

gas fuel blends used in internal combustion engines represent a unique near-term opportunity in commercial vehicle operations,” said Westport’s chief operating officer Michael Gallagher. “With this engine-fuel combination, there is the potential to enable our customers to cost-effectively introduce hydrogen into their fleet operation at the pace they choose.”

**METALCASTING INDUSTRY
2003 OPERATIONAL COST
SURVEY RESULTS**

The American Foundry society and North American Die Casting Assn. have commissioned, and now released, the 2003 Metalcasting Operational Cost Survey. The research was carried out by Sapolsky Research Inc. of Tallahassee, FL, among domestic metalcasting during March 2003, based on the most recently completed fiscal year.

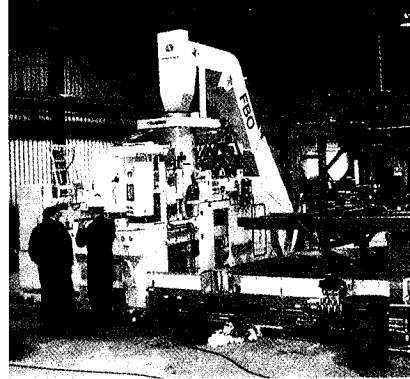
AFS and NADCA report that over 125 companies participated in the survey. The combined results have been presented as a portrait of the industry, along with break-out data on specific segments. Among these are studies based on metal type, process type, employment size, and sales totals (dollars.)

For the industry, totaling 16074 employees, 2002 sales combined to approximately \$2.05 billion, the trade associations said. The report covers more than 30 categories of expenses, and revealing “that the operating profit for the average metal casting company was less than 2 percent. A total of 62 percent reported a profit, with the remaining 38 percent participants reporting a loss,” the groups said in a statement. They added that average expenses for all major industry segments can be determined.

While customized reports have been prepared for each survey participant, the report is available for purchase through the AFS, Tel. 800-537-4237 or 847/824-0181; Fax 847/824-7848; or online at www.afsinc.org. Or, NADCA, Tel. 847-292-3600; Fax: 847/292-3620, or online at www.diecasting.org.

**QUEBEC FOUNDRY SET WITH
NEW MOLDING MACHINE**

Roberts Sinto Corp., Lansing, MI, has completed installing a 20×26-in. FBO IIS flaskless molding machine and material handling system for Quebec’s Laforo Fonderie Industrielle. The new machine is capable of high-speed mold production,



The new flaskless molding machine at Laforo Fonderie Industrielle, Ste.-Claire, PQ.

and features “double roll-down cylinders, touch screen programming, and built-in diagnostics,” the supplier reports. The FBO series is promoted for its ability to achieve high molding rates and product quality, with minimal variability, even with multiple cored molds. The FBO IIS is also sized for producing 20×24 molds.

**BRITISH CONSULTANT GROUP
EXPANDING WITH NEW HQ**

Castings Technology International — a non-profit, ISO 9001-accredited organisation that provides R&D, consulting, and technical services to casting producers and users around the world — is building a new headquarters at the Advanced Manufacturing Park in Rotherham, England. The move from CTI’s current Sheffield base will lead to a staff expansion from 120 to 170.

The new headquarters will include a 57,000 ft² workshop and 17,000 ft² of office space, which will help “to increase the scale and scope of CTI’s activities, particularly in advanced technologies, materials and products relevant to sectors such as defence, aerospace, medical and motorsport,” the group said.

Ashland Casting Solutions was presented with the 2002 Supplier Excellence Award by Wecast Industries. Wecast is the world’s largest supplier of exhaust manifolds, and Ashland supplies the group with Isoset resin and various auxiliary support products.

Winsert Inc., the Marinette, WI designer/manufacturer of heat- and wear-resistant alloys, passed an audit by TUV Rheinland of North America, and is now in compliance with the ISO/TS 16949 standards. In addition, Winsert was certified to the ISO 14001 standard in May.

ISO/TS 16949 is a new standard that the International Automotive Task Force and Japan Manufacturers Assn. have established for automotive supplier, and it’s expected to replace the QS9000 standard, which is due for phasing out after 2006.

Vastera Inc., which software for “global trade management,” will be managing goods imports and exponent exports for Nemak Inc.’s plants in Ontario. Nemak, the world’s largest aluminum automotive component manufacturer, produces cylinder heads and engine blocks at two foundries in Windsor — many of which are exported to the U.S. and Mexico. For those two plants, Vastera will provide Managed Services, including classification, broker management, compliance with trade regulations, and management of duties.

Morganite Melting Systems offers a new retrofit service for crucible or ER furnaces. Vessels are updated with new element panels and wiring schematics, for lower operating costs, better melting efficiency, and higher uptime.

Metaldyne’s Engine Group plans to expand its use of the **QAD Inc.** Supply Visualization software for vendor managed inventory (VMI).