

GREEN IS GOLD

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GE Capital Aviation Services (Gecas) is best known as one of the two biggest airplane leasing companies. But it also operates an airframe dismantling operation in Greenwood, Miss., and has become the latest member of the Aircraft Fleet Recycling Association to achieve accreditation in AFRA's Best Management Practices program.

The best practices effort is independently audited, covers a three-year program and costs \$8,000 to complete, says Deputy Executive Director Bill Carberr, who wears another hat as head of Boeing's environmental performance efforts. The association concentrates on such issues as land and ground water pollution and safe handling of toxic materials. The four-year-old AFRA has 41 members, including 11 with the Best Management seal of approval. Gecas is the first leasing company in that fold. Bombardier became the first original equipment manufacturer to make the grade in February when its CRJ100/200 teardown operation in Bridgeport, W.Va., and Tucson, Ariz., were certified.

AFRA membership is heavy in parts distribution, airplane storage and teardowns, with about half its membership in Europe—mostly the U.K.—and the rest in the U.S. Cumulatively, they have scrapped 9,000 aircraft and account for 50% of the parts fleet in the world's aircraft. Last year, when aluminum prices were down, they scrapped 18,000 tons of aircraft aluminum, some at AeroTurbine, an aircraft maintenance center based in Goodyear, Ariz. (below). Gecas has a fleet of more than 1,800 commercial aircraft, which places it in the unusual position of handling aircraft transactions from procurement to financing, as well as engine and parts management.



Photo Credit: William Carberr