



NEWS RELEASE

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IEDC and Conexus Indiana launch Indiana Aerospace & Defense Council to bolster state's \$7.5B defense industry

***Industry-led group will create a plan to attract more defense/homeland security
contracts, help contractors and suppliers pursue new opportunities***

(INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., August 30, 2011) Economic output from Indiana's defense contractors more than doubled over the past decade; in the last two years alone, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) estimates that Hoosier defense and aerospace companies have created 1,800 new jobs.

A new industry-led forum organized by the IEDC and the Conexus Indiana manufacturing and logistics initiative aims to continue these positive trends, and make the state an even more attractive destination for aerospace and defense investment and employment.

The **Indiana Aerospace and Defense Council (IADC)** held its first meeting Monday afternoon at the Governor's Residence in Indianapolis, bringing together a group of industry leaders to begin creating a proactive strategic plan for growing this sector.

"We can be proud that Indiana-based companies are working together to bolster national security and support the military in our overseas commitments," said Mitch Roob, Secretary of Commerce and chief executive officer of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. "As these firms help make our country safer, they're also making our economy stronger."

Four major defense contractors have operations in Indiana that, collectively, accounted for more than \$2.6 billion in Department of Defense contracts in 2010 – AM General, Rolls-Royce, Raytheon, and ITT.

"Indiana is a great place to do business, and we believe that the new Aerospace and Defense Council can help make it even better," said Mark Rhodes, Rolls-Royce Vice-President of Engineering and Technology. "We see opportunities to collaborate on common workforce needs, advocate for pro-growth public policy, and to encourage more supplier relationships in the state."

Beyond the continued success of Indiana's major aerospace and defense companies, the IADC will focus on broadening the state's contractor base, helping smaller companies enter the market and compete for more contracts.

"For smaller contractors and suppliers to prime contractors, networking and knowledge are critical," said Pete Bitar, President of Xtreme Alternative Defense Systems, an Anderson-based firm that has pioneered 'directed energy' technologies with several military applications. "We need venues to build relationships with potential partners and customers, and help navigating the procurement and contracting processes that exist with federal agencies – the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and NASA.

"If the IADC can provide these sorts of resources, it will quickly become a catalyst to diversify and grow Indiana's defense and aerospace industries."

The Indiana Aerospace and Defense Council is modeled after the successful Logistics Council created by Conexus Indiana in 2008. The Logistics Council brought together industry leaders and solicited their input on a comprehensive strategic plan to strengthen the sector, and the IADC envisions a similar result with aerospace and defense companies.

"If you want a plan to help Indiana's defense and aerospace companies be more competitive, you harness the expertise of industry first," said Steve Dwyer, President & CEO of Conexus Indiana and former Chief Operating Officer of Rolls-Royce North America. "These efforts work best not with academic studies, but with private sector leaders contributing ideas and working together to implement them."

The first meeting of the IADC included participants from AM General, Rolls Royce, Raytheon, ITT Communications, BAE Systems, Allison Transmission, Northrup Grumman, SAIC Inc., Tri Star Engineering, Ultra Electronics – USSI, Aero Engine Controls, Stimulus Engineering, Sherry Laboratories, Xtreme Alternative Defense Systems, Riverside Manufacturing, Praxair Surface Technologies, and Purdue University, along with representatives from the IEDC.

The IADC will be executed by Conexus with major funding from the IEDC, and staffed by Project Director Ryan Metzger, an Indianapolis attorney. Courtney Zaugg, formerly Director of International Economic Development with DevelopIndy, will serve as Director of Industry Research for the Council.

Conexus Indiana is the state's advanced manufacturing and logistics initiative, dedicated to making Indiana a global leader in high-growth, high-tech industries. Conexus is focused on strategic priorities like workforce development, creating new industry partnerships and promoting Indiana's competitive advantages. Learn more at www.ConexusIndiana.com.