

FIGHTING COVID-19: THE VIRTUAL WAR ROOM

As the pandemic began to spread around the world, Magna's multi-disciplinary emergency COVID task force moved to a "war-room footing."

"The war room consisted of daily virtual meetings. Team members dialed in from wherever they could set up," said Kelly Harbridge, Magna's vice president of people. "What we were doing was similar to a military exercise, and many team members worked around the clock for weeks. We pulled together people and resources at all levels of the organization in response to a global adversary."

Daily emergency response calls coordinated by Magna Human Resources began in March with reports from all Groups, functional departments and global regions in a massive 24-hour-a-day undertaking designed to keep employees safe and healthy.

Key to the coordinated effort were Magna's Health & Safety, Medical, HR, Legal, Purchasing, IT, Operations, Engineering, Government Affairs and Communications teams.

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The task force monitored activities around the world, tracking the spread of the virus, along with travel advisories, quarantine and border closings. Getting Magna business travelers and employees into a safe harbor was a major priority in the early days. Later, the team turned its attention to supervising the temporary idling of more than 300 Magna divisions in 27 countries, while safeguarding the needs of affected employees – before later focusing on how to restart global operations in a manner that put employees first.

"During the early days of the crisis, I thought of my maternal grandfather George, who served with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles regiment," said Harbridge, who helped coordinate the task force meetings. "He was in the first wave of landings at Juno Beach on D-Day with the Canadian Army. He never said much about his experience, except that it's important to be very stoic regardless of the crisis. To make progress, keep your head down and keep marching."

Harbridge adds: "Having that collaborative brain trust coordinating our response was critical, especially in a decentralized company. We were blessed to have subject matter experts in countless areas who all played a key role, from Corporate to the Groups to the local divisional level. This is the story of teams from throughout the company pulled together in an unprecedented way."

The task force initially drew on Magna's Infectious Disease Protocol that was developed in response to the 2003 global outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Ebola outbreaks that originated in West Africa. Harbridge said that protocol provided a structure for earlier quarantine and containment policies, and also served as a basic starting point for the Magna Smart Start Playbook. The playbook, which is updated regularly, spells out guidelines for dealing with COVID-19, and has become the blueprint for how Magna can operate safely in the New Normal.



KELLY HARBRIDGE, Magna's vice president of people with his son

The emergency COVID task force is still in place. Instead of meeting daily, the team has "moved to a maintenance phase of managing the crisis," Harbridge said.

Proactive steps in the ongoing fight against COVID-19, such as working with local public-health authorities to set up flu-vaccine clinics in Magna facilities, are in the works for the fall and winter. With battle-hardened veterans still in place, Magna's mission control center is ready for any contingency.

"Instead of constant firefighting, we're now doing calls two days a week to review status reports, statistics and new issues as they arise," Harbridge said.

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"It's now a matter of managing a steady course and keeping our people focused on





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