Two Boeing Facilities Win Top Manufacturing Prize

The Boeing [NYSE: BA] Weapons Enterprise Capability Center (ECC) in St. Charles, Mo. and the AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopter program in Mesa, Ariz. have been named as 2005 Shingo Prize winners for excellence in manufacturing.

Teamwork, demonstrated by the effectiveness of High Performance Work Teams and efficient Lean manufacturing processes, were key factors in the dual win for Boeing.

"The Shingo focuses on Lean Manufacturing principles and demonstrated business results and this shows that the ECC is a world-class operation," said John Campbell, director of Weapons Assembly.

"I am extremely proud of our team here in Mesa," said Mesa Site General Manager Ed Koopman. "It's all about teamwork, efficient production processes and running a healthy business. This reflects the successes of several thousand individuals working together as a team-- something we do every day."

The competition for the Shingo includes other North American companies and researchers throughout the world. Sponsored by Utah State University, the prize was established in 1988 to promote awareness of Lean Manufacturing concepts and to recognize companies that achieve world-class manufacturing status.

"Boeing's ECC and Apache Sites are excellent examples of how Lean Manufacturing is supposed to work," said Shingo Prize executive director Ross Robson. "Utilizing Lean Manufacturing principles has enabled the Weapons ECC to reduce supplier lead times by 60 percent, increase inventory turns from 24 to more than 200, while increasing monthly rates for the Joint Direct Attack Munition by 400 percent. In Mesa, they reduced the lost workday rate by 74 percent, and manufacturing cycle time is down 40 percent. That is very impressive, and it's why the two Boeing sites were chosen."

The Shingo Prize will be awarded April 21 at the Shingo conference in Grand Rapids, Mich.

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