

SPEEA technical members vote to ACCEPT Boeing's offer for a new four-year contract



SEATTLE – Technical workers at The Boeing Company have approved a new four-year contract, putting an end to negotiations that have lasted nearly one year.

Votes tallied Monday (March 18) by the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001 show Technical workers voted **4,244 to accept** and 654 to reject. Union negotiators told members a second rejection would likely result in a strike as Boeing was refusing to move on all issues.

Union members were voting on a contract offer that was identical to the offer the 7,191 Technical workers narrowly rejected and the larger Professional Unit of engineers narrowly accepted on Feb. 19. While engineers and technical workers bargain at the same time, the contracts are separate and independent agreements.

The new contract extends the terms of the previous contract, including 5% annual salary increase pools, no increases to employees for medical coverage and an increase to the retirement benefit. By the end of the new agreement, SPEEA represented technical workers, and also the engineers, will have received eight straight years of 5% salary increase pools, with guaranteed minimum wage increases each year of the contract.

The major area of contention during negotiations was the defined benefit retirement pension plan. While overwhelming member support and workplace action helped union negotiators continually get Boeing to improve most elements of the contract offer, the company steadfastly refused to move away from eliminating the pension for new technical workers hired after March 1, 2013. Like most new employees at Boeing, technical workers and engineers will now receive the company's "enhanced 401(k)" and not the defined benefit pension.

SPEEA and Boeing started negotiations in April 2012. Technical workers have been without a contract since Nov. 25.

While the majority of covered employees are in the Puget Sound region of Washington state, these contracts include employees in Oregon, Utah and California.

A local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), SPEEA represents 26,560 aerospace professionals at Boeing, Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita, Kansas, and Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., in Spokane, Wash.

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Contact: Bill Dugovich, SPEEA communications director, [\(206\) 674-7368](tel:2066747368) or [\(206\) 683-9857](tel:2066839857)

Ray Goforth, SPEEA executive director, [\(206\) 433-0991](tel:2064330991)