

Columbia Aircraft begins recall of laid-off workers

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Columbia Aircraft manufacturing Corporation announced today that, as planned, it has begun recalling the first wave of employees furloughed in late March.

“We’re recalling the furloughed employees in stages to meet the demands of our accelerating production rate,” said Columbia Vice President of Manufacturing Chris Redgrave. “Essentially, we’ve spent the past six weeks cleaning house on our production line, upgrading tooling and implementing a number of Lean Enterprise practices to enhance efficiency. We’re now bringing back our associates as production demands dictate.”

The first furloughed employees who are being recalled work in the assembly, upholstery and subassembly departments. Redgrave reported that he expects to recall the remaining furloughed employees in subsequent stages and that their benefits will remain in place through June, if needed.

“We’re very appreciative of the understanding of those who have stuck with us through this process,” Redgrave said. “During the past six weeks, we’ve kept in regular contact with our furloughed employees and held two Lean Enterprise training sessions in anticipation of their return to work.”

Columbia continues to deliver aircraft at a rate of four per week. Though the Company doesnâ€™t release sales figures, Q1 2007 aircraft deliveries exceeded 2006 levels.

Columbia Aircraft Manufacturing Corporation, headquartered in Bend, Oregon, manufactures a variety of all-composite aircraft including the Columbia 400 â€“ arguably the worldâ€™s fastest certified piston-single. The Columbia 350, 350i, 350SL and 350SLX are normally aspirated, four-place aircraft with a cruise speed of 191 knots. The Columbia 400, 400i, 400SL and 400SLX are intercooled, twin-turbocharged, four-place aircraft certified to FL250 with a cruise speed of 235 knots. In addition to providing legendary performance, both models are renowned for their high level of standard equipment, quality and safety features, including dual electrical systems, dual wing spars and Utility Category certification.

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