

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT IN THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY DECLINED IN 1999 after two years of growth. On an annual average employment basis, the industry's work force fell by 50,000, to a total of 846,000, a decline of 5.6% from the previous year. The aircraft manufacturing sector accounted for slightly more than half of the decline.

The 1999 employment figure represented 4.6% of the total employment in all U.S. manufacturing industries; that compares with 4.8% in 1998 and 6.8% at its peak level in the 1989–1990 period. The aerospace work force also represented 7.6% of total employment by U.S. companies engaged in production of durable goods; comparable figures are 8.0% in 1998 and 11.7% at its peak level in 1990.


The largest decline (30,000) was in the aircraft, engines, and parts industry, with an additional 16,000 from the catch-all "other" segment that includes communications, navigation, flight control, displays, and related equipment. The missiles and space vehicles segment accounted for another 4,000.

The total aerospace payroll for 1999 was \$31 billion, down from \$33 billion the previous year. Both figures include lump-sum payments made by aerospace companies in lieu of general wage increases or cost-of-living adjustments. Expressed as a percentage of the total payroll of all U.S. manufacturing industries (\$780 billion), the aerospace payroll amounted to 4.0%, down from 4.4% in 1998.

Weekly earnings by production workers (again including lump-sum payments) averaged \$846, down from \$848 in the previous year. On average, production workers in airframe fabrication earned \$930 per week (down from \$934). For other sectors, the average weekly rate was \$837 for missiles and space production workers (down from \$845), \$871 for aircraft engine and engine parts (up from \$840), and \$735 for aircraft parts and equipment other than engines (down from \$751).

Average hourly earnings amounted to \$19.82, up from \$19.27 in 1998. The average workweek for production workers was 42.7 hours, which compares to 44.0 hours in the previous year.

The number of R&D-performing scientists and engineers in the aerospace industry continued its steep slide in 1999—dropping 14% to 66,400. Aerospace scientists and engineers accounted for only 6.7% of the 997,700 R&D scientists and engineers employed by all U.S. industries known to conduct or finance research and development.



After holding fairly steady at around one million workers through the 1980s and early 1990s, the federal civilian work force in the Department of Defense (DoD) declined—continuing a slide that began in 1993. In 1999, DoD federal civilian employment dropped to 705,826 from 732,097 the previous year, and is projected to continue falling over the next two years.

Employment in NASA programs also declined to 181,469 in 1999 from 183,109 the previous year. NASA directly employed 10% of the total and NASA contractors employed the remaining 90% or 163,000.