

## **SPEEA says contract for refueling tanker should now go to Boeing**



**SEATTLE** – Today’s decision by the General Accounting Office (GAO) to uphold The Boeing Company’s protest of the Air Force tanker contract is a clear victory, according to the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001.

“The GAO recognized the process was not properly followed and that is a victory for Boeing workers, American taxpayers and the men and women in our armed forces,” said Cynthia Cole, president of the union that represents 21,000 engineers and technical workers at Boeing. “We hope the Air Force now recognizes which aircraft really won the bid process and that is the KC-767AT (advanced tanker).”

The GAO decision said “significant errors” were found in the bidding process. The errors may have affected why the contract did not go to Boeing. The contract was awarded to a consortium put together by Airbus parent European Aeronautic Defense and Space Co. and Northrop Grumman Corp. The GAO decision recommends holding a new competition.

SPEEA’s international union, the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), called the award to EADS/Northrop an error that amounted to a \$105 billion U.S. taxpayer funded economic stimulus package to Europe.

SPEEA members were instrumental in the design and engineering of Boeing’s KC-767AT (advanced tanker). For several years union leaders and members from SPEEA and the International Association of Machinists have worked with congressional leaders to emphasize the need to choose the Boeing 767 and keep taxpayers’ money and production of key military programs in the United States.

While firm numbers of SPEEA-represented employees working on the tanker program are not available, securing contract is expected to create 9,000 jobs in Washington state and about 600 jobs in Wichita, Kansas.

In October, SPEEA begins main table negotiations with Boeing for 21,000 employees in Washington, Kansas, Oregon, Utah and California. Negotiations begin in May for 3,000 represented employees at Spirit AeroSystems, Inc. in Wichita, Kan.

Overall, SPEEA represents more than 24,500 aerospace professionals at Boeing in Washington, Kansas, Oregon, California and at Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., in Spokane, Wash., and at BAE Systems, Inc. in Irving, Texas.

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