

Consulate General of Japan

August 5, 2015

Mitsubishi Regional Jet & Japan-Washington State Partnership



On Monday, August 3, a major milestone for close economic relations between Japan and Washington State was celebrated with the official launch of operations of Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation's new Seattle Engineering Center. In a ceremony at the Museum of Flight overlooking historic Boeing Field, dignitaries, including Washington State Governor Jay Inslee, Seattle Mayor Ed Murray, U.S. Representative Suzan DelBene, FAA Transport Airplane Directorate Manager Jeffery Doven and Consul General of Japan Masahiro Omura, joined the Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation and a crowd of about 200 to mark the occasion with speeches and a *kagami-wari*, or the traditional opening of a sake cask, to inaugurate the start of a new endeavor with good fortune.

The Seattle Engineering Center is a partnership between Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation and Seattle-based AeroTEC to provide technical support for certification and flight testing of the Mitsubishi Regional Jet. The center will employ 150 people, including 50 Mitsubishi engineers from Japan. Additionally, Mitsubishi and AeroTEC are establishing a facility at Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake that will host about 200 employees, including Mitsubishi staff from Japan, and where U.S. flight testing for four of five MRJs will be based. U.S. flight testing is scheduled to start in second quarter of 2016. With both the Seattle Engineering Center and the Moses Lake test-flight facility, the MRJ program will be directly responsible for at least 350 high-quality aerospace jobs in Washington State.

The MRJ is the first passenger jet developed in Japan and, will seat 70 to 90 for short-haul, feeder service. The MRJ will incorporate many revolutionary features to increase fuel efficiency and passenger comfort.

It is said that Boeing's 787 Dreamliner is made with Japan, and during the ceremony, Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation president Morimoto remarked that the MRJ, with a large amount of parts manufacturing and flight testing centered in Washington, "is being developed and made with the State of Washington and the U.S." Moreover, among the 407 orders that have been placed so far, 340 are from U.S. customers.

"We are thankful to the Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation for its investment in our state and are proud of the assistance we can provide in bringing this important aircraft to the worldwide market," said Governor Inslee regarding the opening of the center and test-flight facility.



The MRJ's first flight in Japan is set for the fall of this year, and the jets are expected to enter passenger service in 2017. Congratulations to the Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation and its Washington partner AeroTEC. We look forward to seeing this newest symbol of vital and close Japan-U.S. economic relations grace the skies over our two countries in the near future.