

# Spirit AeroSystems Announces 150 Layoffs In KS

Roxana Hegeman, Associated Press

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — Saying it needs to balance its workforce, Spirit AeroSystems announced Thursday it will lay off about 150 salaried employees and managers at its Wichita plant while hiring about 400 more factory workers by the end of the year.

"The reason that this is happening at the same time that we are drawing down the workforce on the salaried side is because this really is an effort to balance our workforce in order to meet record demand from our customers and become more efficient in the process," company spokesman Ken Evans said.

The airplane parts maker said the layoffs are in addition to a significant number of salaried employees who have expressed interest in voluntary retirement and layoff programs. Evans declined to release the number of employees who expressed interest in the voluntary retirement, except to say that it's in the "hundreds."

Spirit has about 11,000 employees in Wichita and 2,500 at its plant in Tulsa, making components for such airplane manufacturers as Boeing and Airbus.

This is the second round of layoffs since Larry Lawson took over as president and chief executive officer in April. [Three hundred and sixty employees were laid off in Kansas and Oklahoma in July](#) [1].

"We don't think it is a coincidence the new CEO took over, replaced the CFO and then started desperately purging employees," said Ray Goforth, executive director of the Society for Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace. "The company has been really mismanaged and they are slashing the payroll to try to meet certain fiscal targets so that the executives will receive their own bonuses."

In August, Spirit wrote down the value of some of its airplane programs, announcing a \$350 million to \$400 million pre-tax charge mostly to offset expected cost increases through 2019 in programs related to its Gulfstream business jets.

"Nobody within the company — including the lower levels of management who share information with us — think that this plan will succeed," Goforth said. "Their goal seems to outsource a lot of the engineering work to India, and we saw how well that outsourcing of work away from production worked on the 787."

Spirit said its backlog of orders remains "robust" at about \$38 billion.

"We understand that reductions in the workforce can be difficult," Evans said. "They are necessary in order to position our company to be successful now and in the future."

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