

Spirit cargo set to ship to France

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MOREHEAD CITY — The state port here is set today to ship to France the first components produced at Spirit Aero-systems, a tenant at the Global Transpark near Kinston.

Meanwhile, a steady stream of log trucks has been flowing for the past few weeks through the gates at the N.C. Port of Morehead City, where long-dormant but newly refurbished woodchip-handling equipment recently cranked up operations again under the management of Cogent Fibre, a privately held company that is the leading producer and exporter of pine wood chips on the East Coast.

The recent activity – new lines of business for the port – is expected to continue and both operations appear to be running smoothly, said port operations director Rex Edwards.

He said the Spirit shipment, which arrived Wednesday afternoon, was a successful test of the logistics involved in moving large aircraft components for the wide-body Airbus A350 from the Kinston facility to the port.

“Everything went real good with no problems and we’re ready for the ship tomorrow,” Mr. Edwards said on Thursday. “Spirit was well satisfied with the move.”

The shipment included various smaller parts packaged in the container meant for the carbon-fiber fuselage section that are being manufactured in Kinston and will eventually be shipped to France for final assembly.

The Spirit components arrived at about 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday on a tractor-trailer rig operated by Magnum Trucking of Wilson that departed the GTP about 9 a.m. that day. The large box – 82 feet long by 19 feet wide by 14 feet tall – was to be loaded today aboard the 633-foot cargo ship Rickmers Dalian.

“It’s just coming in to pick up that one shipment,” Mr. Edwards said.

Magnum Trucking specializes in extra-large, heavy loads, Mr. Edwards said.

“For them it was a pretty routine day,” he said.

Sightings of log trucks at the port gates have also become routine as timber harvesters in the area feed Cogent Fibre’s new wood-chipping operation at the port.

The logs began arriving during the first week of April with chipping operations beginning the following week.

The goal is to amass 40,000 tons of the chips for export by the end of June.

Established in 2005, Cogent Fibre produces wood chips from what it calls the necessary tree thinning of private timberlands in the Southeast for use in the manufacture of paper pulp, particleboard, medium-density fiberboard and for the generation of clean, renewable energy in biomass-fired power plants.

The company says it has exported more than 2 million metric tons of pine wood chips, mainly from its facility in Savannah, Ga., and is the leading wood chip exporter on the East Coast. The company has offices in Stamford, Conn., Istanbul, Turkey and Ontario, Canada.

The firm has clients in Wales, Austria, Italy, Turkey and China. It has two wood chip vessels under long-term charter, according to the company’s website.

The rehab of the woodchip facility in Morehead City was the result of a \$1.5 million joint venture between the State Ports Authority and a marine contracting firm.