

Spirit AeroSystems Announces 360 Layoffs

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WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — Spirit AeroSystems announced Thursday it is laying off about 360 salaried support and management employees at its Kansas and Oklahoma facilities.

The Wichita-based aircraft parts maker said it remains strong with a "robust backlog" of orders worth about \$36 billion.

"Today's action is a strategic move to make the company more competitive in a cost-sensitive environment, and results from an ongoing workforce assessment designed to reduce overhead costs, increase efficiency and drive improved performance," the company said in a news release.

Spirit AeroSystems, which makes large sections of airplanes assembled by companies such as Boeing and Airbus, saw its first-quarter net income rise 10 percent as demand for commercial planes increased. Deliveries for commercial airplanes rose 9 percent from a year earlier and production is accelerating on several of the key passenger jets made by Boeing and Airbus.

While deliveries of finished 787s were halted for nearly the entire quarter because of malfunctioning batteries, production by Boeing and its suppliers continued. Spirit delivered sections for 17 787s during the quarter, up from 15 during the fourth quarter of 2012.

Larry Lawson, the company's new president and CEO, said in May that Spirit would do a "comprehensive evaluation" of the development programs" in Tulsa, Okla., Wichita, Kinston, N.C., and St. Nazaire in France.

That is where sections of the 787 and the new Airbus A350 are made. Lawson said at the time that one of the company's goals in the future will be to cut costs in the manufacturing of new planes.

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