

F-35 Will Bring 5TH Generation Capability To Navy

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The United States Navy's first stealth fighter -- the F-35 Lightning II -- will bring tremendous improvements in combat capability, operational flexibility and overall force efficiency, a Lockheed Martin official and former Naval aviator said on Monday.

"The F-35C offers advanced stealth that is ruggedized to maintain its Very Low Observable signature even in the harsh environment of an aircraft carrier," said Stephen O'Bryan, Lockheed Martin F-35 Business Development senior manager for U.S. Navy Programs. O'Bryan addressed reporters at a pre- Navy League news conference.

"We are committed to meeting or exceeding the Navy's requirements for the F-35C. It's an honor to be part of the industry team that will provide the Navy unmatched air-to-air, strike and intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance capabilities in a single platform," O'Bryan said.

In addition to its war-fighting capabilities the F-35 will reduce operation and support costs, with a forecast 20-percent savings in cost per flight hour and a 60-percent reduction in support-equipment requirements, compared to current-generation fighters.

The Lightning II is one of only two 5TH Generation Fighters in the world. Lockheed Martin is developing the F-35 with its principal industrial partners, Northrop Grumman and BAE Systems. Two separate, interchangeable F-35 engines are under development: the Pratt & Whitney F135 and the GE Rolls-Royce Fighter Engine Team F136.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2006 sales of \$39.6 billion.

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