

Building the First Commercial Aircraft from Japan with Help from Washington State

Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation is building the first commercial jet aircraft from Japan and we are developing it with the help of Washington state. The Mitsubishi Regional Jet (MRJ) is a tremendous source of pride for our country and is the culmination of a long history in commercial aviation.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) has more than 40 years of manufacturing components as a Tier 1 supplier for global aviation giants like Boeing. With the development of Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation and the MRJ program, MHI has focused its extensive aviation experience and vast resources into creating the most advanced and most efficient regional jet in the world.

The MRJ is a very important development for our country as we are not only building an aircraft, but we are also rejuvenating the commercial aerospace industry in Japan. To accomplish this we have developed a clean-sheet aircraft design that incorporates advanced aerodynamics, the latest technologies, and a global development program that includes world class flight test and engineering centers in Washington state.

We selected Washington state as the home for our Seattle Engineering Center and our Moses Lake Flight Test Center because of its long history of driving aerospace innovation and its commitment to the aviation industry. Many of the most advanced aerospace companies in the world are located here and it is also home for several partners for our MRJ program.

Our Seattle Engineering Center was established in July 2015. We share office space with our partner AeroTEC, a turnkey flight testing, engineering and certification firm headquartered in Seattle. With AeroTEC, we employ about 150 employees here who support the MRJ flight test program by planning and coordinating ground tests, refining flight test plans, accelerating technical solutions, and analyzing flight test data. This team works very closely with our main design and engineering office in Nagoya, Japan, as well as the flight test center in Moses Lake.

Our Moses Lake Flight Test Center (MFC) commenced operations in August 2016. It is housed at an AeroTEC facility located on the Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake. Here there are over 400 employees, including engineers and aviation experts from around the globe working together to rigorously test the MRJ as we drive towards type certification in 2019.


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As a Tier 1 supplier to Boeing, including supplying wing boxes for the 787, proximity to Boeing was an important site selection decision point.



At MFC we have a fleet of four MRJ flight test aircraft (FTA). We have accumulated more than 1500 flight hours and in 2017 alone, our MRJ program accomplished several flight test milestones including natural icing, high speed flutter, and extreme temperature tests just to name a few. One of the statistics we are most proud of is that the flight test program has seen only a 1 percent takeoff cancellation rate due to technical issues. We feel that this is a great testament to the quality of the aircraft and a terrific highlight for its future as a regional jet.

Teamwork is a vital component of the success of our MRJ program. We believe that the communities in which we live and work are important parts of our team. We want to share our success with our communities and help support causes in the areas where we live and work. Last year we helped sponsor a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) event in Moses Lake to introduce students to some of the career opportunities that are available through STEM education. Education is a great tool for our youth, but just as important is being able to use that tool to build a career. In the coming years, we hope to continue to promote STEM education and career opportunities with the Moses Lake community and surrounding areas.

We are very proud to be members of Washington state and your historic aviation community. We look forward to continuing the success of our MRJ program here and we thank you for the acceptance and support we have already received. 



Hitoshi "Hank" Iwasa is the Head of Moses Lake Flight Test Center. Iwasa-san has been with the MRJ program from its inception and he plays a crucial role overseeing the flight test program in Moses Lake.

THE "BOEING EFFECT"

Boeing Attracts International Businesses to Washington

Nearly half of The Boeing Company's workforce is located in Washington, making Boeing the largest private employer in the state. In addition to billions of dollars in payroll and vendor fees, taxes, and construction costs in 2017, Boeing regularly invests—staff time and financially—in training and education, charitable donations, innovative technologies, energy conservation initiatives, sustainable aviation biofuels, and much more, in Washington state.

The aerospace giant also makes non-linear investments that generate enormous economic benefit in Washington, such as relationships with foreign companies that result in those companies making capital investments in the state.

Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation--MRJ

Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation launched both an engineering office in Seattle focusing on flight test analysis, and a 65,000 square foot flight test facility in Moses Lake, creating more than 200 high-wage jobs in Washington state. The first Japanese built commercial jet since the 1960s, the MRJ (Mitsubishi Regional Jet) uses components from Washington state suppliers Esterline (Korry), Zodiac, and Avtech Tyee, among other Washington suppliers. AeroTEC, a Seattle-based firm specializing in helping companies fill testing, engineering and certification positions, has been working with Mitsubishi for the past two years to help them hire Washington engineers.

