



**WICHITA STATE
UNIVERSITY**
NATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR AVIATION RESEARCH



Rep. Pompeo tours Aircraft Structural Test and Evaluation Center at Coliseum's former Britt Brown Arena

Congressman Mike Pompeo (R-Kan.) visited the Aircraft Structural Test and Evaluation Center (ASTECC) at the Kansas Coliseum's former Britt Brown Arena recently to check on progress at the new facility, part of Wichita State University's National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR).

Pompeo is a proponent of aviation and recently assisted the institute with obtaining a unique 500-kip load frame for testing materials, which is now installed and working at the new ASTECC facility.

"Congressman Pompeo and his staff were instrumental in obtaining the 500-kip load frame from Tinker," said NIAR executive director John Tomblin. "His support of NIAR and aviation in general is valued."

The 500-kip load frame is unique in its size, capacity and capability to perform both axial and torsion testing on materials up to eight feet in length. The machine was acquired from a retired laboratory at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City. The \$1 million piece of equipment was awaiting delivery to the scrapyard when Pompeo and Tomblin rescued it for repurposing at NIAR.

While at ASTECC, Pompeo toured the center's various capabilities and met with Tomblin, Andy Schlapp, WSU executive director of government relations; Pat Gallagher, manager of government relations for the Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce; Tim Hickey, ASTECC director; and Pierre Harter, structures director for the Learjet 85, which is currently undergoing full-scale fatigue testing there.

"The aviation manufacturing cluster in Wichita is the largest in the United States, and NIAR is a central contributor to the industry," Pompeo said. "The innovations and testing that John Tomblin and his team are doing are helping propel Wichita aviation into the future and helping foster aviation research. I am pleased my staff was able to help this new facility receive the instrumental tools that continue to make this organization successful."

About NIAR

NIAR supports the aviation industry by providing research, development, testing, certification and training services. Its laboratories include Advanced Coatings, Aging Aircraft, CAD/CAM, Composites & Advanced Materials, Computational Mechanics, Crash Dynamics, Environmental Test, Full-Scale Structural Test, Mechanical Test, Metrology, Nondestructive Test, Research Machine Shop, Virtual Reality and the Walter H. Beech Wind Tunnel. NIAR operates on a nonprofit budget and is the largest university aviation R&D institution in the U.S., located in Wichita, Kan., the "Air Capital of the World."

www.niar.wichita.edu

About Congressman Pompeo

Congressman Pompeo serves the 4th District of Kansas and sits on the Energy and Commerce Committee, which oversees energy, health care, manufacturing and telecommunication, and the House Intelligence Committee. Mike started an initiative called “America Flies” as an effort to increase awareness of the importance general aviation and airplane manufacturing plays in our economy. Mike and his wife Susan are involved in many activities in support of Susan’s *alma mater*, Wichita State University.

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John Tomblin, executive director of NIAR and Congressman Pompeo pose with the 500-kip load frame at the new ASTEC facility. The 500-kip load frame can perform both axial and torsion testing on materials up to eight feet in length. Pompeo and Tomblin worked to bring this unique piece of equipment to NIAR testing facilities.



(Pictured from left to right) Congressman Pompeo met with John Tomblin; Pierre Harter, structures director for the Learjet 85 and Tim Hickey, ASTEC director.