



F-35 Lightning II Program

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F - 3 5 C O N T I N U E S O N P A T H T O W A R D F U L L W E A P O N S C E R T I F I C A T I O N

Washington D.C. - All three variants of the F-35 Lightning II continue on a path toward full weapons certification by successfully completing numerous milestones during the previous four months. Highlights included validating 2B weapons software and successfully executing several weapons separation and engagement tests. The most recent accomplishments are in support of the first military service Initial Operational Capability (IOC) declaration by the U.S. Marine Corps in July.

The program also surpassed 25,000 combined flight hours in December with F-35 military fleet aircraft (16,200 hours) nearly doubling the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) test aircraft (8,950) hours. Comprehensive flight test on the F-35A variant GAU-22 25mm gun system is scheduled to begin mid-year at Edwards AFB, Calif., and will include ground fire tests, muzzle calibration, flight test integration and in-flight operational tests. The 25mm missionized gun pod carried externally, centerline mounted on the F-35B and F-35C also begins testing this year to meet U.S. service's desired schedule for full warfighting capability software known as 3F. The 3F software is currently planned for delivery with the Low Rate Initial Production nine (LRIP 9) U.S. aircraft in 2017.

"The weapons development program continues to track forward on the plan laid out by the Technical Baseline Review approved in 2010," said Lt. Gen. Chris Bogdan, F-35 Program Executive Officer. "All weapons tests needed for 2B software, the software the U.S. Marine Corps will use to declare IOC, is complete and will be ready to go for their combat capability certification."

Specific F-35 Flight Test accomplishments during the past four months include:

- First F-35 day and night Mission Effectiveness Close Air Support (CAS) flights completing 2B CAS testing (Oct. 21)
- Completion of live fire testing on an F-35B ground test article. (Sept. 9)
- Successful first (Sept. 9) and night flight (Sept. 18) with the Generation III helmet-mounted display with 3iR4 software
- Completion of final buffet, loads and high-angle-of-attack testing required for F-35A Block 2B software (Nov. 18)
- Successfully launched an AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) from an F-35C, marking the last weapon separation test needed for Block 2B software (Sept. 30)
- F-35C set a record for 17 sorties in a day for a single F-35 aircraft (Nov.5) and a record 22 sorties with F-35C aircraft CF-3 and CF-5 combined aboard USS Nimitz for F-35C Sea Trials off the coast of San Diego (Nov. 3-14)
- First separation test of a GBU-39 Small Diameter Bomb, a 250-lb. precision-guided glide weapon (Oct. 21) and multi-separation test (Nov. 20)
- First F-35 external flutter tests flown with the AIM-132 Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile (ASRAAM) (Oct. 29) and Paveway IV missiles (Nov. 13)
- Three Weapon(s) Delivery Accuracy (WDA) live fire events completed in a week. The F-35 employed two AIM-120 AMRAAMs and one Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM). These events included the first supersonic-guided missile launch and the first JDAM release on target coordinates generated from the Electro-Optical Targeting System (EOTS) (Nov. 18-25)

F-35 Flight Test year-in-review videos from Edwards AFB, California

<http://vimeo.com/Imaeronautics/review/116796750/1f6cfd8541>, and NAS Patuxent River, Maryland

<http://vimeo.com/Imaeronautics/review/116800824/34c6e3be8f> are available for download.