PRATT & WHITNEY'S ICONIC 747SP TEST BED TO SOAR INTO EAA AIRVENTURE OSHKOSH 2025

News / Events / Festivals, Manufacturer

EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2025 will feature a unique version of one of the world's most popular airliners as RTX's business Pratt & Whitney brings a Boeing 747SP test bed aircraft to Boeing Plaza during the World's Greatest Aviation Celebration. The 72nd edition of the Experimental Aircraft Association's fly-in convention is July 21-27 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh. The aircraft's appearance is part of Pratt & Whitney's global centennial celebration, commemorating 100 years since its founding in 1925. The 747SP will arrive on Sunday, July 20, and depart on Thursday, July 24, offering attendees a rare opportunity to tour this iconic flying test bed up close.

"Pratt & Whitney has built a storied legacy in general, commercial, and military aviation," said Rick Larsen, EAA's vice president of communities and member programs, who coordinates AirVenture features and attractions. "As a means of celebrating its 100 years of innovation, Pratt & Whitney is flying the 747SP to be displayed for the more than half-a-million aviation enthusiasts who will attend the show."

Pratt & Whitney began operations in 1925 with the invention of the R-1340 Wasp engine, which

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revolutionized military and commercial aviation. The 1940s saw more innovation as the company powered several era-defining aircraft for the allies in World War II and began exploring jet propulsion.

Maria Della Posta, president at Pratt & Whitney Canada commented: “Pratt & Whitney has always pushed the boundaries of what’s possible in flight. Bringing our 747SP to Oshkosh isn’t just about showcasing a unique aircraft — it represents how our legacy of innovation continues to shape the future of aviation. This aircraft has played a pivotal role in the testing and development of our advanced propulsion technologies — from the PW800 for business jets to our groundbreaking GTF engine for commercial fleets. As a proud EAA AirVenture exhibitor for more than 15 years, we’ve valued every opportunity to connect directly with pilots, operators, maintainers, aviation enthusiasts, and OEM partners who share our passion for flight.”

Canadian subsidiary Pratt & Whitney Canada, founded in 1928, has attended the annual EAA show for decades and is a major player in the general aviation space. Its legendary PT6 engine — celebrating over 60 years of flight — has logged more than 500 million flying hours and remains a benchmark for performance, reliability, and innovation in turboprop propulsion. PT6 engines continue to power thousands of aircraft around the globe, from bush planes to business aviation and beyond.

Boeing 747SP (for special performance) is a shortened version of the 747 airliner that features a longer range than its full-sized counterpart and is powered by four Pratt & Whitney JT9D engines. Only 45 such aircraft were produced, with Pratt & Whitney owning the only two that are currently airworthy. The test bed variant features a fifth engine mount separate from the four main powerplants located below the wings. This extra engine configuration allows for testing engines in real-life weather conditions. Since 2001, Pratt & Whitney’s test beds have completed more than 1,400 ground runs and flight tests using 71 different experimental engines.

In addition, RTX’s booth located in Exhibit Hangar B will showcase Pratt & Whitney Canada’s iconic PT6 engine cutaways, as well as Collins Aerospace technologies throughout the week of EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2025.

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