MONTHLY MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Space Coast Aerospace & Defense Hiring Report

Brevard County, Florida • June 2026 Edition

> Tracking who is hiring, what they pay, the contracts shaping demand, and where the Space Coast aerospace and defense workforce is headed — compiled monthly for employers, job seekers, and the regional community.

Prepared by Intrepidus Talent Solutions — specialist aerospace & defense staffing for Florida's Space Coast.

Why this report

If you hire, recruit, or work in aerospace & defense on the Space Coast, this report is built for you. Each month, it answers the questions that matter most in this market, using public, verifiable data: Who is hiring right now, and for what roles? What does the market actually pay here? Which federal contracts will create the next wave of jobs? Is the local market expanding or contracting?

Hiring managers and HR teams use it to benchmark pay and see who they're competing with for talent. Recruiters use it to spot where demand is moving. Job seekers — including transitioning military — use it to find who's hiring and what it takes to qualify.

This is Issue No. 1. Every figure here sets a baseline; starting with the July issue, you'll see real month-over-month change. Methodology and sourcing for every number are consolidated at the back of the report.

> *Get every issue free — subscribe at intrepidus-ts.com.*

The Monthly Pulse

Within our tracked employer sample, the Space Coast aerospace and defense market looks expansion-leaning this month. Our Openings Index — a same-date count from a **fixed list of 23 named Space Coast A&D employers** — recorded **1,413 open roles**; paired with two major announced expansions, the near-term signal points up. One caveat to keep front of mind throughout: the Index is a **defined sample built for month-to-month comparability, not a census of every aerospace opening in Brevard County** (full scope notes are in the appendix). Within that tracked sample, the openings are concentrated: **Blue Origin, Northrop Grumman, L3Harris, Amentum, and Lockheed Martin together account for about 86% of the 1,413 roles we counted** — an anchor-tenant pattern among the employers we track. (This is 86% of the Index, not of all Space Coast aerospace openings.)

Three themes stand out this month. **Expansion:** Blue Origin's $600M "Project Horizon" (≈500 announced jobs) and Lockheed Martin's new Titusville missile plant (≈300 announced jobs) point to roughly 800 jobs entering the pipeline. **Federal demand:** 2,525 active federal contracts have a Brevard County place of performance, led by Navy aircraft and missile programs and NASA spaceflight; fresh FY2026 awards may signal future demand. **Wages:** Space Coast A&D pay lands at national levels for the same jobs, while running well above the local all-occupation average ($67,210) — premium pay relative to the local wage base.

Cleared talent is one of the most visible constraints in the local defense market. This month's Spotlight examines **security clearances** — one of the most visible gatekeepers in local defense hiring, and a recurring requirement in tracked postings. On the downside watch, **no major Space Coast A&D layoff (WARN) notices were filed this period**; the signal in the tracked sample is expansion-leaning even as Florida's broader job market softens.

This month at a glance[1]

Indicator	Reading	Note
Open A&D roles in the Index (23-employer sample)	**1,413**	First live count — sets the baseline; not a county-wide total
Top-5 share of tracked roles	~86%	Concentration within the Index — not the whole market
Major expansions announced	Blue Origin +500, Lockheed +300	~800 jobs in the pipeline
Avg. aerospace engineer wage (local)	$134,950	~2× the local average wage
Avg. aerospace technician wage (local)	$91,030	At national par
Active federal contracts in Brevard (FY26)	2,525	Missile / space / aircraft
Major WARN / layoff notices (Brevard A&D)	None this period	Net expansion
Hiring outlook (tracked sample)	**Expansion-leaning ▲**	1,413 roles; 2 expansions; no Brevard A&D WARN this period

Space Coast Openings Index

> *The Openings Index is this report's primary monthly metric — a same-date count of open aerospace & defense roles across a fixed list of 23 Space Coast employers, taken from official company sources.*

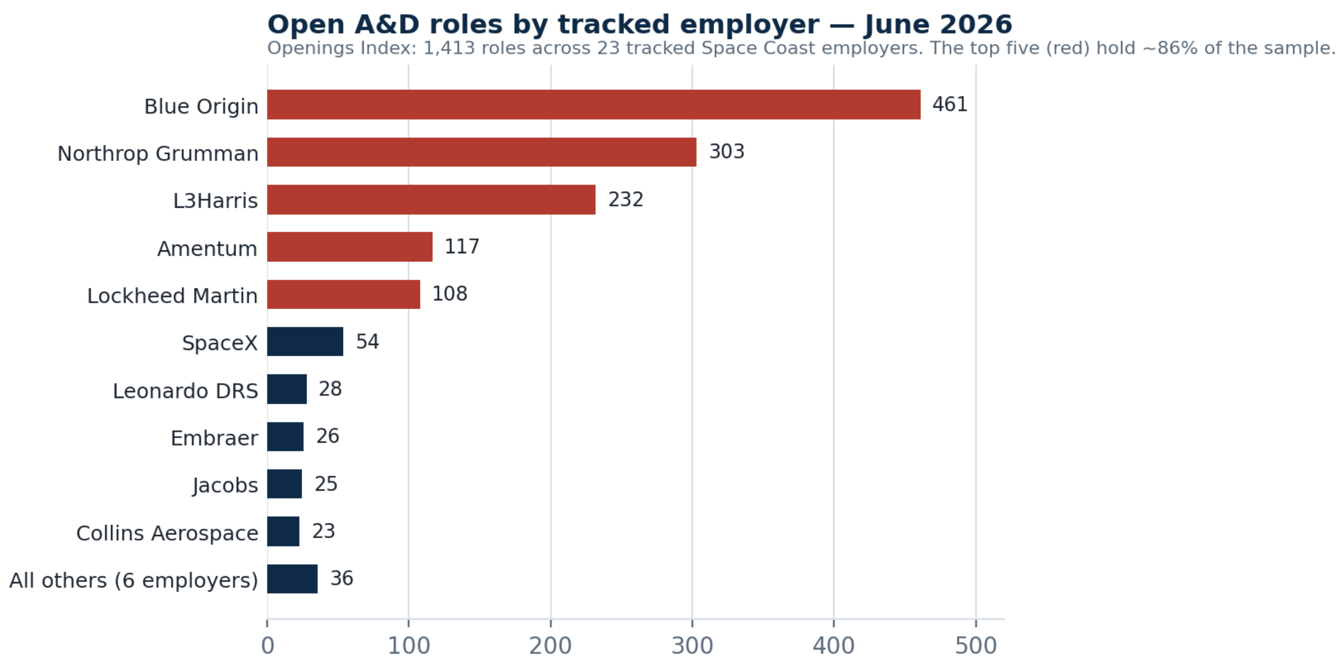
Scope note: the Index is a **fixed 23-employer sample built for month-to-month comparability — not a census of every A&D opening in Brevard County.** All share and concentration figures below describe the tracked sample, not the whole local market. Full scope detail and methodology are in the appendix.[2]

This month's count

1,413 open A&D roles across the 23 tracked employers (counted June 3–4, 2026).

This is the **first live Openings Index** — every figure below is pulled directly from each company's official careers site, counted across all Brevard County locations and cross-checked against Indeed, replacing the prototype's illustrative numbers. Because it is the first issue, this month sets the **baseline**: starting with the July issue, each Index will report the real month-over-month change against the same fixed list.

By employer (top of the list)



Employer	Open roles	Primary Space Coast site
Blue Origin	461	Merritt Island (New Glenn)
Northrop Grumman	303	Melbourne (B-21, space & missile systems)
L3Harris	232	Palm Bay + Melbourne
Amentum	117	KSC base operations + Eastern Range
Lockheed Martin	108	Cape Canaveral + Titusville
SpaceX	54	Cape Canaveral (Starship)
Leonardo DRS	28	Melbourne (electro-optical/infrared)
Embraer	26	Melbourne (executive jet assembly)
Jacobs	25	KSC (COMET ground systems)
Collins Aerospace	23	Melbourne (avionics)
Amazon Kuiper	18	Merritt Island (satellite processing)
Boeing	9	Titusville
KBR	3	Patrick SFB (Space Force support)
Leidos	3	Cape Canaveral

Employer	Open roles	Primary Space Coast site
Custom Aerospace	~2	Palm Bay
Sierra Space	1	Kennedy Space Center

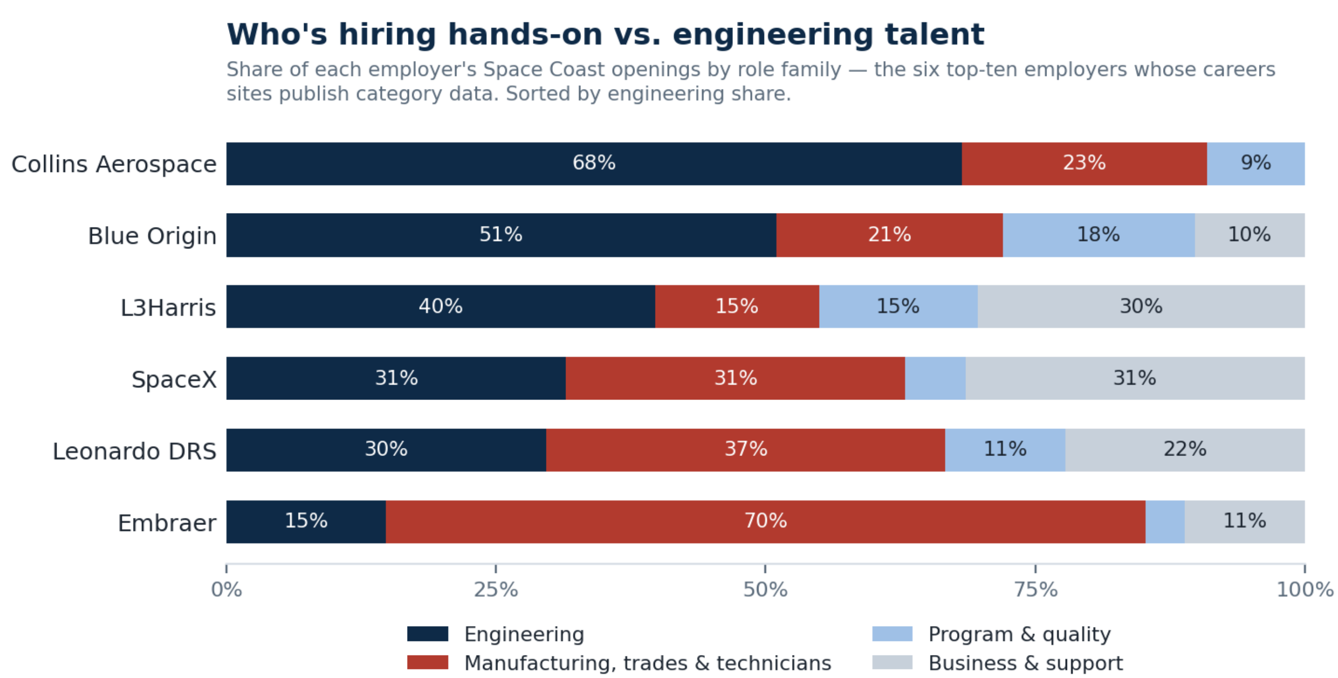
> *The remaining tracked companies (Redwire, Bechtel, and several smaller suppliers) posted no Brevard openings this month.*

What's driving the number

Within the tracked sample, the openings are concentrated at the top: **Blue Origin alone accounts for roughly a third of the Index total** (461 of 1,413), coinciding with its New Glenn manufacturing and Blue Moon production ramp. Together, the five largest tracked employers — Blue Origin, Northrop Grumman, L3Harris, Amentum, and Lockheed Martin — represent about **86% of the 1,413 roles counted** (a calculation from the figures above; again, a share of the Index, not of the whole market). Among the employers we track, this is an anchor-tenant pattern.

A second pattern: **Amentum's 117 openings** are predominantly base-operations and Eastern Range roles at KSC and Cape Canaveral — the technicians, engineers, and mission-operations staff associated with day-to-day spaceport operations. This is contract-backed demand that tends to be steadier than program-cycle-driven manufacturing hiring.

By role family



> *Six of the top ten tracked employers publish role-category data — enough to show how differently they hire. Collins Aerospace and Blue Origin skew engineering-led; Embraer is the inverse, with 70% of its openings in skilled trades (A&P mechanics, assembly, paint, avionics). For job seekers, this is a map of where your profile fits; for employers, it shows who you're bidding against for each talent pool.*

Across the employers whose sites break roles down by category, the demand splits into four broad families:

- **Engineering** is the largest category at the big primes — electrical, systems, propulsion, RF/avionics, and manufacturing engineering lead at L3Harris, Northrop, Blue Origin, Collins, and Leonardo DRS.
- **Skilled trades & technicians** are a notable local pattern. Embraer's openings are almost entirely A&P mechanics, assembly, paint, and avionics technicians; SpaceX, Blue Origin, and Amentum show large numbers of assembly, fabrication, welding, and maintenance technician postings.
- **Program & quality** — program managers, schedulers, and quality/mission-assurance specialists — appear across nearly every employer.
- **Manufacturing, operations & supply chain** round out the mix.

Likely among the hardest to fill this month: cleared engineers (several defense roles at L3Harris, Northrop, and Leidos list an active U.S. security clearance as required) and certified A&P mechanics. This reflects recurring requirements in tracked postings and Intrepidus's recruiting experience rather than measured time-to-fill data — a posting-level "hard-to-fill" measure is planned for a future issue.

Contracts & the Demand Signal

> *Federal contract awards are a directional signal of future hiring — work awarded today is staffed over the following quarters. Tracking awards performed on the Space Coast, from public federal records, is one of this report's differentiators.[3]*

Every figure below is filtered to a **Brevard County place of performance** on USASpending.gov — so we count only work performed here, not awards a local company performs out of state. Important caveat: a Brevard place of performance establishes local relevance, but it does **not** by itself prove incremental local hiring. Existing staff, subcontractors, remote workers, or non-labor spending may absorb part of the work.

The scale: 2,525 active federal contract records have a Brevard County place of performance with FY2026 activity. (Here, "contracts" means active USASpending **prime-award records** with FY2026 activity and a Brevard County place of performance; individual award records and modifications may not correspond one-to-one with standalone programs.) They span Navy aircraft, ballistic-missile production, NASA spaceflight, and the day-to-day operation of the spaceport itself.

The anchor programs (largest active contracts, by total award value)

Awardee	Program	Total award value	Where
Northrop Grumman	E-2D Advanced Hawkeye aircraft (U.S. Navy)	$8.5B + $5.4B	Melbourne
SpaceX	Commercial Crew transportation (NASA)	$3.0B	Kennedy Space Center
Lockheed Martin	Trident II D5 / D5LE2 missile production (U.S. Navy)	$2.9B	Titusville
L3Harris	NOAA & FAA ground and communications systems	$1.8B	Palm Bay / Melbourne
Amentum	KSC Base Operations & Spaceport Services (BOSS)	$608M	Kennedy Space Center
Boeing	Commercial Crew / Starliner (NASA)	$361M	Kennedy Space Center

These are multi-year, cumulative award values; they show where federal money is anchored, not single-year local spend. Their alignment with the Openings Index is notable but correlational — we have not mapped individual postings to specific programs. With that caveat: Northrop's E-2D work in Melbourne is a major local defense program and is consistent with the company's 300-plus open engineering and manufacturing roles; Lockheed's Trident work aligns with its Titusville hiring; and Amentum's base-operations openings are consistent with its KSC BOSS and Eastern Range contracts.

Freshly awarded — the forward signal

Newer awards are the part of this section that moves. Several landed in this fiscal year and point to hiring still to come:

- **Blue Origin — $78M** U.S. Space Force investment in a **Space Vehicle Processing Facility** at Cape Canaveral (awarded Oct 2025) — new infrastructure likely to require staffing.
- **Lockheed Martin — $428M** FY26 Trident production & deployed-systems support, Titusville (awarded Sep 2025).
- **Walsh Federal — $166M** Naval Ordnance Test Unit construction, Cape Canaveral (awarded Nov 2025).
- **Blue Origin — $25M ×2** NASA Commercial Lunar Payload Services task orders, Merritt Island (awarded May 2026).
- **L3Harris — $26M** FAA Surveillance & Broadcast Services II, Palm Bay (awarded Mar 2026).

Why it matters for hiring: each of these has a Brevard place of performance, so the work has a local footprint and is likely to support local labor demand — though not every contract dollar becomes a local hire. The mix also aligns with the talent the Openings Index tracks: missile and space-vehicle manufacturing (technicians, assemblers, quality), aircraft programs (systems and propulsion engineers), and spaceport operations (mission-operations and trades). Industry experience suggests some awards translate into related postings over subsequent quarters, but this report does not yet measure the local award-to-posting lag.

Out for bid now — the earliest signal

Earlier still than a new award is the **solicitation** — work the government has put out for bid but not yet awarded. These become next year's awards and, potentially, future job postings. Two local buyers stand out in the active pipeline we reviewed:

NASA Kennedy Space Center is recompeting its support-services backbone:

- **Architecture & Engineering IDIQ (SERAE 2)** — a multiple-award engineering services contract (offers due June 2026); engineering-services work is labor-intensive and may translate into local technical hiring.
- **Fire Services Contract II** and **Protective Services Contract, South Region II** — recompetes of KSC's fire/emergency and security services, both in draft-RFP / sources-sought stage (responses due June 2026). These are staffing-heavy.

The Space Force (45th Contracting Squadron, Patrick SFB / Cape Canaveral SFS) is highly active in the local pipeline we reviewed, running everything from base support to range operations:

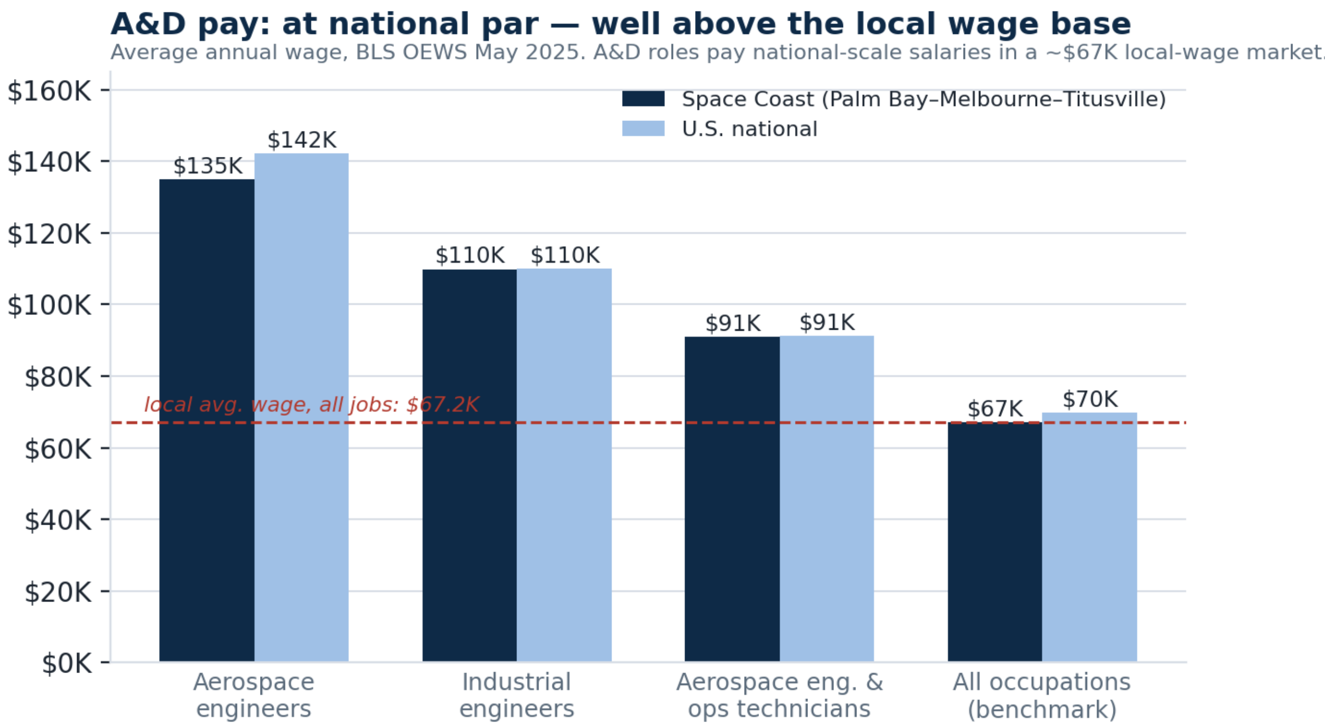
- **Instrumentation Range Support Program IV** — a major recompete of Eastern Range instrumentation and operations; a large, labor-intensive services contract (we have not estimated a headcount).
- **AFTAC** (Air Force Technical Applications Center) research solicitations — a Broad Agency Announcement and Commercial Solutions Opening for sensor/technology R&D.
- The **"Giant Voice"** mass-notification replacement and a steady stream of base-operations buys.

So why aren't the big defense primes in this list? The procurement nuance answers the natural "where's the DoD work" question. The region's largest defense programs — Northrop's E-2D Hawkeye, Lockheed's Trident, L3Harris's missile and comms work — are mostly continued through **sole-source awards and IDIQ delivery orders to the incumbent**, not open competitions. They show up in the *awarded* data above (often as multi-billion-dollar contracts) but rarely as competitive solicitations. A live example: a current NAVAIR **Manned/Unmanned Teaming (MUM-T)** effort performed in Melbourne is posted as an *intent to award sole-source* to the incumbent — a notice, not a bid. Our reading of this is that the open-solicitation pipeline likely understates prime-level defense activity, because that work is largely sole-sourced or placed on existing IDIQs rather than openly competed. Where the open pipeline is richest is where the work is competitively bid — **base operations, range support, and R&D** — which is associated with the contractor tier (Amentum, Jacobs, and peers) that accounts for a meaningful slice of the Openings Index.

What the Market Pays

> *Salary benchmarks are among the data most requested by both job seekers and hiring managers.*[4]

All figures here are the official BLS Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics for the **Palm Bay–Melbourne–Titusville metro** (May 2025, the latest release), shown as the **average annual wage** and compared to the **national** average for the same occupation.



Occupation	Local avg. wage	National avg.	Local employment
Computer hardware engineers	$149,930	—	500
Aerospace engineers	$134,950	$142,060	1,360
Electronics engineers	$125,770	—	970
Industrial engineers	$109,840	$109,900	2,030
Aerospace engineering & operations technicians	$91,030	$91,310	480
Aircraft mechanics & service technicians	$71,960	—	660
Machinists	$57,500	—	560
All occupations (local benchmark)	**$67,210**	$69,770	245,170

The real story: premium *jobs*, not just premium pay

The main wage finding is straightforward. Space Coast aerospace wages are **not** dramatically higher than the national average for the same jobs — local aerospace engineers ($134,950) actually run a touch *below* the national mean ($142,060), and aerospace technicians ($91,030) and industrial engineers ($109,840) sit essentially *at* the national average.

What makes the Space Coast a premium market is the comparison **against the local economy**. The average wage across all jobs in the metro is **$67,210**. Against that benchmark:

- An **aerospace engineer** ($134,950) earns about **2×** the local average wage.
- An **industrial engineer** ($109,840) — the region's largest engineering occupation by employment at ~2,030 jobs — earns about **1.6×** the local average.
- An **aerospace technician** ($91,030) earns about **35% more** than the typical local worker.
- The premium is not uniform across the trades, however: an **aircraft mechanic** ($71,960) sits modestly above the local average, while a **machinist** ($57,500) sits *below* it. The clearest local premium is for engineers and aerospace technicians.

The takeaway, stated plainly: A&D professionals here earn national-scale salaries while the surrounding cost of living is set by a roughly $67,000 local wage base. For relocating engineers and technicians, that gap between a national paycheck and a regional cost base is a central part of the recruiting case.

vs. national — the benchmark line

The U.S. average wage is **$142,060 for aerospace engineers** and **$91,310 for aerospace engineering & operations technicians** (BLS, May 2025). The Space Coast pays right in line on both — competitive enough to recruit nationally, in a lower-cost Florida market.

This Month on the Space Coast

> *A fast-moving roundup of the developments that move the local labor market — refreshed every issue so the report always has news, not just numbers.[5]*

Hiring & expansion

- **Blue Origin — $600M "Project Horizon."** Blue Origin is building an **830,000-square-foot facility** at its Merritt Island campus to ramp New Glenn upper-stage production, an expansion the state says will add ~**500 jobs at an average salary of $98,000**. The company has scaled to roughly **4,000 employees** across 11 Brevard/Orange sites and over $2.3B invested in Florida. Blue Origin tops the Openings Index at 461 open roles this month; this is consistent with a broader Florida ramp, though the Index does not map each posting to Project Horizon.

- **Lockheed Martin — Titusville missile plant.** Lockheed's **$140M, 225,000-sq-ft** facility for **Trident II D5LE2** submarine-missile components continues build-out through 2026 (operational target 2027), expected to add ~**300 jobs at an average $89,000**, plus up to 100 Navy personnel. It's the backbone of Lockheed's growing Titusville footprint.
- **Space Force — STARCOM builds out its Patrick SFB headquarters.** The Space Force's Space Training and Readiness Command (STARCOM), permanently headquartered at Patrick, opened a **$28M headquarters annex** in March (workspace for 210+ personnel) and launched a **400+ position civilian hiring surge** spanning cybersecurity, data science, intelligence analysis, modeling & simulation, and program management — with hundreds of personnel relocating from Colorado through 2027. These are federal civil-service roles, so they sit outside the Openings Index by design, but they draw on the same local cleared-talent pool the region's contractors compete for. (Not to be confused with U.S. Space Command, whose combatant-command HQ is relocating to Huntsville, AL.)

Contracts in the news

The federal pipeline stayed active (full detail in *Contracts & the Demand Signal*): a new **$428M FY26 Trident** production award to Lockheed (Titusville) and a **$78M Space Force award to Blue Origin** for a Space Vehicle Processing Facility at the Cape both landed this fiscal year — awards that may signal future hiring.

Launch cadence

The Eastern Range recorded a high cadence in 2025 — **109 orbital launches**, per Space Launch Delta 45. Launch activity has remained high in 2026, though this issue does not publish a year-to-date count. The range also supported **Artemis II** — NASA's first crewed lunar mission in more than 50 years — launched from Kennedy Space Center on **April 1, 2026**. Launch tempo is generally associated with demand for integration, ground-systems, mission-operations, and trades roles — the kind of work concentrated in the contractor tier of the Openings Index — though this issue does not measure that relationship directly.

Layoff / WARN watch

No major Space Coast aerospace or defense layoff (WARN) notices were identified in Brevard County this period. The dominant signal in the tracked sample remains expansion-leaning — Blue Origin and Lockheed have both announced hundreds of jobs, and L3Harris remains one of the region's largest active hirers (232 open roles, third on the Openings Index behind Blue Origin and Northrop Grumman).

For honest context, the backdrop beyond the Space Coast is softer: Florida recorded roughly **60 WARN notices affecting ~4,756 workers in 2026 (through April)**, and statewide initial jobless claims were up about **52% year-over-year** — but those filings are concentrated in retail, logistics, and finance, not Brevard A&D. Worth watching are corporate-level cost programs at two primes — L3Harris's multi-year "LHX NeXt" efficiency drive and Boeing's ~300 defense-division cuts (announced February 2026, nationwide) — though neither has produced a Brevard A&D mass-layoff filing, and L3Harris continues to hire locally on net.

Monthly Spotlight

THIS MONTH: Security Clearances on the Space Coast

> *Each issue features one rotating deep-dive on a topic that shapes local A&D hiring. This month: the security clearance — one of the most visible gatekeepers in Space Coast defense hiring.[6]*

People think of the Space Coast as NASA country, but a large share of the work here is defense and intelligence — and that work is classified. Across this month's tracked postings, "active clearance required" or "clearance preferred" appears across multiple defense-side employers — enough that cleared roles stand out as **among the harder categories to fill** locally. (This is an observation from recurring posting requirements and recruiter experience, not a measured statistic. A **posting-level clearance breakdown** — counting how many tracked defense postings require Secret, TS/SCI, or a polygraph, or list a clearance as preferred — is planned for a future issue; we have deferred it rather than publish unverified counts.) On many of these jobs the clearance is frequently a decisive factor in who gets hired and how fast.

First, an important distinction. Not every Space Coast role needs a security clearance. Most NASA and civil-space work requires a **Public Trust** position designation — a background suitability check, not a classified clearance. The clearance requirement comes from the **defense and intelligence** side: the U.S. Navy and Space Force programs, missile and sensor work, and range and base operations. That's where the bottleneck lives.

The ladder, in plain English:

- **Public Trust** (NASA, many KSC support roles) — suitability vetting, no classified access.
- **Secret** — a common level across defense-prime postings involving missile, aircraft, and related programs (L3Harris, Northrop, Lockheed).
- **Top Secret**, often with **SCI** (Sensitive Compartmented Information) and sometimes a **polygraph** — the intelligence tier. Our own data found this at the sharp end of the local market: every one of Leidos's open Cape Canaveral roles this month required **TS/SCI with polygraph**, and KBR's Space Force STARCOM roles at Patrick SFB required **TS/SCI**.

Why cleared talent is so scarce — and so valuable. Two structural facts drive it:

1. **You can't get a clearance on your own.** A clearance must be *sponsored* by an employer who has a job that requires it. That's a genuine chicken-and-egg problem for newcomers — you need the job to get cleared, and many jobs want you cleared to get the job.
2. **Clearances take far longer than the official goals suggest.** The government's statutory targets are 40 days for Secret and 75 for Top Secret — but DCSA's actual reported processing times (Q1 FY2026, fastest 90% of industry cases) are roughly **156 days for Secret and 227 days for Top Secret**. Layer on adjudication, SCI access (which can add months beyond the Top Secret itself), polygraph scheduling, and employer onboarding — each a separate step — and the recruiting reality is often **six months to a year, sometimes longer**. Candidates and employers should plan around the actuals, not the targets.

Put those together and the implication is straightforward: a candidate who **already holds an active clearance can typically start much sooner**, while an uncleared candidate means six months to a year of investigation time and cost. As a result, employers prioritize candidates with active clearances — which helps explain why "active clearance" recurs across defense-side postings in the tracked sample. (We have not measured a cleared-versus-uncleared wage premium; establishing one would require compensation data this report does not yet collect.)

One favorable development — the system is slowly improving. Under **Trusted Workforce 2.0**, the government has shifted from periodic reinvestigations to **continuous vetting** — automated, ongoing checks — with more than **3.8 million cleared personnel** now enrolled; DCSA cut its investigation backlog roughly **65% over the past year**, and Top Secret processing times fell again in the latest quarter. The honest caveat: timelines remain well above the statutory targets, adjudication wait times rose last quarter, and industry observers describe a "two-speed system" — clean, well-sponsored cases move while complex ones stall. The durable good news for cleared professionals: a clearance is more likely to stay *current* and to transfer cleanly between employers through **reciprocity** — making an active clearance one of the most portable, valuable assets a Space Coast candidate can carry.

What it means if you're hiring or job-hunting here:

- *Job seekers:* in Intrepidus's recruiting experience, one common way in is a role that can sponsor a clearance, including some base-operations and contractor roles. Keep your financial and personal record clean (common risk areas in adjudication include financial concerns and foreign contacts, per DCSA's adjudicative guidelines), and remember that a *current* clearance is portable; an *active* one is a significant advantage.
- *Hiring managers:* budget for the timeline. "Clearable" candidates — U.S. citizens with a clean record who can pass an investigation — plus **interim clearances** can bridge the gap, but the wait is real, so the cost of an open cleared requisition is often measured in quarters rather than weeks.

The Space Coast has roles at every vetting level — Public Trust at the NASA gate, Secret across the missile and aircraft lines, and TS/SCI at the intelligence and range edges. Understanding which one a job needs — and how long it takes to get — can be the difference between a fast hire and a months-long vacancy.

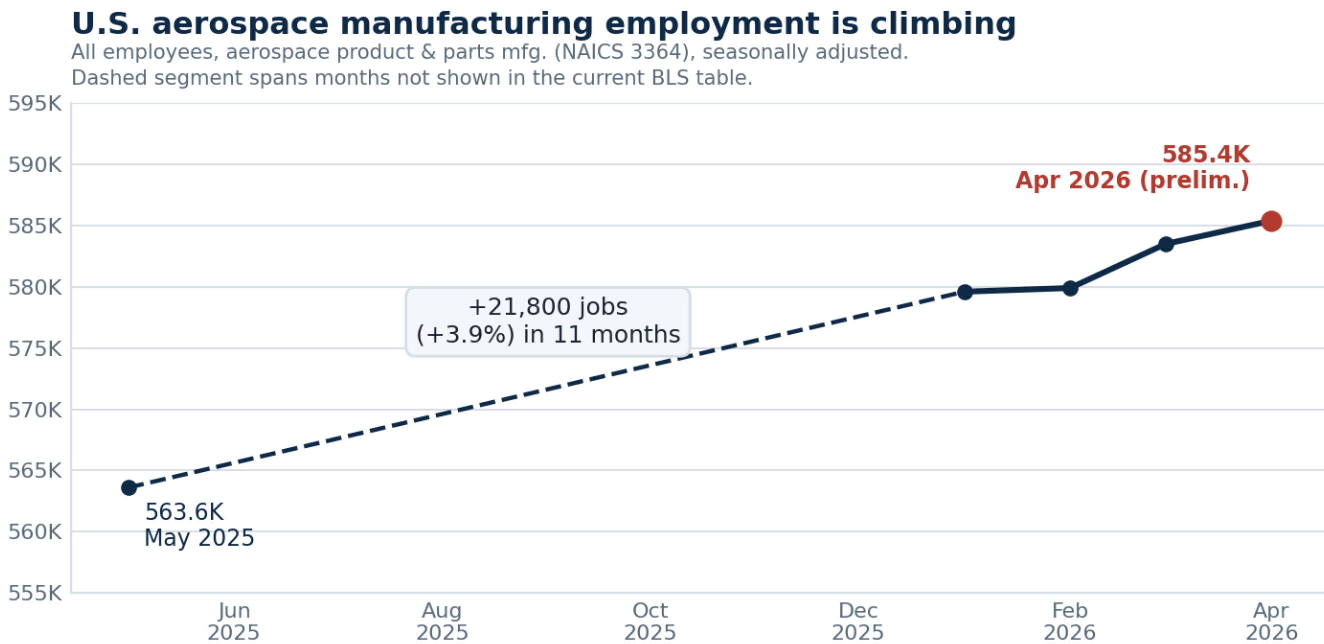
National Context: U.S. vs. the Space Coast

> *The Space Coast is a small slice of a very large national industry. Setting the local market against the national backdrop suggests what makes Brevard distinctive: it pays A&D occupations well above the local wage base, it sits in the path of federal defense spending, and — on the evidence of this year's announced expansions — it is adding capacity.[7]*

U.S. aerospace & defense supports **more than 2.2 million jobs** (about **914,000 direct**) and generated **$995 billion** in total economic activity in 2024, paying **$257 billion** in labor income — an average of roughly **$115,000 per job, about 56% above the national average** (AIA 2025 Facts & Figures). More than half of *national* direct A&D employment is in defense and national security; that segment is also prominent on the Space Coast, though we have not separately quantified the local defense-versus-commercial split.

On the federal demand side: Congress enacted **$839 billion** in FY2026 Department of Defense appropriations (with the all-in national-defense topline above $900B), and the procurement emphasis on **missiles and space** aligns with visible Brevard strengths — Navy missiles in Titusville, space vehicles at the Cape, sensors and aircraft in Melbourne.

The national trend line



The national industry is hiring, not just holding: U.S. aerospace manufacturing employment has added roughly **21,800 jobs (+3.9%) since May 2025**, reaching a preliminary **585,400 in April 2026** (BLS). The Space Coast's expansion-leaning signal this month — 1,413 tracked openings and ~800 announced expansion jobs — sits inside a national industry that is itself growing.

The benchmark snapshot

Metric	National (U.S.)	Space Coast	Takeaway
A&D direct employment	~914,000	Not published*	Local count omitted — see note
Aerospace engineer pay (avg)	$142,060	$134,950	Near national par; ~2× the local average wage

Metric	National (U.S.)	Space Coast	Takeaway
Aerospace technician pay (avg)	$91,310	$91,030	At national par; above the local wage base
Avg labor income per A&D job	~$115,000	Above the $67,210 local all-occupation avg	A&D pay sits above the local wage base
Federal demand backdrop	~$839B FY26 DoD approps	Missile / space awards	Aligns with visible Brevard strengths

> **A figure near 14,800 (2023) is sometimes cited for Brevard aerospace-aviation employment; it is omitted here because we are not able to attribute it to a named, current source.*

Bottom line: the region pays national-scale A&D salaries against a local wage base of about $67,000; its missile-and-space work aligns with current federal budget priorities; and this year's announced expansions (Blue Origin, Lockheed) point to continued capacity growth. Taken together, these read as favorable conditions for recruiting and relocation — an interpretation we will keep testing against the monthly data.

Get the Report Every Month

This report is published monthly by **Intrepidus Talent Solutions**, a specialist aerospace and defense staffing firm serving Florida's Space Coast. We place the engineers, technicians, and cleared professionals the region's top employers depend on.

Subscribe free to receive each monthly issue — and reach out any time for hiring support or a confidential talent-market consultation at **intrepidus-ts.com**.

Appendix & Methodology

How this report stays fresh

Most foundational data — employment, wages, total industry size — changes slowly. To stay current without manufacturing false movement, the report is built in two layers on a hybrid schedule:

- **Fresh layer** — the Openings Index, contract awards and pipeline, news roundup, launch cadence, and the rotating Spotlight. These change every issue and lead the report.
- **Backbone layer** — employment, wages, and national benchmarks. These anchor credibility and are refreshed when official data is released, not forced monthly.

A light **monthly pulse** runs every month; a deeper **quarterly flagship** (BLS-anchored) lands in September, December, March, and June.

Methodology & sources

- **Openings Index — a defined-sample** metric: open roles counted from a fixed list of **23 named Space Coast A&D employers** (anchors, suppliers, and base/range contractors), pulled from each company's **official careers site** across all Brevard County locations on a fixed date (June 3–4, 2026), then **cross-checked against Indeed** to catch missed locations. The same list is used every month so the trend is comparable; it is reviewed quarterly. The Index is **not** a census of all county-wide A&D openings — NASA and Space Force civil-service/military roles, third-party staffing listings, and employers not on the list are excluded by design. Share figures (e.g., the top-five ~86%) describe the tracked sample, not the whole market.
- **Wages** — BLS Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics (OEWS), May 2025, Palm Bay–Melbourne–Titusville metro and national, shown as annual mean (average) wages on a like-for-like basis.
- **Contracts** — USASpending.gov prime awards filtered to **Brevard County place of performance**; pre-award solicitations from SAM.gov active notices. Award values are total (multi-year) obligations, not single-year local spend. A Brevard place of performance establishes local relevance but does not by itself prove incremental local hiring.
- **Layoff** / **WARN watch** — official Florida Department of Commerce WARN filings.
- **National context** — AIA 2025 Facts & Figures; U.S. DoD FY2026 appropriations; BLS national OEWS.
- **Evidence standard** — role counts, wages, WARN filings, and federal award values are reported as observed data from public sources. Connections between awards, solicitations, and hiring are treated as directional indicators unless individual postings can be tied directly to a specific program. Where a figure is our own count (the Openings Index) or an estimate, it is labeled as such.

Section notes & sources (footnotes)

[1] **The Monthly Pulse.** This is the first issue built on live data. Figures are drawn from public sources (company career sites, USASpending.gov, SAM.gov, BLS, DCSA, Florida WARN filings); where a number is our own count — chiefly the Openings Index — or an estimate, it is labeled. Starting next month, the Openings Index will report real month-over-month change against this baseline.

[2] **Openings Index — scope & method.** The Index is a sample, not a census: open roles counted from a fixed, named list of 23 Space Coast A&D employers (anchor primes, key suppliers, and base/range contractors), pulled from each company's official careers site, filtered to Brevard County locations (Melbourne, Palm Bay, Titusville, Cape Canaveral, Merritt Island and nearby), on a single fixed date — held constant so the month-to-month change is real and comparable. It excludes the long tail of smaller firms and subcontractors not on the list, third-party staffing-agency listings, and NASA and Space Force civil-service/military postings (we count their commercial contractors instead) — so the headline count is not a county-wide total. Every share and concentration figure (e.g., the top-five ~86%) describes the tracked sample, not the whole local market. Multi-location postings where the Space Coast is one of several sites are included as

posted. The role-mix chart covers the six top-ten employers whose careers sites publish category data (Northrop Grumman and Lockheed Martin do not expose per-category counts); L3Harris's mix is from its Melbourne/Palm Bay category detail, and Blue Origin's from its site's category counts, which can overlap slightly. The company list is reviewed quarterly; see *Methodology & sources* above.

[3] **Contracts & the Demand Signal.** We report awards as observed public data; the connection to local job postings is a reasonable interpretation, not something this issue measures directly (a common industry rule of thumb puts the award-to-hiring lag at roughly two to three quarters; this report does not yet measure that lag against local posting history). Source: USASpending.gov, prime contract awards with Brevard County, FL place of performance, FY2026. KSC awards appear under the "Orlando, FL 32899" ZIP but are physically performed at Kennedy Space Center in Brevard. Values shown are total award obligations (multi-year), not single-year spend. Pre-award solicitations from SAM.gov Contract Opportunities, active notices, FL place of performance; SAM.gov's place-of-performance data for not-yet-awarded solicitations is coarser than USASpending's award data — many notices list only a state — so the solicitations shown are a verified, representative sample of local-agency activity rather than an exhaustive count.

[4] **What the Market Pays.** Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics (OEWS), May 2025, Palm Bay–Melbourne–Titusville, FL metropolitan area and national; data.bls.gov/oes, extracted June 4, 2026. Figures are annual mean (average) wages, compared on a like-for-like basis. (Note: this corrects the prototype's "~28% technician premium," which compared the local average to the national median; on a like-for-like basis the local premium is vs. the local cost base, not vs. national A&D peers.)

[5] **This Month on the Space Coast.** Sources: Florida Department of Commerce / FloridaJobs WARN filings; Space Florida and Space Coast EDC expansion announcements; Eastern Range / Space Launch Delta 45 launch records; U.S. Space Force / STARCOM public releases (April 2026) on the Patrick SFB headquarters annex and civilian hiring surge. The WARN watch is monitored against official Florida filings each month.

[6] **Monthly Spotlight.** Sources: Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) industry processing times as reported at the Q1 FY2026 NISPPAC meeting (fastest 90% of cases: ~156 days Secret, ~227 days Top Secret); statutory timeliness goals per the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (40/75 days); Trusted Workforce 2.0 reporting on continuous vetting enrollment and backlog (2026); clearance-level definitions per federal personnel-vetting tiers; local clearance requirements drawn from this month's tracked job postings. No company-provided information was used.

[7] **National Context.** Sources: Aerospace Industries Association, 2025 Facts & Figures (2024 data); U.S. DoD FY2026 appropriations (P.L. 119-75); BLS OEWS May 2025 (national and Palm Bay–Melbourne–Titusville); BLS Current Employment Statistics, all employees, aerospace product & parts manufacturing (NAICS 3364), seasonally adjusted, May 2026 release (April 2026 figure preliminary; trend chart shows the months published in the current BLS Table B-1a); Brevard County A&D employment estimate withheld pending named-source confirmation. National and local wage figures are both annual mean (average) wages on a like-for-like basis.

The tracked company universe (23)

Anchors: Blue Origin, Northrop Grumman, L3Harris, Lockheed Martin, SpaceX, Leonardo DRS, Embraer, Collins Aerospace (RTX), Amazon Kuiper, Boeing. **Suppliers/specialists:** Redwire, Sierra Space, Custom Aerospace, Space Coast Composite, Space Perspective, Beyond Gravity, Rocket Lab, Terran Orbital. **Base/ range contractors:** Amentum, Jacobs, KBR, Leidos, Bechtel. *(Under quarterly review: Rocket Lab and Terran Orbital — no current Brevard site; Space Perspective — dormant; Beyond Gravity — U.S. operations now Decatur, AL.)*

Intrepidus Talent Solutions • intrepidus-ts.com — specialist aerospace & defense staffing for Florida's Space Coast