

Spirit expected to answer SPEEA's counterproposal as talks resume



WICHITA, Kan. – With ample time passed since presenting a full and complete counterproposal, the union negotiating a new contract for 2,300 technical and professional workers at Spirit AeroSystems expects a response from the company when talks resume Thursday (Sept. 8).

The counterproposal was presented to the company Aug. 25 by negotiators for the Wichita Technical and Professional Unit (WTPU) of the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001. The counterproposal was based on information from a bargaining unit survey taken after 96.5% of the voting union members rejected the company's initial offer on July 28.

"We are going back to the negotiations table to get the fair and equitable resolution that our members deserve and the company desires," said Bill Hartig, chair of the WTPU negotiation team.

Union negotiators used the past two weeks to meet with members and inform them about contract issues. Efforts have included distributing information fliers at Spirit gates. Fliers tomorrow will remind bargaining unit members about the need to stick together and support union negotiators.

In a show of solidarity with union members in Wichita, leafleting is taking place at the Spirit facility in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on Thursday (Sept. 8). Internationally, the Spirit facilities in Prestwick, Scotland, and Onex headquarters in Toronto, Canada, are being leafleted by members of other unions. Onex owns 58 percent of Spirit and controls 92 percent of the voting rights.

"Employees want a good working relationship with Spirit," said Rodney Sheppard, president of the Society of Energy Professionals, IFPTE Local 160, in Toronto.

The union counterproposal addresses every one of the key issues Spirit voiced since negotiations started June 20. SPEEA negotiators built a counterproposal that protects the interests of all the stakeholders in Spirit AeroSystems (employees, shareholders, customers and suppliers). Highlights from the union counterproposal are available on the union's website at: www.speea.org.

A local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), SPEEA represents 24,600 aerospace professionals at Spirit in Wichita, The Boeing Company, Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., in Spokane, Wash., and BAE Systems, Inc., in Irving, Texas.

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