

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY IN OKLAHOMA

BY: JENNIFER LEPCARD, V.P. OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS | [JLEPCARD@OKSTATECHAMBER.COM](mailto:jlepard@okstatechamber.com)

JULY 2016

KEY FACTS

- The aerospace industry is one of Oklahoma's top economic engines
- With more than 120,000 Oklahomans employed by companies in the aerospace and defense industries, Oklahoma continues to rank among the top 20 states for the number of workers in key aerospace occupations
- Oklahoma's aerospace and defense industries produce \$24 billion in sales and \$19 billion in exports per year

BACKGROUND

For Oklahoma to withstand and survive economic changes over time, we must create a diverse economic base. With its unique geography, military bases, higher education and career and technology network, Oklahoma has become a leader in the aerospace industry.

Oklahoma is a major center for maintenance, repair and overhaul of military and civil aircraft. Different from most industry sectors, Oklahoma's aerospace industry spans the state with major centers of operation in Ardmore, Fort Sill, Tulsa, Oklahoma City and western Oklahoma.

The state's significant assets include:

- Federal installations such as Tinker Air Force Base, Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, Altus Air Force Base and Vance Air Force Base
- Major private sector companies including American Airlines, Boeing, NORDAM and Spirit AeroSystems
- University research in new applications related to robotics, intelligent systems, unmanned aerial system (UAS) design and the nation's first UAS-focused degree program
- The only national spaceport operation in unrestricted airspace
- Competitive incentive packages for manufacturing, workforce and financing for expansion and recruitment efforts

While Oklahoma has a growing and competitive aerospace industry, the state faces challenges in the global marketplace with advances in technology, national and worldwide economic changes, and U.S. policies and federal funding affecting defense, civilian and commercial aviation.

STATE CHAMBER POSITION

The State Chamber aims to take a statewide leadership role in the sustainment and growth of the aerospace industry in Oklahoma, in addition to securing and expanding federal Department of Defense interests in the state. In order to remain competitive in growing this industry, the State Chamber of Oklahoma strongly supports development of technology, aerospace industry-specific economic development incentives and strengthening our education system for workforce development.

The State Chamber will also support the continued expansion, research and development, testing and evaluation of the aerospace industry, including efforts that boost military and defense interests in the state. Expansion of this industry will ensure increased economic diversity for Oklahoma, strengthen other economic sectors, provide financial security and create lasting jobs for Oklahomans.