Lockheed Martin F-16 Continues Record As Safest Single-Engine Multirole Fighter

The U.S. Air Force (USAF) F-16 fleet achieved its safest flying year in history during the 2004 fiscal year, with three F-16 units receiving top safety awards.

The 27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, N.M., received the 2003 Colombian Trophy for best achievement in safety among all U.S. Air Force fighter and reconnaissance wings/groups. F-16 units have won this prestigious award six times in the last 11 years and the last four years in a row.

The 119th Fighter Wing, Fargo, N.D., and the 114th Fighter Wing, Sioux Falls, S.D, were the recipients of the 2004 General John J. Pesch Flight Safety Trophy, which is presented annually to the two Air National Guard wings (all type aircraft) with the highest standards of flying safety. The Fargo unit has enjoyed more than 65,000 accident-free flying hours since converting to the F-16 in 1990 and also received this award in 2000, 2002 and 2003.

During this period a significant portion of the USAF F-16 flying hours were accomplished in demanding peacekeeping missions around the globe, including missions over the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan, plus continued homeland defense missions in the United States.

"The F-16 continues to be the safest single-engine fighter and safest multirole fighter in USAF history," said June Shrewsbury, vice president, F-16 Programs, at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. "We are committed to maintaining the F-16's outstanding safety record through improvements in the aircraft systems, operating and maintenance procedures, and training of maintenance personnel and pilots."

The F-16's safety record has continued to improve on the international scene as well, with more than 11 million flight hours by 20 air forces worldwide.

The F-16 is produced by Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., a business area of Lockheed Martin Corp.

The USAF fleet consists of more than 1,200 F-16s assigned to the active- duty Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command. There were only two F-16s lost in FY 2004. The two aircraft lost were involved in a mid- air collision.

Class A flight mishaps are defined as those involving more than $1 million in damage or loss of life, but may not necessarily result in a destroyed aircraft. There was an F-16 damaged in a landing mishap, yielding a total of two Class A mishaps for FY 2004.

Safety records are defined as rates of mishaps per flying hour. The USAF F-16 fleet flew approximately 350,000 hours during FY 2004. The USAF F-16 loss and Class A rates were both at an all-time low of 0.57 per 100,000 flight hours. The previous best fiscal year was in 2002, with rates per 100,000 flight hours of 1.37 for losses and 1.90 for Class A mishaps.

The USAF F-16's cumulative safety record over more than seven million flight hours is 3.86 losses and 3.98 Class A mishaps per 100,000 flight hours. The cumulative mishap rate for USAF's newest F-16s, the Block 50/52 versions, is 2.3 losses/mishaps per 100,000 flight hours in 740,000 flight hours of operations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The F-16 is the choice of 24 countries. More than 4,000 aircraft have been delivered worldwide from assembly lines in five countries. The F-16 program has fostered unprecedented international cooperation among governments, air forces and aerospace industries. Major upgrades to all F-16 versions are being incorporated to keep the fleet modern and fully supportable over the aircraft's long service life.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., a business area of Lockheed Martin, is a leader in the design, research and 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/A-22, F-35 JSF, F-117, C-5, C-130, C-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2. The company produces major components for the F-2 fighter, and is a co-developer of the C-27J tactical transport and T-50 advanced jet trainer.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin Corp. employs about 130,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology

systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2003 sales of $31.8 billion.

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