



ABB's energy equipment plant at Varennes gets \$50 million expansion and a North American mandate

ABB

Canada is spending \$50 million to upgrade and expand its plant at Varennes, Quebec, for a significant retooling and expansion of production capacity. The investment is linked to ABB's award of a North American mandate to the plant for the research, design and production of medium and large power transformers.

The plant currently produces, installs, maintains and repairs a range of products for the transmission of electrical energy, including medium high voltage power transformers, shunt reactors and transformers for static compensation systems. At Varennes, ABB also operates an R&D Centre of Excellence which uses advanced technologies for the development of new products.

"The new mandate confirms Quebec's leadership position in the electrotechnical field," says Henri Mikhaël, Vice-President and General Manager of ABB Canada's Power Transformer Division, "and this investment reflects the internationally-renowned capability of our people at the Varennes plant. In fact, our success has been based to a large extent on our employees' expertise," said Mr. Mikhaël, who announced plans for specialized long-term training programs for workers at the plant.

ABB plans to install most of the new equipment at Varennes in the first year. In that period, the workforce will grow from 200 to 280 employees with the expansion concentrated in design, engineering, production, technical support, financial planning and administration. ABB Canada also plans to invest in ongoing specialized training programs for its employees at Varennes. ♦

3-C Canada:

Manufacturing in New Brunswick for assembly in China

After one full year of operation, the Hong Kong based 3-C Company has proved its point. You can make money manufacturing electronic components in eastern Canada for shipment back to Hong Kong and final assembly in China.

In November 1996, the company's subsidiary, 3-C Canada Ltd., opened a high-technology sub-assembly plant in Fredericton, New Brunswick, as the production site for modules of its PABX (switchboard) products destined for sale in the People's Republic of China. This trans-global strategy has worked so well that the head office in Hong Kong has broadened the Canadian plant's product line, adding the manufacture of two additional PABX components to its original assignment. The Fredericton facility also has a mandate to research and develop new products for the China market.

What factors make Atlantic Canada a sound business choice as a site in which to manufacture components for an Asian final product? Mr. S.B. Chan, General Manager of 3-C Canada and one of the three founders of the parent company, says three commanding advantages tilted the balance in New Brunswick's favour.

One is Canadian strength in telecommunications technology design and production. "Product manufacturers in Canada have the highest standards in the industry," Mr. Chan told *Canada Investment News*. "Canadian products have a high reputation for quality and reliability."

For growth-minded 3-C, another attraction is Canada's R&D-friendly climate. "There is a huge market in China for telecommunications," says Mr. Chan. "And, since there isn't time to hard-wire such a vast country, wireless is the way to go. We want to pursue research on wireless local loop



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