



ATK TELLS EMPLOYEES TO TAKE VOLUNTARY LAYOFFS, OR ELSE...

Company workers at ATK have recently been asked to take voluntary layoffs before mandatory layoffs are ordered in late March. On the other hand, champagne is flowing in company boardrooms over the acquisition of a big military contract. When asked about the issue, Rod Gibbons, director of communications for Alliant Techsystems said, "There have been no layoffs ... but it is likely there will be some layoffs." An email sent to employees requested them to consider a voluntary layoff before decisions were needed for terminations. While the layoffs are intended to be permanent, Gibbons said, "As the business grows we would hope to be hiring." The company announced on Monday that it has been selected by the U.S. Army for building an alternative warhead for the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System. ATK would be working as a subcontractor under Lockheed Martin. Gibbons said "This is exciting news for the company and definitely exciting for the Allegany Ballistics Laboratory." The company reported that staff layoffs were necessary at the Rocket Center facility because of the expiry of several defense programs and cuts in federal spending. While about 1,350 employees work at the ballistics lab, no number for layoffs has yet been set. Commenting that the situation was common in the industry Gibbons further said, "Any company in the defense industry is facing challenges due to government funding cuts." Dave Wise, vice president and general manager of ATK was visibly jubilant over the new contract: "This new warhead offers the advantage of uncompromised performance without leaving unexploded submunitions on the battlefield... We look forward to further development and integration of our improved warhead solution for GMLRS. We are also excited to demonstrate that we can adapt our lethality-enhanced ordnance design for other missile, mortar, artillery and air-dropped weapon applications." However, the general manager did not comment on whether the acquisition of this new contract would prove less lethal for employees.

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