

SPEEA expects Boeing to honor commitments to Wichita employees



WICHITA – The union representing engineers at The Boeing Company is calling on the company to honor its commitment to use the Wichita site for the U.S. Air Force KC-767 tanker program in the wake of the recent announcement that the future of the site is under evaluation.

Representing 550 engineers at the site, the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001, worked diligently to help secure tanker work for the site during competition for the \$35 billion contract. Wichita Boeing was slated to do the final modifications on the KC-767 after the planes were assembled in Everett, Washington.

“Boeing consistently said it would bring jobs to Wichita if it won the contract,” said Ray Goforth, SPEEA executive director. “At this time of congressional scrutiny of defense budgets, it would be a mistake to materially alter the tanker program they sold to the customer.”

Union leaders are meeting with Boeing on Thursday, Dec. 1, to discuss the company’s site evaluation. The union is compiling members’ concerns and will bring those to the meeting.

In September, Wichita engineers agreed to a two-year contract extension with Boeing. Originally set to expire Dec. 2, 2011, the contract locks in terms through Dec. 2, 2013.

In addition to refueling tankers, recent work at the Wichita plant includes B-52 modifications, maintaining Air Force One, and the 737 Wedgetail program.

“The engineers in Wichita are the world experts at building refueling tankers,” Goforth said. “They can get the job done and provide the best value to the Air Force and the tax payer.”

SPEEA represents 550 engineers at Wichita Boeing. The union also represents 3,000 engineers, technical workers and other professionals at Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita.

A local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), SPEEA represents 25,400 aerospace professionals at Boeing, Spirit AeroSystems in Kansas, Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., in Spokane, Wash., and BAE Systems, Inc., in Irving, Texas.

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