



# F-35 Lightning II Program

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## F-35 PILOT CADRE GROWS TO 100 AS TRAINING RAMPS UP AT EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE

**EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.,** – Maj. Robert Miller became the 100th pilot to fly the F-35 Lightning II when he took to the skies above Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., for a training flight on July 9.

Miller's 90-minute familiarization flight included normal operations for aircraft handling and landings in an F-35A fighter. The flight followed academic and simulator instruction at Eglin Air Force Base's Integrated Training Center, which provides pilot and maintainer training for the three F-35 variants.



100<sup>th</sup> Pilot Maj Robert Miller  
(Lockheed Martin photo by SSgt Nicholas Egebrecht)

"It was great to get airborne today. The jet handles well and is very easy to fly. I'm looking forward to testing the combat capabilities of the F-35 over the next few years at Edwards," said Miller.

Miller, currently assigned to the 31st Test and Evaluation Squadron at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., has spent 11 years in the Air Force and has flown more than 1,300 hours in the F-16, including 369 combat hours. He joins an experienced cadre of F-35 pilots among the U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy, the United Kingdom and industry.

"Maj. Miller is representative of the highly-trained pilots populating the F-35 community," said Col. Todd Canterbury, commander of Eglin's 33d Fighter Wing. "This milestone is significant because it shows the program is maturing rapidly and highlights the successful implementation of a world-class training program and development of the F-35 Lightning II for the combat air forces. We are excited to have produced the 100th F-35 Lightning II pilot."

The joint service partners at Eglin Air Force Base have flown 2,292 F-35 hours and have 28 aircraft assigned, representing the largest fleet of F-35s in the world. Approximately 100 pilots and 2,200 maintainers will be qualified annually through the F-35 Lightning II Training System at the base to support initial operational capability targets. The training system is also operational at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

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.