
Robin Hayes selected to lead Airbus in North America

Herndon, Virginia, 22 April 2024 – Airbus SE (stock exchange symbol: AIR) has announced that C. Jeffrey Knittel is retiring as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Airbus Americas, Inc. effective June 3, 2024, after serving as the region’s top executive since 2018. He will remain with Airbus through a transition period. Robin Hayes, former CEO of JetBlue Airways, has been selected to succeed him.

Hayes brings 35 years of global aerospace leadership to Airbus having served in a series of senior executive roles at British Airways over the course of his 19-year tenure, and JetBlue, where he was CEO for nine years. From 2020 to 2022, Hayes was Chair of the IATA’s Board of Governors, where he championed the association’s commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Hayes will report to Airbus CEO Guillaume Faury.

“I am delighted to welcome Robin to Airbus,” said Airbus CEO Guillaume Faury. “Together with the leadership team we’re looking forward to having Robin and his vast industry experience onboard to further deliver on our strategic objectives for the region across all the Airbus businesses and further grow our North American footprint. I want to thank Jeff for his many contributions to Airbus’ success over the years, and I wish him all the best for a well deserved retirement.”

As Chairman and CEO, Hayes will lead the commercial aircraft business, and will have responsibility for coordination among the company’s helicopters, space and defense businesses in North America. The region has more than 10,000 Airbus employees across 50 sites. Additionally, Airbus spends \$15 billion annually with more than 2,000 U.S. suppliers in over 40 states.

“After some time off, I am excited and energised to join Airbus and build on the incredible success in the region. I have known Jeff and the Airbus team for well over a decade and I believe they have done a terrific job leading Airbus in the Americas. It is an honour for me to take up this opportunity to be part of the Airbus team,” said Hayes. “Airbus’ commitment to safety and decarbonisation is incredibly important to me personally, and I am both motivated by and committed to contributing to the Airbus purpose to pioneer sustainable aerospace.”

During Knittel’s tenure, Airbus has grown its presence in the Americas and expanded its industrial and manufacturing footprint, doubling the region’s commercial aircraft deliveries.

Knittel brought 40 years of aviation finance, leasing and manufacturing experience to Airbus, previously serving as President of CIT Aerospace and CIT Transportation Finance.

“My time at Airbus has been a privilege and I am immensely proud of what the team has accomplished during our time together. We significantly increased revenues, grew market share and expanded our presence and operational footprint across all three Airbus businesses,” said Knittel. “The future is bright for Airbus in the region, as it is well-positioned to continue on its growth trajectory. Robin’s vast aviation experience, depth of knowledge and industry relationships make him the right choice at the right time to lead the organisation into the future in line with the Company’s global ambition. I look forward to watching the team reach new heights under Robin’s leadership.”

About Airbus

Airbus pioneers sustainable aerospace for a safe and united world. The Company constantly innovates to provide efficient and technologically-advanced solutions in aerospace, defence, and connected services. In commercial aircraft, Airbus designs and manufactures modern and fuel-efficient airliners and associated services. Airbus is also a European leader in space systems, defence and security. In helicopters, Airbus provides efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions and services worldwide.

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