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LOCAL 971

SHOP NOISE



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Spirit AeroSystems: A Key Player in Aerospace and Boeing's Potential Acquisition

Spirit AeroSystems is one of the largest independent manufacturers of aerostructures in the world, specializing in designing and producing critical components for commercial and military aircraft.

Headquartered in Wichita, Kansas, Spirit has built a strong reputation for supplying major aerospace companies, including Boeing and Airbus, with fuselages, wing sections, propulsion systems, and other essential parts. While its business has expanded over the years, Boeing remains its primary customer, making any changes in their relationship significant for the aerospace industry.



The History of Spirit AeroSystems

The origins of Spirit AeroSystems can be traced back to 1927 when the Stearman Aircraft Company was founded in Wichita,

Kansas. This company eventually became part of Boeing, playing a crucial role in aircraft production for both military and commercial aviation. For decades, Boeing's Wichita division contributed to major aviation programs, including those during World War II and the jet age.

In 2005, Boeing made a strategic decision to spin off its Wichita-based aerostructures division. This led to the creation of Spirit AeroSystems, an independent entity formed through a sale to private investors. The move allowed Boeing to focus more on aircraft assembly while Spirit continued to serve as a key supplier of aerostructures. Over the years, Spirit expanded its operations, securing contracts with Airbus, Gulfstream, and other major aerospace companies, further diversifying its portfolio. Despite this diversification, a significant portion of Spirit's business remains tied to Boeing, particularly with the production of the 737 MAX fuselages.

The Implications of a Boeing Acquisition

Boeing's potential reacquisition of Spirit AeroSystems carries significant implications for the aerospace industry. One of the most immediate benefits would be enhanced supply chain stability.

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Boeing has faced substantial disruptions in recent years, particularly following the 737 MAX crisis and the broader challenges of post-pandemic recovery. Bringing Spirit back under Boeing’s control could help streamline operations, reduce logistical hurdles, and improve quality control.

Another major impact of the acquisition would be increased vertical integration. By regaining direct oversight of Spirit’s operations, Boeing could exert greater control over the production of critical aircraft components, potentially leading to increased efficiency and cost reductions. This move aligns with Boeing’s broader strategy of consolidating its supply chain to mitigate risks and improve production reliability.

However, the acquisition would also raise questions about its effect on Airbus and other Spirit customers. Since Spirit supplies parts to multiple aerospace firms, Boeing’s control over Spirit’s operations could lead to renegotiations, shifts in supply chains, or even regulatory scrutiny over potential competition concerns. The move may also accelerate broader market consolidation trends, influencing how other suppliers and competitors structure their operations.

Additionally, Boeing would need to navigate regulatory approvals and labor considerations. Integrating Spirit’s workforce, addressing potential antitrust concerns, and managing financial implications would all be

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critical factors in making the acquisition successful.

Given the complexity of the aerospace supply chain, the move could have long-term ripple effects across the industry, shaping how aircraft manufacturers and suppliers operate in the coming years.

As Boeing moves forward with its plans, industry experts will closely watch how this acquisition unfolds and what it means for the future of commercial and military aviation. The potential deal marks a pivotal moment in the aerospace sector, one that could redefine the landscape for aircraft manufacturing and supply chain management.

IAM Union Leadership Meets with Wichita District 70, Local 839 Officials to Plan for Boeing's Upcoming Acquisition of Spirit AeroSystems

IAM International President Brian Bryant recently led a delegation of top IAM officials to meet with Local 839 and District 70 leadership to discuss the Boeing Co.'s upcoming acquisition of Spirit AeroSystems.

"The IAM Union is completely united in ensuring that our Local 839 membership at Spirit AeroSystems benefits from this upcoming acquisition," said IAM International President Brian Bryant. "We had great discussions with leaders at Local 839 and District 70 leaders about how to protect our membership throughout this process and

make sure that Boeing fulfills its obligations to our members and the community."

In June 2023, IAM members at Spirit ratified a four-year contract that included improvements in wages, prescription drug coverage and overtime rules.

"Our membership is watching the company's actions closely as we move toward Boeing's reacquisition of Spirit," said IAM District 70 President and Directing Business Representative Lisa Whitley. "We look forward to working at all levels of our union to engage our members, while maintaining and growing the quality of life for our dedicated membership at Spirit."

In addition to Boeing and Spirit, the IAM is proud to represent workers at Lockheed Martin, Pratt and Whitney, GE Aerospace, and other major aerospace companies.

"Our Local 839 membership at Spirit AeroSystems are leaders not only in the Wichita community, but in the entire aerospace industry," said IAM Southern Territory General Vice President Craig Martin. "We will use all IAM resources necessary to make sure we continue to grow Wichita's reputation as the 'air capital of the world.'"

"As the largest and most powerful aerospace union in North America, the IAM is laser-focused on continuing to make gains for all aerospace workers," said IAM Resident General Vice President Jody Bennett. "We will stop at nothing to ensure that the generational, skilled workers at Spirit are protected throughout this acquisition."



International President Bryant Showcases IAM Victories, Membership Resources at National Labor and Management Conference

IAM International President Brian Bryant was recently a keynote speaker at the annual National Labor and Management Conference. “We are the second largest union in organizing new members among our peers in the labor movement,” said Bryant. “The IAM has more organizers on the ground than we have ever had in the course of our union.” The conference brings together leaders from labor, business, healthcare, pension funds, and employment law to discuss and inform attendees on a wide range of current matters. More than 600 participants attended this year’s conference. It’s an opportunity to hear different perspectives that impact workers and management in an open forum where information can be exchanged, and interested parties can make their case on what is going to impact workers in the near future. Bryant’s remark highlighted the IAM’s growth in non-traditional union trades like healthcare and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence. The IAM’s partnership with AFT fostered a winning organizing campaign at Wexner Medical Center in Ohio, bringing more than 1,000 healthcare workers into the IAM. Bryant also announced that the IAM has become the first labor union to be recognized by the Veterans Administration as a Veterans Services Organization, providing

professional case representation for IAM military veterans at no charge. During a question and answer session, Bryant gave a detailed response about the seven week strike at Boeing by IAM members from District 751 and W24, which resulted in a 40% wage increase over the next four years. In response to a follow up question from the audience about the challenges of inflation and worker salaries, Bryant told the audience about fights the IAM sees in negotiations on established collective bargaining agreements with companies that have mismatched expectations. “Companies want skilled trades, but they don’t want to pay skilled wages,” said Bryant. “President Trump’s administration has said it supports skilled workers and we’re going to see if corporations want to adhere to what this administration is saying.”

Union Meeting

March 16th
7:00pm
Executive Board Meeting at 6:30
Old Town Hall,
1000 Town Hall Ave., Jupiter

The map shows a street grid. A vertical street on the right is labeled 'INDIAN TOWN RD.'. A horizontal street at the top is labeled 'OLD TOWN RD.'. A small square on Old Town Rd. is labeled 'OLD TOWN HALL'. A street labeled 'CENTER STREET' runs from the intersection of Old Town Rd. and Indian Town Rd. down to the bottom of the map. A compass rose is located below the center of Center Street. To the right of the compass rose is a sign for 'TO I-95' with a downward arrow.