Boeing CEO To Address Meeting Of U.S. Ambassadors To Asian Nations And Southern California Businessmen

Boeing Chief Executive Officer Phil Condit and the United States Ambassadors to six of the United States' largest Asian trading partners will discuss Pacific Rim business and commercial opportunities here Monday, June 7.

The half-day event, to be held at The Anderson School at UCLA, is part of Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) 1999 Ambassadors Tour. The annual tour is designed to give small, medium, and large companies across the United States the information and knowledge needed to do business in a rapidly changing Southeast Asia.

Boeing is sponsoring the Los Angeles program. "Boeing is the United States' largest single exporter and now is also the largest private employer in Southern California," Condit said. "We have an intense interest in supporting forums in which the men and women involved in fostering international trade can meet to improve the way we do business."

The ambassadors will meet with local businessmen at a morning seminar, followed by a luncheon meeting at which Condit will speak. Ambassadors present will include B. Lynn Pascoe, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia; Thomas C. Hubbard, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines; Steven J. Green, U.S. Ambassador to Singapore; Richard Hecklinger, U.S. Ambassador to Thailand; Douglas "Pete" Peterson, U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam; and Michael Owens, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy Indonesia.

In addition to Condit, Boeing will be represented by Jim Albaugh, the president of Boeing Space & Communications Group and the ranking Boeing officer in California.

Boeing employs over 38,000 people in California. Almost all are in Southern California, giving the region the highest concentration of Boeing employees outside the Puget Sound area. Of that figure, 19,500 are part of the Space & Communications Group. Other major Boeing units in Southern California include the Long Beach Division of Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group with 10,000 employees and the Military Aircraft Southern California Sites of Boeing Military Aircraft & Missiles Group, in Long Beach and Palmdale, with 8,500 employees.

The 1999 tour focuses on challenges facing ASEAN -- whose member nations include Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

"This year will see massive change in the region as most economies continue to recover from the Asian economic and financial crisis of 1997-98," said Ernest Bower, president of the US-ASEAN Business Council. "Previously the fastest growing major market for US exports, trade between the United States and ASEAN slowed last year for the first time since the early 1980s. Nonetheless, at $39 billion, U.S. exports to ASEAN last year were far ahead of that with China or other regional markets."

Bower added, "These exports support an estimated 650,000 jobs in the United States."

California is by far the largest exporter to ASEAN among the 50 states, with its exports to the region reaching just under $14 billion in 1997, compared with $5.5 billion at the beginning of this decade. "California's trade with Southeast Asia is vital to the state's growth, livelihood, and employment," said Albaugh. "We have a substantial stake in Asia's economic recovery and future economic growth in that part of the world."

Aircraft and aerospace sales by United States companies to ASEAN nations totaled more than $3.5 billion in 1996. In California, transportation equipment sales (which include aircraft) to ASEAN nations were $887 million in 1996 and $1.03 billion in 1997.

In addition to Boeing, the Ambassadors Tour also enjoys the local support of the Asia Society - Southern California Center, the California-Southeast Asia Business Council, the California Trade and Commerce Agency, the City of Long Beach, the City of Los Angeles, the Small Business Administration, the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Foreign Trade Association of Southern California, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, the World Trade Center Association of Los Angeles - Long Beach, and the U.S. Department of Commerce.

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