Pratt & Whitney Discloses Fraudulent Engine Tests

The Associated Press

EAST HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — Jet engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney said Monday it has uncovered fraudulent testing of engine parts involving falsified records, but that no recalls or other problems resulted.

The subsidiary of United Technologies Corp. said an investigation was begun in June 2011 when an employee anonymously alleged that test data had been altered over 15 years at Carmel Forge, another United Technologies unit, in Israel.

"Carmel Forge produced test records that were not accurate," Pratt & Whitney spokeswoman Stephanie Duvall said in an email. "That is a serious matter for an engine manufacturer, and we have treated it very seriously."

The doctored data did not lead to any flight safety risks nor did Pratt & Whitney have to issue airworthiness directives or service bulletins for delivered components.

The Wall Street Journal first reported the disclosure.

An internal investigation found that employees doctored metallurgical test results to make certain engine forgings appear to meet strict standards when in fact they did not.

Pratt & Whitney, based in East Hartford, Conn., said Carmel Forge has made personnel changes, established stronger software controls, purchased test equipment and taken other steps to prevent adjustments to original test data.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the Federal Aviation Administration launched an administrative proceeding after being informed by Pratt of its probe. The agency concluded that initial allegations of widespread violations of agency rules "were reviewed and confirmed" by Pratt's lawyers.

Pratt & Whitney said the FAA visited the facility in Israel and that it was satisfied with corrective actions taken by the company. The agency closed its file in June 2012, Pratt said.

The FAA did not immediately respond to a phone call and email seeking comment.

In afternoon trading, shares of United Technologies fell $1.53 to $88.60.

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