

## **Boeing Supplier Hired To Help Build 787**

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The Association for Manufacturing Technology

A Virginia-based aerospace products supplier has won a Boeing contract to build substructural composite components for the 787 Dreamliner assembled in North Charleston as the airplane builder ramps up its production rates.

The parts will be made in Utah and transported to South Carolina, said Amanda Covington, spokeswoman for ATK Aerospace Group.

It is the first work on the Dreamliner for the company, she said.

Boeing South Carolina spokeswoman Candy Eslinger did not immediately know Thursday if ATK is supplementing a current supplier or replacing one.

In a statement, ATK said its work would begin immediately to provide composite substructures for the 787 center fuselage to Boeing at its South Carolina assembly facility.

An ATK executive said the parts would supply Boeing's 787-9, which is partially made in North Charleston, and 787-10, which hasn't gone into production yet.

We are honored to have gained Boeing's confidence to build composite substructures for the 787-9 and 787-10 airplanes, said Joy de Lisser, vice president and general manager of ATK's aerospace structures division. Our manufacturing reputation is built on execution excellence, and we look forward to delivering world-class structures to Boeing to meet its increased 787 production rates.

Boeing is expected to announce by March where the 787-10 will be built. Aviation analysts predict it will be in North Charleston.

ATK's statement is another indication the plane, or at least its center fuselage, will be manufactured in the Lowcountry.

The aerospace, defense and commercial products company, with operations in 22 states, Puerto Rico and internationally, is no stranger to working with Boeing.

ATK composite structures can be found on the Boeing 767 and 757 airplanes, C-17 Globemaster, F-18 fighter, V-22 Osprey, Boeing 702 and GPS II-F satellites, and Delta II and Delta IV launch vehicles.

This work scope adds to our long-term relationship of supporting Boeing with composite structures spanning many dynamic products across the commercial aircraft, military aircraft, launch vehicle and satellite industries, said Blake Larson, president of ATK Aerospace Group.

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The new supplier is expected to help Boeing meet increased production goals for the Dreamliner.

The company is trying to build 10 787s a month in North Charleston and Everett, Wash., combined and has more ambitious goals ahead. It's aiming to build 12 a month by 2016, and 14 a month by 2019.

Currently, only the 787-8, the smallest of the wide-body planes in the Dreamliner series, is produced in North Charleston.

Starting this fall, the 787-9 will be assembled locally.

To meet higher production goals, Boeing said in a statement Wednesday it has the flexibility at the non-unionized North Charleston plant to quickly hire contract labor to address these work surge requirements as they arise.

While Boeing's statement said it had challenges, the company did not address production issues or the number of contractors it might hire.

A Wall Street Journal report, citing unidentified workers, noted the local plant could employ as many as 1,000 temporary employees to speed up completion of the mid-body fuselage sections, which are made in Italy and transported to South Carolina to be outfitted before going to the assembly lines in North Charleston and Everett.

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