

## **Boeing Selects Wichita as Site for potential 767 Tanker Modifications**

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The Boeing Company announced today that it intends to use its Wichita facility and work force for the potential conversion of Boeing 767 aircraft into tankers for the U.S. Air Force. If chosen by the Air Force, Boeing would produce the 767 aircraft at its Everett, Wash., plant, and then complete tanker-specific modifications at its Wichita Development and Modification Center.

Late last year, Congress granted the Air Force authority to negotiate a lease for up to 100 tankers as the first step in replacing its aging Eisenhower-era KC-135 tanker fleet. Boeing produced 732 KC-135 tankers for the Air Force between 1957-65; some 540 are still in service today.

"Our Boeing teammates in Wichita have a long history of commitment and quality workmanship, including extensive expertise in modifying and supporting air-refueling tankers," said Jerry Daniels, president and chief executive officer of Boeing Military Aircraft and Missile Systems. "We certainly appreciate the support of federal and state officials from Kansas in helping to enhance this great capability in Wichita."

Wichita has been the center of Boeing air-refueling efforts for decades, performing tanker modifications, air-refueling boom development, re-engine programs and other support efforts. It also is home to the 767 Tanker engineering and development program.

With more than 50 years of tanker experience and a solid understanding of Air Force air-refueling mission requirements, Boeing can provide capable, proven tankers to the flight line faster and more affordably than any other candidate.

Prior to making public announcements, Daniels notified elected officials representing Kansas of the company's intention to do the tanker work in Wichita.

"I am encouraged by Boeing's decision to perform the 767 Tanker modification work in Wichita once the company and the Air Force agree on terms of a tanker lease program," said Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan. "New tankers and Kansas are a perfect fit. All the technology and expertise for a successful 767 Tanker program already resides in Wichita. Further, beginning to replace the KC-135 tanker fleet now will save the Air Force approximately \$3 billion in the years ahead because of reduced operating and maintenance costs associated with new 767 aircraft."

Republican Rep. Todd Tiahrt said: "This announcement means more jobs for our community and represents a significant step forward in getting more of our neighbors, friends and family members back to work in the aftermath of September 11. I applaud Boeing's decision to perform this modification work in Wichita, and I am pleased that our young men and women in the Air Force will soon be flying new, much-needed aerial-refueling tankers."

Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., added: "Maintaining the global reach of our nation's armed forces and strengthening the Wichita economy are important factors in the implementation of this project. Through a combined Kansas delegation effort, we can make this work."

Rep. Jim Ryun, R-Kan., said: "Boeing's decision to bring the 767 modification work to Wichita means jobs for Kansans and will serve to fuel our state's economy. Kansans will do well with the charge to support the continued work of the military in defending our nation."

Kansas Gov. Bill Graves said: "Boeing is a critical part of the Kansas economy, and I want to thank the company for its continued commitment to Wichita and the state. This announcement underscores the importance of maintaining a competitive business climate and the value of a long-term partnership with a key industry."

About 2,000 Boeing employees work at the Wichita Development and Modification Center, where the tanker modification work would be performed. Another 11,500 people work in the Boeing Commercial Airplanes manufacturing area in Wichita, which provides many components of the 767 for final assembly in Everett, Wash.

The Air Force 767 Tanker program will have a positive impact on employment. However, until specific configuration and programmatic details have been finalized, it is not possible to determine the exact number of jobs represented by this program.

"We are committed to providing the Air Force and the American taxpayer with an affordable, low-risk, highly capable tanker to address the nation's vital air-refueling mission requirements," said Daniels. "I know we have the right airplane and the right work force in Wichita to meet this challenge. I am confident that, with the tremendous support of the Kansas delegation and many others, Boeing will deliver on that commitment."

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