

Bell Unveils New Manufacturing Technology Center



FORT WORTH, Texas – Bell Textron Inc. unveiled on Aug. 10 its new 140,000-square-foot Manufacturing Technology Center (MTC) in Fort Worth, Texas, the company said in a release.

The MTC is a proving ground where Bell will test and refine technologies and processes – demonstrating manufacturing readiness and ability to successfully build and support Future Vertical Lift (FVL) aircraft. The facility provides capabilities that span all of Bell’s core manufacturing of rotor and drive systems, critical infrastructure and final assembly.

Since establishing a footprint in North Texas in 1951, Bell’s facilities have been a hub for new technology in aviation. Many milestones, including first flight of the XV-15, V-22, 609 and 407, took place in the DFW metroplex. Building FVL aircraft will require the right blend of investment in manufacturing technology and a quality workforce, as well as strong partnerships with the state and community, to deliver an affordable, capable and reliable aircraft for the warfighter.

“The MTC is the next step in successfully deploying new manufacturing technologies and processes into Bell’s future factories,” said Glenn Isbell, vice president of rapid prototyping and manufacturing innovation for Bell Textron. “These future factories working together with our teammates and suppliers, will be designed to enable high-quality, high-rate production of the Bell V-280 Valor, Bell 360 Invictus and other future aircraft.”

Digital connectivity and integration form the backbone of the MTC. The facility will be monitored and controlled by a network of IT, Internet of Things (IoT) and cybersecurity systems that manage the inflow and outflow of materials, as well as the movement of activity throughout the factory.

By deploying a networked software infrastructure, the MTC will produce a digital twin of itself that gives everyone a common operating picture of the building, the equipment and the processes.