On Monday, March 21, 2016, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls visited the Safran Aéro Composite plant in Commercy, the Lorraine region of eastern France, where he was welcomed by Philippe Petitcolin, Chief Executive Officer of Safran. He then talked extensively with plant employees.

The Prime Minister's visit came more than a year after the visit by French President François Hollande, who had officially inaugurated the Safran Aéro Composites plant in Commercy at the end of 2014. Manuel Valls, accompanied by Philippe Petitcolin and local elected officials, first made a quick tour of the plant. In particular, he was introduced to the manufacturing process for the fan blades on the new LEAP engine, using 3D woven composites and resin transfer molding (RTM). He was also able to gauge the heavy investments made in these new-generation industrial facilities.

After the visit, Manuel Valls and Philippe Petitcolin met with about 60 employees from Safran and U.S. partner Albany International to answer their questions concerning employment. The Prime Minister was particularly keen to hear about their training programs, both in the United States, at Commercy's twin plant in Rochester, New Hampshire, and at the Aeronautical Skills Center at Henri Vogt high school in Commercy, a program that includes Safran as partner. With support from the local employment office, this center took an active role in recruiting employees for the plant. Philippe Petitcolin emphasized Safran’s corporate social responsibility: as an employer Safran helps energize the employment picture in a region that has experienced economic difficulties. Among the 191 permanent employees hired by Safran and Albany, 168 are from the Lorraine region. By 2018, the plant will have some 400 employees.

Along with its twin plant in Rochester, New Hampshire, Safran Aéro Composite will be producing 50 fan blades and tee fan cases a day for the CFM International LEAP engine by 2020. In February 2016 Safran announced plans for a third Safran/Albany plant, in Querétaro, Mexico. Production at this new plant is scheduled to start at the end of 2017.