

TIMCO AVIATION KEEPS PLANES FLYING

An experienced work force and central location helped company decide to come to Greensboro.

Ron Utecht, 64, is president and chief operating officer of Greensboro-based TIMCO Aviation Services. Before joining TIMCO as a consultant in August 2003, he was senior vice president of maintenance and engineering for Chicago-based United Air Lines, where he worked 39 years. Utecht recently answered questions about TIMCO, which repairs and overhauls airplanes in Greensboro, Macon, Ga., and Lake City, Fla. It employs about 1,300 at Piedmont Triad International Airport.

What brought TIMCO to the Piedmont Triad?

Raleigh-Durham International, Lake Charles Regional in Louisiana and Piedmont Triad International airports

were selected as the finalists to bid for our business for numerous reasons. The Piedmont Triad had the best financial, work-force-availability and location proposal of the three. We found the airport-management team and the local business environment the best to work with during our due diligence.

What has the company's experience been in the region?

TIMCO's experience in the Triad has been very positive over the years. This is a community with high values and a great work ethic. For example, unlike the experience many of our competitors face around the world, there has always been a strong bond between TIMCO, its employees and the Piedmont Triad community.

How have you found the work force in the region?

We are very happy with our employees. They are an honest, hardworking, family-oriented group of people. There is a real sense of family and support among the more than 1,300 TIMCO employees in the Triad, making work special for all of us.

Does the work force need any special training to meet the company's needs? How do you make sure it gets that training?

There is a basic skill set that is required for most job positions. However, the Piedmont Triad certainly has a ready and well-qualified labor force in this regard. Many of the positions do require specialized training that is either provided in



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the work place or for which our employees obtain certification from prior places of employment or local schools. We also have a full training department that is dedicated to ensuring that all employees have the specialized training they need.

Obviously, the airport is a big factor in the location. How else does the region's infrastructure play into operations?

Within the local labor pool, there is a good subset with experience and a strong passion for aviation. Beyond issues related to the work itself, the moderate-to-low cost of living relative to other parts of the country, the desirability of the community as a place to raise a family, very good school options and a reliable local government support structure all make the region very important for TIMCO.

How have Guilford County and other local governments responded to the company's needs?

The local schools and governments at a variety of levels have consistently responded to needs for support in our initiatives to become more established and to grow in the community.

U.S. Rep. Howard Coble has been an especially strong supporter of TIMCO, and we are grateful to the Triad mayors, city councils and the Guilford County Board of Commissioners for their ongoing support for economic development.

What's the company's future in the Piedmont Triad?

We are very enthusiastic about the company's growth in the Piedmont Triad and expect to continue to prosper as our customers recognize the value we deliver.

What factors will keep conditions right for growth here?

Our primary concerns are for keeping our building lease costs as low as possible, securing continued strong support by our local government agencies and the school systems, and seeing continued growth of the airport in terms of the traffic in and out of Greensboro.

How do you see the Triad changing during the next 10 years?

I see more aviation companies moving into the region as our reputation for good worker skill sets and attitudes grows and as more folks dis-

EMPLOYEES AT TIMCO AVIATION SERVICES MAKE SURE COMMERCIAL AND OTHER AIRCRAFT ARE FIT TO FLY. ABOUT 1,300 WORK AT ITS OPERATION IN GREENSBORO.

cover the numerous values offered by the region.

How will the opening of the FedEx hub next year affect the airport?

We expect it to have much busier traffic patterns, particularly at night. The development of the hub already has benefited the entire airport community because significant improvements have been made to the infrastructure, including the new runway, as well as to the highways leading to the airport. We are excited by the growth of our neighbor and for what it will bring to this community.

How will it affect your operations?

FedEx is a very important TIMCO customer. Its expanding operation at Piedmont Triad International will bring greater benefits to both our operations.