Lockheed Martin's F-16 Reborn To Lead Into The Next Generation

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Lockheed Martin's F-16 family is being reborn in the 21st century with robust new technologies, new production configurations and unmatched management experience to enhance its position as the world's most advanced, high-capability multi-mission fighter, company officials said today (July 24, 2002) at the Farnborough Air Show.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. is a business area of Lockheed Martin Corp.

John Bean, vice president of Lockheed Martin's F-16 program, said recent orders from such countries as Greece, Israel and the United Arab Emirates, have revitalized the F-16 program and added more than 300 units to the company's backlog. Production of the F-16 in Fort Worth, Texas, will triple in the next year.

"These orders have positioned us for the future with two product families of aircraft for additional sales -- the Advanced Block 50 and the Block 60," Bean said. "Both types have powerful new capabilities that make them highly competitive with any other aircraft available for purchase today on the world market."

Enhancements for the Advanced Block 50 aircraft include the addition of conformal fuel tanks, an advanced internal Electronic Warfare (EW) suite and the APG-68(V)9 radar. The Block 60 improvements include an Active Electronically Scanned Array radar, integrated navigation and targeting FLIR system, higher thrust engine, a glass cockpit and new commercial avionics/software communicating over a fiber-optic high-speed data bus.

In addition to the production programs, Lockheed Martin has incorporated a "roadmap of convergence" for F-16 upgrades and production aircraft, consisting of an integrated plan that will result in maximum commonality throughout the fleet.

"Of course, we know there are many factors that countries consider when they procure aircraft," Bean said. "Capability is a big consideration, but so are price, supportability, interoperability, industrial participation and programmatic risks. Lockheed Martin consistently delivers the product promised on schedule and within program budget targets."

Bean also emphasized the importance of the F-16's role in the F-22 and Joint Strike Fighter programs, saying new technologies being developed on the F-16 will be the foundation for part of the JSF's avionics and some F-22 upgrades.

"All of these initiatives add up to a new lease on life for the F-16 family," Bean said. "And the family of people who build, buy and fly this unparalleled fighter aircraft can look forward to a solid and exciting future."

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, is a leader in the design, development, systems integration, production and support of advanced military aircraft and related technologies. Its customers include the military services of the United States and allied countries throughout the world. Products include the F-16, F-22, F-35 JSF, F-117, T-50, C-5, C-130, C-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2.

Lockheed Martin Corp., headquartered in Bethesda, Md., is a global enterprise principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, and integration of advanced technology systems, products, and services. Employing about 125,000 people worldwide, Lockheed Martin had 2001 sales of $24 billion.

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