



F-35 Lightning II Program

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Luke F-35s Return to Flight Under Temporary Safety Restrictions

Hours after the F-35A made its flight show debut in Paris; the Air Force announced the 55 F-35As that were grounded at Luke AFB, Ariz., since June 9 will return to flight on June 21. Officials still have not determined what caused five physiological events to occur during flights from May 2-June 8, though "specific concerns were eliminated as possible causes, including maintenance and aircrew flight equipment procedures," according to an Air Force release. The strike fighters will temporarily adhere to the following restrictions, according to the release:

- Avoid the altitudes in which the hypoxia-like incidents occurred
- Ground procedures will be modified to mitigate physiological risks to pilots
- Physiological training will be expanded
- Minimum levels for backup oxygen systems for each flight will be increased
- Pilots will be offered the option of wearing sensors during flight to collect airborne human performance data.



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"Our Active Duty, reserve, and international team have worked tirelessly to better understand the physiological events," said Brig. Gen. Brook Leonard, the 56th Fighter Wing commander. "This is a complex challenge that necessitates multidimensional solutions across a series of steps to get back to a full operating capability. We are confident that this initial step with the criteria our team developed will allow us to return to flying F-35s safely and to continue building the future of airpower."