

AEROSPACE & DEFENSE

South Central Coast Priority Sector Snapshot



AIRCRAFT, SPACE, AND MARINE SYSTEMS



DEFENSE MANUFACTURING



DEFENSE OPERATIONS AND MISSION SUPPORT



MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR SERVICES



R&D IN AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE

Regional Impact

\$7.5B

Contribution to Gross
Regional Product, 2025

23,145

South Central Coast
Jobs, 2025

\$114,997

Average Annual
Regional Wages, 2025

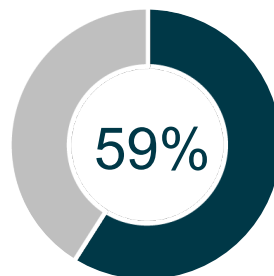
93%

Regional Employers
Interested in Work-Based
Learning Partnerships

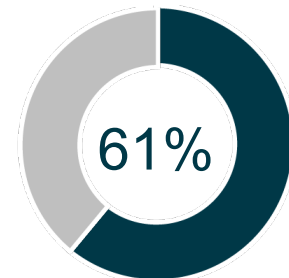
Aerospace & Defense Sector Definition

The Aerospace & Defense sector encompasses R&D, manufacturing, operations, maintenance, repair, and other professional services supporting aircraft, space, and marine systems, components, and technologies.

The Aerospace & Defense sector has been designated an “Accelerate” sector under California Jobs First due to its projected growth and its strategic importance to the South Central Coast’s innovation ecosystem.



EMPLOYERS PREDICTING
12-MONTH JOB GROWTH



EMPLOYERS PREDICTING
3-YEAR JOB GROWTH

Assets and Demand Drivers



VANDENBERG
SPACE FORCE BASE



EDWARDS AIR
FORCE BASE



NASA RESEARCH
CENTERS



SPACE VANDENBERG INITIATIVE



BIOCOMMUNICATIONS AND
BIOMEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES



RETIREMENTS OF EXISTING
WORKFORCE

AEROSPACE & DEFENSE

South Central Coast Priority Sector Snapshot



Emerging Regional Skills Needs



Data Analysis



Troubleshooting and Diagnostics



Precision Assembly



Precision Measurement



Blueprint Reading



AI Literacy and Digital Skills

Community College Investment Priorities

Community colleges can accelerate growth in key middle-skill occupations requiring less than a four-year degree at entry.

Occupation	Jobs, 2025.Q3	Advancement Potential *	Automation Potential **
HIGH PRIORITY			
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	333	*	Moderate
CNC Tool Operators and Programmers	401	High	High
Electrical & Electronic Assemblers	393	Moderate	High
MEDIUM PRIORITY			
Aircraft Assemblers	105	Moderate	High
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	137	Moderate	High
Machinists	400	Moderate	High
Welders	277	Moderate	High

* BW Research's Job Advancement Index measures workers' potential to advance to higher-paying job opportunities. Advancement potential is not applicable for occupations already paying high wages.

** BW Research's Job Automation Index measures the proportion of skills and tasks that can be automated within a particular occupation.

204

Regional Aerospace & Defense Training Programs, 2026

65%

Regional Training Programs Offered by Community Colleges, 2026

47%

Regional Employers Partnering with Community Colleges to Recruit, Hire, or Train

Data Sources

- U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (2000-2025),
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2025)
- O*NET Online 30.0 Database (2025)
- JobsEQ (2026)
- Regional employer survey (n=99, 2026)
- Regional stakeholder interviews (2026)
- Training provider websites (2026)