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| MTC to transform operation model to suit post Covid-19 business needs

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NATION

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) has taken the necessary steps to transform its operation model and activities to suit the current and post Covid-19 business needs.

Its acting chief executive officer, Wong Kah Cane said with the cooperation of and collaboration with various ministries, agencies and the private sector, the MTC will do its part to ensure that the Malaysian economy and timber industry will be more resilient in post Covid-19.

“It’s a digital push we are looking at now. We simply cannot ignore this fact and businesses must now consider operating on e-platforms,” he said in a statement yesterday.

Wong said as many industries were contemplating a shutdown due to the Movement Control Order (MCO) beginning March 18, 2020, the timber sector received a special approval from the Ministry of Health through the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC) to operate under strict adherence to the standard operating procedures during the MCO.

More than 500 timber-based companies were granted approvals, of which over 70 per cent were furniture and moulding manufacturers, he said.

The MTC has also conducted an industry-wide survey and among the findings were concerns over the slowing global and domestic demands, cash-flow management, order fulfilling issues, and workforce sustenance.

He added that one of the primary hiccups during the MCO involved the supply disruption of timber raw materials which was swiftly resolved during the Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) when the government granted permission for the transportation of logs from the landing sites to the respective factories.

Since then, Wong said the timber-based manufacturers were assured of regular supply of raw materials for their operations.

“The timber sector has been literally up and running during the MCO and CMCO with 90 per cent of manufacturers resuming operations and more than 60 per cent began exporting their products.

Thus, Wong said these timber-based manufacturers were also revisiting their business plans and actively re-looking at digitalisation and automation options to further fortify their operations.

In 2019, the timber industry achieved RM22.5 billion in exports which is 2.2 per cent of the country’s total merchandise export.

The industry attracted a total investment worth RM1.1 billion in 2018 and has a domestic market worth RM13.6 billion. —

Bernama