



F-35 Lightning II Program

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Next three F-35A Joint Strike Fighters mission-ready

Australian Government Department of Defense



Australia has taken delivery of the next three F-35A aircraft from Lockheed Martin.

Minister for Defence Senator the Hon Marise Payne and Minister for Defence Industry the Hon Christopher Pyne MP congratulated Defence and Lockheed Martin on reaching the important milestone.

“These latest aircraft are fitted with the program’s final software system, which unlocks the aircraft’s full war-fighting potential including weapons, mission systems and flight performance,” Minister Payne said.

“The stealthy, advanced F-35A is a step change in the Australian Defence Force’s capabilities, giving Australia an edge against the emergence of advanced capabilities in our region.”

“Australia is the first international partner to accept jets with Block 3F capability, and this is another key step towards introducing the aircraft into service before its arrival in Australia in December this year.”

Minister Pyne said this is another significant point in the Joint Strike Fighter program.

“Australia now has five aircraft at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona, USA, where our pilots are currently training. Five more aircraft are scheduled for delivery by the end of 2018.

“More than 50 Australian companies have directly shared in more than A\$1 billion in production contracts to date, providing further opportunities to small and medium Australian businesses which benefit through supply chain work.

“In 2016, the F-35 Program supported more than 2,400 jobs across Australia, which is set to grow to 5,000 by 2023. The Australian Government is investing in 72 F-35A Lightning II aircraft to replace the current fleet of 71 ageing F/A-18A/B Classic Hornets.