



Manpower Employment Outlook Survey Reveals Continuation of Global Hiring Slowdown Through the Second Quarter of 2009

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MILWAUKEE, March 10, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- U.S. hiring plans weakest since 1982 recession, as the downturn takes its toll on Asia Pacific job prospects

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey of global hiring trends released today reveals that employers worldwide say they will continue to cut back on hiring in the second quarter of 2009 compared to one year ago, with U.S. employers reporting the gloomiest outlook since the 1982 recession. In the Asia Pacific region, labor market conditions are expected to deteriorate at a surprisingly rapid rate.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20060221/CGTU012LOGO>)

The survey of nearly 72,000 employers worldwide conducted by Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN), shows that employers in 13 of 33 countries and territories still expect some positive hiring activity in the coming quarter; however, hiring expectations are considerably weaker in all countries and territories surveyed compared to this time last year. In fact, employers in 23 countries and territories are reporting their weakest hiring plans since the surveys were established there by Manpower.

"Hiring forecasts from all of the G7 countries are notably weaker compared to 12 months ago confirming that the global labor market will continue to contract - only outlooks from employers in Canada and Germany have not slipped into negative territory," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman and CEO of Manpower Inc. "Meanwhile, hiring patterns in the U.S. have declined to those seen during the recession of 1982, yet a significant number of employers surveyed anticipate no change in their employment intentions. This tells us that in this difficult economic environment, employers are struggling to manage the tension between generating a profit and maintaining their workforce infrastructure.

"Employers in Asia Pacific expect the downturn to take a toll on job prospects," added Joerres. "Interestingly, employers in the important emerging market of India expect to edge up the pace of hiring from three months ago, suggesting some resilience in the quarter ahead."

Of the eight countries and territories surveyed in the Asia Pacific region, India is showing more positive intentions than any other country. But despite Indian employers' improved outlook from three months ago, the expected hiring pace remains much weaker than that of prior years. Employers in Singapore, New Zealand and Taiwan expect the deepest cuts to their payrolls compared to three months ago.

"The caution that began to set in across Asia Pacific during the first three months of the year is expected to accelerate in the second quarter. Despite the fact that this period is typically a peak hiring season in many of the markets we survey, our data shows extremely weak hiring ahead for the region, similar to the pace seen in 2003 during the SARS pandemic," said Joerres. "The Manufacturing sector has been particularly hard hit in China in response to weaker global demand for exports. The picture is similar in Japan, Australia and Singapore where hiring optimism is the weakest since our survey was established."

Of the 17 countries surveyed in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region, only employers in South Africa, Poland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium and Norway are reporting positive, but modest, second-quarter hiring activity. However, in countries where year-over-year comparisons can be made, all expect cutbacks. In comparison to three months ago, only Outlooks from Austria, France and South Africa are relatively stable, while Italian employers report a slightly improved but still negative forecast.

"Companies will continue to come up with creative alternatives to downsizing, such as reduced work weeks, voluntary pay cuts and pay freezes to hold on to the people they have and get through this recession," said Joerres.

Job prospects throughout the Americas region are decidedly weaker, compared to both the first quarter and one year ago. Hiring is expected to be strongest in Colombia and Peru and weakest in Mexico, where employers are the most pessimistic about adding employees since Manpower began surveying there in 2002.

"Considerable year-over-year declines in the Mining and Transport/Storage/Communication sectors are contributing to the weakest job prospects since we established the survey in Mexico," said Joerres. "North of the border, the U.S. and Canadian labor markets are expected to contract considerably with Canadian employers in the Manufacturing-Durables sector reporting the slowest hiring pace since the 1991 downturn. Prospects are equally as gloomy for this sector in the U.S., where difficulties in the auto industry continue to force companies throughout the supply chain to keep hiring plans in neutral."

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on 9 June 2009 to report hiring expectations for the third quarter of 2009. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is available free of charge to the public through their local Manpower representative in participating countries. To receive e-mail notification when the survey is available each quarter, interested individuals are invited to complete an online subscription form at: <http://investor.manpower.com/investors/alerts.cfm>.

Note to Editors

Commentary is based on seasonally adjusted data where available. Full survey results for each of the 33 countries and territories included in this quarter's survey, plus regional and global comparisons, can be found in the Manpower Press Room at www.manpower.com/meos. In addition, all tables and graphs from the full report are available to be downloaded for use in publication or broadcast from the Manpower Web site at <http://www.manpower.com/library>.

About the Survey

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is conducted quarterly to measure employers' intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforce during the next quarter. It is the most extensive forward-looking survey of its kind, unparalleled in its size, scope, longevity and area of focus. The Survey has been running for more than 45 years and is one of the most trusted surveys of employment activity in the world. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is based on interviews with nearly 72,000 public and private employers worldwide and is considered a highly respected economic indicator.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is currently available for 33 countries and territories: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The program began in the United States and Canada in 1962, and the United Kingdom was added in 1966. Mexico and Ireland launched the survey in 2002, and 13 additional countries were added to the program in 2003. New Zealand joined the program in 2004, China, India, Switzerland and Taiwan were added in 2005, and Argentina, Peru, Costa Rica and South Africa joined in 2006. Colombia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Poland and Romania joined in 2008. For more information, visit the Manpower Inc. Web site at www.manpower.com and enter the Research Center, or contact Bruce Bock, Sr. Global Communications Manager at bruce.bock@manpower.com

About Manpower Inc.

Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) is a world leader in the employment services industry; creating and delivering services that enable its clients to win in the changing world of work. Founded in 1948, the \$22 billion company offers employers a range of services for the entire employment and business cycle including permanent, temporary and contract recruitment; employee assessment and selection; training; outplacement; outsourcing and consulting. Manpower's worldwide network of 4,400 offices in 82 countries and territories enables the company to meet the needs of its 400,000 clients per year, including small and medium size enterprises in all industry sectors, as well as the world's largest multinational corporations. The focus of Manpower's work is on raising productivity through improved quality, efficiency and cost-reduction across their total workforce, enabling clients to concentrate on their core business activities. Manpower Inc. operates under five brands: Manpower, Manpower Professional, Elan, Jefferson Wells and Right Management. More information on Manpower Inc. is available at www.manpower.com.

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