly production shifts from 21 to on average 18 from January 2010.

Under this plant agreement, it is planned to adjust production processes flexibly in line with order levels to better meet fluctuations in demand. Shifts may vary in a range from 15 to 21 per week, with the differences being offset by working time accounts. As part of the reduction in shifts, 300 jobs are to be cut by socially compatible means, such as partial retirement, severance programs and natural turnover. There will be no compulsory redundancies.

The measures will affect the ThyssenKrupp Nirosta production sites in Krefeld, Bochum, Dusseldorf Benrath and Dillenburg as well as the service center in Wilnsdorf with a combined workforce of around 3,900. In total, the Nirosta group employs some 4,500 people.

Further components of the plant agreement are income safeguards for employees and a pledge to maintain an apprentice training rate of at least 5%. Efforts will also be made to retain all apprentices. This will reduce the age of the workforce and take account of demographic change. To achieve further flexibilization of production operations, talks will be commenced on the more extensive use of long term and lifetime working accounts.

Mr Klaus Peter Hennig chief HR officer at ThyssenKrupp Nirosta AG said that "The plant agreement will allow us to react notably better to fluctuations in the workload."

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