



F-35 Lightning II Program

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F-35C CARRIER VARIANT CONDUCTS FIRST AMRAAM WEAPONS SEPARATION TEST

Fort Worth, Texas --- The AIM-120 advanced medium range air-to-air missile (AMRAAM) was released for the first time Nov. 4 from a F-35C carrier variant (CV) fighter aircraft operating from Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md.

The test pilot, Lt. Col. Patrick Moran, released the AIM-120 radar-seeking missile from the F-35C's internal weapons bay, which successfully separated itself from the aircraft over restricted military range airspace.

The AIM-120 AMRAAM (Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile) is a radar-guided air-to-air missile and is the U.S. military's standard air intercept missile carried on tactical fighter aircraft. The AIM-120 is a beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile (BVRAAM) capable of all-weather, day-and-night operations, and is powered by a solid-propellant rocket motor. The F-35C air-to-air missile weapon separation test occurred less than a week after an F-35A (AF-6) variant's successful air-to-air weapons test of a AIM-120 AMRAAM on Oct. 30 against an aerial target off the California coast and an F-35B (BF-2) successfully released a 500-pound Guided Bomb Unit-12 (GBU-12) Paveway II laser-guided bomb over a test range at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. on Oct 29.

The F-35 Lightning II is a 5th generation fighter, combining advanced stealth with fighter speed and agility, fully fused sensor information, network-enabled operations and advanced sustainment. Three distinct variants of the F-35 will replace the A-10 and F-16 for the U.S. Air Force, the F/A-18 for the U.S. Navy, the F/A-18 and AV-8B Harrier for the U.S. Marine Corps, and a variety of fighters for at least 10 other countries.



(Lockheed Martin Photo by Michael D. Jackson)