

Australian Ministry Of Defence Selects Lockheed Martin's JASSM Cruise Missile For AIR 5418

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The Australian Ministry of Defence has selected the Lockheed Martin JASSM(TM), a stealthy, air-to-surface missile, as the preferred solution for its AIR 5418 Follow-on Standoff Weapon (FOSOW) requirement. This marks the first international sale of JASSM, originally developed for the U.S. Air Force. The contract includes production, integration and support of the advanced weapon.

JASSM provides the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) with the capability to strike both land-based and maritime targets. The missile will be equipped with a data link to permit position updates on moving targets or missile retargeting after launch. In addition, the F/A-18 integration schedule proposed by Lockheed Martin enables retirement of the Australian F-111 aircraft on schedule.

"JASSM will provide the Royal Australian Air Force with a system that dramatically improves the pilot's ability to strike both land and maritime targets from long range," said Randy Bigum, vice president of Strike Weapons at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control. "This is important because it keeps Australian aircraft and aircrews safely out of range of air defense systems, while allowing them to successfully engage and destroy a wide range of critical targets, including highly defended point targets."

"We are very excited about the opportunity to work with the Royal Australian Air Force to integrate JASSM into their inventory," said U.S. Air Force Col. James Geurts, JASSM program manager and commander of the Long Range Missile Systems Group at Eglin Air Force Base, FL. "JASSM will give Australian Air Force crews an unprecedented capability during the critical early stages of a conflict. JASSM can avoid detection and uses pinpoint accuracy and a highly lethal warhead to take out the most important targets. JASSM also enables the RAAF to work in close coordination with the U.S. Air Force, providing force multiplication for both country's warfighters."

JASSM deliveries to the RAAF will begin in 2009, with the missile initially slated for integration on Australian F/A-18 aircraft. JASSM may be employed by the F-35 aircraft. Australia is one of the international partners developing the F-35 and is in final evaluation of options to buy up to 100 of the aircraft.

Lockheed Martin plans to integrate the RAAF JASSM production into its existing production line at the Lockheed Martin Pike County Operations facility in Troy, AL (USA). This will reduce the overall cost of the system to Australia and ensure that production schedule requirements are met. "Performing the final assembly in Troy is the lowest risk and most cost-effective and efficient method of responding to the Australian requirement, while still serving the domestic JASSM order strategy," Bigum said. The U.S. Air Force plans to continue JASSM production through 2018.

JASSM is an autonomous, precision-standoff missile designed to destroy high-value, well-defended, fixed and relocateable targets. The missile has a range of over 200 nautical miles and features high survivability in hostile environments. JASSM's pinpoint accuracy and 1,000-pound warhead make it highly effective against a wide range of targets.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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