Lockheed Martin Highlights Recent F/A-22 Raptor Successes As This 5th Generation Fighter Prepares For Initial Operational Capability

Lockheed Martin , builder of the world's only 5th generation fighter aircraft flying today, provided an F/A-22 Raptor program update detailing the game- changing advantages and unmatched capabilities that only the F/A-22 can bring to the United States and its allies.

"This has been a great year for the Raptor program," said Larry Lawson, executive vice president and general manager of the F/A-22 program, at the Air Force Association's 2005 Air & Space Conference and Technology Exposition. "We had excellent news in February when the Air Force announced the F/A-22 Raptor as 'overwhelmingly effective,' based on performance results of its Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (IOT&E). More good news followed in March when the Department of Defense approved the Raptor for full rate production."

"We are two weeks into Follow-On Operational Test and Evaluation (FOT&E) and the supersonic drop of a Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) from the Raptor on the first attempt in July are also significant milestones for the program," Lawson added. "We've completed final assembly on 62 of the 83 revolutionary stealthy aircraft presently on contract, and all Raptors slated for delivery this year are now on the flight line."

In short, Lawson reported the F/A-22 program is healthy, and on track -- with superb production and solid aircraft performance.

Lockheed Martin and its industry team partners are working side by side with the Air Force at all F/A-22 bases as the Air Force prepares for Initial Operational Capability (IOC) later this year. The Air Force now has 47 F/A-22 Raptors flying at four bases, Edwards AFB, Calif., Tyndall AFB, Fla., Nellis AFB, Nev. and Langley AFB, Va., where airmen are involved in flight testing, tactics development, flight and maintenance training and preparing for real world operational employment capability later this year.

The F/A-22 Raptor, the world's most advanced 5th generation fighter, is built by Lockheed Martin in partnership with Boeing and Pratt & Whitney. Approximately 1,000 suppliers in 42 states provide parts and subsystems. F/A- 22 production takes place at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics facilities in Palmdale, Calif.; Meridian, Miss.; Marietta, Ga.; and Fort Worth, Texas, as well as at Boeing's plant in Seattle, Wash. Final assembly and initial flight testing of the Raptor occurs at the Marietta plant facilities.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin 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 2004 sales of $35.5 billion.

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