

Spirit Aerosystems Ready To Hire 200 Workers

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — Aircraft parts maker Spirit AeroSystems is planning to hire workers for several locations this year.

The Wichita Eagle reported that the hiring is expected to occur in the first quarter because production on new and existing programs is increasing.

Spokesman Ken Evans said Friday that the near-term plans call for hiring about 200 workers for Wichita and Tulsa, Okla., primarily for factory positions.

Spirit and the Machinists union are planning a job fair Tuesday and Wednesday in Wichita. Another job fair is planned for Jan. 21 in Wichita for workers who might consider moving to the company's Tulsa facility, which performs wing work for Boeing and Gulfstream Aerospace.

Hires also are expected at the Kinston, N.C., plant, where Spirit builds the center fuselage and wing spar for the Airbus A350. No details were given.

Spirit employs 14,000 people worldwide, including more than 10,000 in Wichita.

"The hiring that's going on is measured hiring," Evans said. "It's not throw the doors open, and we have to ramp up thousands of new positions tomorrow."

Evans said it was too soon to give an exact number of jobs to be filled in 2011.

"What we're dealing with are rate increases across different programs where job numbers are not the only issue," Evans said. "There are also issues with expanded space, the right tooling (and) if you change processes in a particular way or not."

The hiring comes as Boeing announces production rate increases on its popular 737 and 777 commercial airliners. Spirit builds the 737 fuselage and parts of the 777.

Hiring also depends on the Boeing 787 Dreamliner schedule, Evans said. With delays on the program, Spirit has moved workers on the 787 to other areas.

Other development programs that will be moving into the initial stages of production this year include the Boeing's 747-8 and P-8A and Gulfstream's G250 and G650.

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