

GE Aviation Plans \$56M Expansion

ELLISVILLE, Miss. (AP) — GE Aviation, a unit of the General Electric Co., plans to spend \$56 million to build a second manufacturing plant in Mississippi to produce advanced composite components for aircraft engines and systems.

GE Aviation plans to employ 250 workers at the new Ellisville plant when full production is achieved around 2018. Production is expected to begin in 2013. The company currently is developing the design for the 300,000-square-foot plant.

The company currently employs about 300 at a Batesville plant that began production of composite aircraft components in 2008. Gov. Haley Barbour said that when the Ellisville project is completed, GE Aviation will have created about 600 jobs and invested \$150 million in Mississippi.

"We are pleased to make Ellisville part of our composites technology network and to commit to high-technology jobs for the state," said GE Aviation chief executive David Joyce.

Composite components are more durable than traditional components, weigh less and translate into better fuel efficiency for aircraft and reduced maintenance and replacement costs. GE Aviation manufactured the first composite fan blades in 1995 with its GE90 engine on the Boeing 777.

GE Aviation will use Mississippi's aerospace tax incentive program for companies that manufacture or assemble aerospace components or provide research, development and training services for the aerospace sector.

The Mississippi Development Authority is providing assistance for work force training and equipment, along with funding for infrastructure. Ellisville, Jones County and the Economic Development Authority of Jones County are providing land, site preparation and infrastructure assistance.

GE Aviation, which employs about 17,000 workers in the United States, has said it will invest hundreds of millions of dollars in its 30 U.S. operations, including the new Ellisville plant and a new manufacturing operation in Auburn, Ala.

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