

Reporting on The Business of Business Aviation Since 1965

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Intelligence

Spirit AeroSystems, the leading aerostructures provider and Boeing's top supplier, announced Jan. 10 it is laying off 2,800 of its employees in Wichita due to the open-ended production halt at both companies over the 737 MAX. Spirit further said it will make smaller cuts to other workforces in Tulsa and McAlester in Oklahoma later this month, and it warned even more cuts may come depending on what Boeing and Spirit decide in the future about again ramping up 737 production rates.

OEM/SUPPLIERS

Mooney Employees Furloughed For Second Time

MOLLY MCMILLIN, molly.mcmillin@aviationweek.com

Employees of financially troubled Mooney International were sent home from work Jan. 6—their second furlough in about a month.

In early December, employees were recalled from a two-week furlough from the company's facility in Kerrville, Texas. At the time of the recall, Mooney said it was finalizing negotiations of a sale of the company to a group of investors who wanted to re-establish the company as a "viable production and support company for the Mooney brand of aircraft," the company said.

With the return of the employees, production of Mooney single-engine piston aircraft resumed.

But the sale appears to have fallen through, a Mooney employee, who requested anonymity, told The Weekly of Business Aviation.

"From what I know, the buyer backed out, and they're looking at other options," the employee said. "We all hoped for better things."

Employees were first furloughed in mid-November. They were recalled Dec. 2, worked through Dec. 20 and then went on a holiday break, said Devan Burns, Mooney human resources manager. **FURLOUGHED, P. 2**

INDUSTRY DATA

What's Ahead For 2020? Business Aviation Leaders Weigh In (Part 2)

MOLLY MCMILLIN, molly.mcmillin@aviationweek.com

The Weekly of Business Aviation polled leaders in the general and business aviation industry about what they think lies ahead in 2020 and the challenges they face. Below is Part 2 of the two-part series. (For Part 1, please see the Jan. 6, 2020, edition of BAV.)

What is the biggest goal or challenge for your business, or for your members, and the business aviation industry in 2020?

Ed Bolen, National Business Aviation Association president and CEO:

I think access continues to be a front-burner issue, particularly access to airports. There are significant pressures at some high-profile general aviation airports, including East Hampton [New York], Santa Monica [California] and so forth. Protecting access continues to be a front-burner issue. Safety is a core value of our industry. General aviation safety statistics are not where we want them to be in 2019. We'll continue to do all we can to ensure we continue to move toward our ultimate goal of increased mobility and zero accidents.

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FURLOUGHED, P. 1

resources specialist.

“We were supposed to get paid for that, but we didn’t,” Burns said of the company’s promise of holiday pay. They returned from the holiday Jan. 6, but were sent home. The company furloughed 55 employees, she said.

Mooney has been owned by Chinese investors since 2013.

During the first nine months of 2019 Mooney delivered eight aircraft, comprising two M20U Ovation Ultras and six M20V Acclaim Ultras.

Billings for the nine months totaled \$6.5 million, according to the General Aviation Manufacturers Association. In 2018, it delivered 14 aircraft to customers.

WHAT’S AHEAD, P. 1

Brian Foley, aviation analyst with Brian Foley Associates:

The biggest industry challenge will be the continued fanning of the flames regarding flight shaming. Business aviation companies will continue to ratchet up their PR stunts that portray them as stewards of the environment, even if just for a single aviation event. The real impact, however, will be even less incentive to buy new aircraft at the risk of being labeled the next Prince Harry in the headlines. As such, it would come as no surprise if more fliers consider fractional, charter and other models to protect their identity. This trend would likely begin in Europe where the topic is hottest and later spread to North America.

Rolland Vincent, Rolland Vincent Associates president:

IMHO, our biggest objective as an industry should be to proactively, confidently, and consistently take command of our public image, both in the U.S. but especially beyond. We have to shine the image of our industry beyond the corridors of legislative offices and strive to convince an increasingly larger public that we are a force for good—an industry to be coveted and embraced as good community neighbors, employers, and partners; we have to get ahead of this challenge, which is ever-present.

Adam Twidell, PrivateFly CEO:

Market and economic conditions are likely to remain tough for flight providers. It’s never been more important for clients to have confidence in [the] stability of who they choose, but I predict there will be more acquisitions, mergers and unfortunately some losses in 2020. Finding a way to make your business stand out, to be attractive to end users and to be commercially successful over the long term is a challenge. At PrivateFly, we plan to keep innovating and to continue to evolve our model, reaping the benefits of being part of Directional Aviation’s OneSky family.

Jack Pelton, Experimental Aircraft Association CEO:

The biggest goal in 2020 is to ensure that integration of UAS vehicles into the NAS is accomplished without any compromise to the airspace our members use today.

Mark Burns, Gulfstream Aerospace president:

Gulfstream’s priorities for 2020 remain unchanged—ensuring the ongoing safety of our fleet, continuing to enhance our customer support network and consistently creating and delivering the world’s finest aviation experience. It’s going to be an exciting year as we begin certification flying of our all-new Gulfstream G700, the new industry standard.

Pete Bunce, General Aviation Manufacturers Association president and CEO:

The Boeing 737 MAX accidents have resulted in a questioning of the aircraft certification process, and there are a number of completed or ongoing investigations or studies looking at how to improve the certification process. GAMA will continue to work to explain the strength of the certification process and its importance to delivering safety-enhancing products. At the same time, our industry has always been proactive in improving the certification process, and we are working with our member companies to facilitate initiatives like safety management systems for manufacturers to enhance the certification process. Our challenge for 2020 will be to work with FAA, Congress and other stakeholders to develop constructive changes that will improve safety oversight and the effectiveness of the certification process, which is essential to enable the development and introduction of new safety enhancing technologies and future general aviation products.

Ron Draper, Textron Aviation president and CEO:

As a company and an industry, we have made significant progress with our long-term workforce development efforts in recent years. We must continue investing in workforce pipelines that expose the next generation of advanced aviation manufacturing employees to the opportunities in this industry. In 2019, Textron Aviation had the opportunity to showcase the important workforce development efforts, like Aviation Pathway and Wichita Move, happening in Kansas on a national stage, and we have to keep driving forward with these initiatives during the new year. Manufacturing innovations will demand a highly skilled workforce that progress our factories of the future.

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WHAT'S AHEAD, From P. 2

Sustainability will continue to be a topic we address. Business aviation has a good record of environmental stewardship and continues to invest in initiatives and advancements in technology, infrastructure and operations to reduce its environmental impact. The adoption of sustainable aviation fuels continues to progress, along with significant improvements in fuel efficiency and aerodynamic improvements that reduce overall fuel burn.

Michael Amalfitano, Embraer Executive Jets president and CEO:

As an industry, our biggest challenge is to continue to reduce our environmental footprint and drive forward the sustainability of business aviation. With fully electric aircraft on the long-term horizon, we have valuable opportunities here now, with the replacement and retirement of old, inefficient aircraft. Embraer's new Praetor jets, the industry's most technologically advanced midsize and super-midsize aircraft, are a great example of how an OEM can continue to incorporate environmentally friendly technologies (including the use of SAF, sustainable aviation materials, a lower noise footprint and more electric architecture with full fly-by-wire flight controls). This different by design and disruptive by choice mindset is driven by Embraer's vision to deliver the ultimate experience in business aviation, providing best-in-class, industry-leading products, services, and support.

Janine Iannarelli, Par Avion Ltd. founder and CEO:

Getting through an election year that promises to have at least a turbulent start to it. Election years are historically "bad" for business, but there is so much uncertainty in the air that 2020 promises to be unique and perhaps a bit more challenging. The ongoing challenge—one that I think has existed since the economic fallout of 2008 and persists—is bringing back previous users of business aviation to the industry. The whole ownership sector of the business aircraft industry has not fully recovered, and we all


need to work to extol the benefits of this means of transport to those outside of our industry. I have long said we do a really good job of telling each other how beneficial business aviation is, but the industry as a whole is failing to sell that to the general public.

David Coleal, Bombardier Aviation president:

Few industries have stated objectives on environmental sustainability, and fewer still have a detailed plan to track their progress as our industry does through the Business Aviation Commitment to Climate Change. The business aviation community is at the forefront in taking proactive measures towards building a sustainable future. The biggest challenge for the industry will be to overcome the misconceptions surrounding sustainable aviation fuel and its availability. SAF still isn't widely available, but our industry is dedicated to ensure this changes. Another challenge the industry is facing is the misconceptions from the public opinion in terms of carbon emissions when travelling with private jets. Incidents of flight shaming involving the use of private jets are unfortunate when you consider that our industry has delivered fuel efficiency improvements of 40% over the past 40 years. Sustainability is a key issue in our industry, and it's important to note that business jet emissions account for only 0.04% of total annual carbon emissions globally.

Timothy Obitts, National Air Transportation Association chief operating officer:

Through collaboration, education, resources and outreach, the aviation community will be empowered to elevate safety and business success in the areas of training, fuel quality, workforce recruitment and retention, sustainability and addressing illegal operations. The industry is finding success with these issues, and others, by working as a unified force for general and business aviation. Together, we will assure a bright future for women and men who help aviation take flight.



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