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Heath plant wins Air Force contract

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Boeing Co.'s operation in Heath has been awarded a three-year, \$20.6 million contract to build airborne surveillance systems for the Air Force.

The contract will increase the plant's business by about 20 percent to more than \$100 million annually. Company leaders expect about 20 people to be hired as a result of the contract.

The company moved production of the Airborne Warning and Control Systems to Heath last year after closing its operation in Corinth, Texas. About 600 people work for Boeing at the converted Newark Air Force base.

“With nearly 20 years of experience supporting the U.S. Air Force in the development of Electronic Systems Measures for the AWACS program, Boeing is prepared to deliver the antenna radio frequency processor capability,” Mike Emmelhainz, Heath center director, said in a statement. “We're proud of our customer's confidence in our ability to meet these important requirements.”

The contract calls for 53 radar antennas to be produced between September 2008 and January 2010. AWACS allows planes to detect, identify and track transmissions from ground, airborne and maritime sources.

At its Heath plant, Boeing repairs, tests and builds military equipment. That includes testing parts of intercontinental ballistic missiles and repairing guidance systems for B-52s and numerous other planes.

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