

SPEEA tells Boeing to bring back more outsourced 787 work



SEATTLE – The Boeing Company’s decision to buy a large stake in a major supplier’s U.S. plant for the 787 is a necessary first step to bringing work back to the experienced employees who can get the program back on schedule, according to the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001.

“We are hopeful this is an indication that the company realizes that not just anyone can engineer, design and build these very complex aerospace products,” said Ray Goforth, executive director of the union representing engineers and technical workers at Boeing. “Our members have been saying for some time that this global network is not working.”

Boeing announced today (March 28) plans to buy Vought Aircraft Industries’ interest in Global Aeronautica LLC, owner of the South Carolina plant that will assemble major portions of the fuselage for the 787 Dreamliner. The purchase will make the assembly plant a 50-50 joint venture between Boeing and Italy’s Alenia Aeronautica.

Employees working on the 787 program have voiced concerns about unnecessary rework required on parts coming in from outside Boeing. In some areas, employees are working 20 to 40 percent overtime and traveling frequently to help suppliers. SPEEA members at the former Boeing plant in Wichita, now operated by Spirit AeroSystems, Inc., have expressed the same concerns.

“The existing employees know how to do this work and should be doing the work,” said Goforth. “If the company does not correct this failed model, they will lose the younger people who are the future of aerospace.”

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, Kansas.

A local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), SPEEA represents more than 24,000 aerospace professionals at Boeing, Spirit, Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., in Spokane, Wash., and at BAE Systems, Inc., in Irving, Texas.

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