

Navy Flies Lockheed Martin JSF X-35C

PRNewswire

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif.

The United States Navy got its first hands-on evaluation of the Lockheed Martin Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) X-35C carrier variant (CV) on Dec. 22, as Navy pilot Lt. Cmdr. Brian Goszkowicz logged his first flight in the supersonic demonstrator.

Goszkowicz took off from Edwards Air Force Base and flew a series of maneuvers in preparation for demonstrating the aircraft's ability to operate from a carrier. Maneuvers included an approach and practice wave-off, a straight-in approach to a touch-and-go landing, and a full-stop landing. It was the aircraft's fourth flight since first taking to the skies on Dec. 16.

During the 42-minute flight, Goszkowicz reached an altitude of 10,000 feet and a speed of 250 knots, describing the X-35C's flight path as "smooth and predictable."

Later the same day, Lockheed Martin test pilot Joe Sweeney continued the X-35C's envelope expansion program with side slips, rolls, high angle-of- attack maneuvers and landing-gear cycling.

"As a former Naval aviator, I can tell you I'm thrilled to get a Navy pilot behind the controls of the X-35C," said Tom Burbage, executive vice president and general manager of the Lockheed Martin Joint Strike Fighter program. "This is going to be an outstanding carrier aircraft; it's already shown that it is very stable. With each new flight, we're seeing more and more of its tremendous potential."

The X-35C, designed to satisfy U.S. Navy requirements, features a larger wing and control surfaces than the other JSF variants, and has an increased- capacity structure for absorbing catapult launches and arrested landings.

The X-35A conventional-takeoff-and-landing (CTOL) variant, built to U.S. Air Force specifications, successfully completed its flight-test program on Nov. 22, 2000, logging 27 flights in 30 days and achieving supersonic flight on Nov. 21.

The X-35B short-takeoff-vertical-landing (STOVL) demonstrator is expected to begin hover-pit testing next month. Designed to meet U.S. Marine Corps and British Royal Air Force/Royal Navy requirements, the X-35B features a unique shaft-driven lift fan that amplifies engine thrust and reduces exhaust temperature and velocity during vertical flight operations.

"All of these aircraft not only have a high degree of commonality, but they are very highly representative of the JSF we're proposing to produce for our armed forces. That means the demonstrators we're flying today behave like the production planes -- no surprises," Burbage said.

The single-seat, single-engine JSF will be a stealthy and highly sophisticated replacement for an aging fleet of U.S. and British warplanes, including the A-10, F-16, F/A-18 and Harrier.

Lockheed Martin , in partnership with Northrop Grumman and BAE SYSTEMS, is competing to build the JSF for the United States and United Kingdom. Government selection of a single contractor for the Engineering and Manufacturing Development phase is set for fall 2001.

For corresponding photos, visit

http://www.lmaeronautics.com/image_gallery/pr_photos/jsfpr_photos/jsf_1stfligh t/index_6.html.

For information on Lockheed Martin Corporation, visit: <http://www.lockheedmartin.com/>.

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For government information on the Joint Strike Fighter program, visit <http://www.jast.mil/>.

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