



# F-35 Lightning II Program

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## Navy and Marine Corps to Deploy F-35B

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**PEARL HARBOR (NNS)** -- Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMPACFLT) co-hosted the Joint Strike Fighter Sustainment Summit alongside Marine Corps Forces, Pacific at COMPACFLT Headquarters June 27-28.

During the summit Rear Adm. John Palmer delivered remarks to more than 50 service members and civilians to include representatives from Lockheed Martin, who built the aircraft, Pratt and Whitney, who built the engine, Marine Corps Headquarters, Defense Logistics Agency, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific, Commander Naval Air Forces Atlantic, Commander Naval Surface Forces Pacific, and Military Sealift Command. The attendees focused on planning and preparing the logistical support for the F-35B Lightning II first deployment scheduled to happen within the next year.

"The summit was primarily built to maximize communication, elevate problems, and arrive at solutions. This aircraft has a unique maintenance and support structure, and it is unlike any aviation weapon system presently in the Navy and Marine Corps inventories," said Palmer, U.S. Pacific Fleet director of logistics, fleet supply and ordnance.

According to Palmer, deploying the F-35B will require focused efforts by all stakeholders to ensure logistics resources are available to support the Fleet introduction to include funding, spares, tools, support equipment, information systems support, and training.

"The aircraft and engine are large and require keen planning for hangar and flight deck spotting & storage. The best strategy for overcoming the Joint Strike Fighter roll-out challenge is to engage in continuous communications across all stakeholders," Palmer added.

After reaching initial operational capability, 10 F-35Bs were delivered to the fleet.

"The Marine Corps has been successfully operating the F-35B Lightning II in the western Pacific for almost 7 months now with VMFA-121 at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in Japan. Next year, we will make the first shipboard deployment for the squadron as part of a Marine Expeditionary Unit. The F-35B is a tremendous upgrade from the legacy AV-8B and these new capabilities will be demonstrated in future operations. This aircraft, unlike any others in the past, brings unique challenges due to the global logistic network associated with this platform," said Brig. Gen. Brian C. Cavanaugh, deputy commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific.



PACIFIC OCEAN (Nov. 19, 2016) Four F-35B Lightning II aircraft perform a flyover above the amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6) during the Lightning Carrier Proof of Concept Demonstration. The F-35B will eventually replace three Marine Corps aircraft; the AV-8B Harrier, F/A-18 Hornet and the EA-6B Prowler. (U.S. Navy photo by Andy Wolfe/Released)



ATLANTIC OCEAN (July 13, 2017) An F-35B Lightning II joint strike fighter lands on the flight deck aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1). Wasp is underway acquiring certifications in preparation for their upcoming homeport shift to Sasebo, Japan where they are slated to relieve the USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Levingston Lewis/Released)

The aircraft is a short takeoff, vertical landing (STOVL) variant, and is the world's first supersonic STOVL stealth aircraft. It's designed to operate from austere bases and a range of air-capable ships near front-line combat zones. It can also take off and land conventionally from longer runways on major bases. The F-35B will replace the AV-8B Harrier and F/A-18 Hornet.