Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor Air Dominance Fighters Begin Operational Service In Alaska

Ceremonies held at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska today marked the formal beginning of operations for the Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor in the Pacific region.

"There is no doubt that the F-22 is the most advanced and capable operational fighter in the world," said Larry Lawson, Lockheed Martin Executive Vice President and F-22 Program General Manager. "The Raptor stands ready to defend America and our allies from one of the most strategic locations on the planet. 90th Fighter Squadron pilots are now flying a fighter that is overwhelmingly effective and relevant worldwide for the next 40 years."

Formed almost 90 years ago during World War I, the 90th FS has the distinction of being the first unit in the Pacific to fly the F-22. Basing Raptors in Alaska underscores America's commitment to the Pacific region. Aircraft can be deployed rapidly from Alaska to anywhere in the world, and with 67,000 square miles in the Pacific Alaska Range Complex, the state is an ideal location for F-22 operations.

Raptors first visited Alaska in 2006 when the 27th Fighter Squadron at Langley AFB, Va., deployed to participate in Northern Edge, a large-scale, force-on-force exercise. Raptor pilots flew 97 percent of their scheduled missions and achieved an 80-to-1 kill ratio against their Red Air opponents. They also scored direct hits with every 1,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) air-to-ground weapon dropped, and increased overall situational awareness for the entire Blue Force through the F-22's integrated avionics. These achievements were key reasons the joint Air Force/contractor F-22 team was awarded the 2006 Robert J. Collier Trophy.

A total of 183 production Raptors are currently on contract, and 106 aircraft have completed final assembly at the Lockheed Martin facility in Marietta, Georgia. A total of 99 F-22s have been delivered. The F-22, the world's only operational fifth-generation fighter, blends stealth, speed, agility and sensor fusion. The aircraft has been in operational service with the U.S. Air Force since December 2005.

The F-22 Raptor, the world's most advanced fighter, is built by Lockheed Martin in partnership with Boeing and Pratt & Whitney. Parts and subsystems are provided by approximately 1,000 suppliers in 44 U.S. states. F-22 production takes place at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics facilities in Marietta, Ga.; Fort Worth, Texas; Palmdale, Calif.; and Meridian, Miss., as well as at Boeing's plant in Seattle, Wash. Final assembly and initial flight testing of the Raptor occurs in Marietta.

Raptors are currently assigned to five U.S. bases. Flight testing takes place at the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, Calif. Operational tactics development is ongoing at Nellis AFB, Nev. Pilot and crew chief training takes place at Tyndall AFB, Fla. Operational Raptors are assigned to the 1st Fighter Wing at Langley AFB, Va. (27th and 94th Fighter Squadrons) and now the 3rd Wing at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. Raptors will also be based at Holloman AFB, N.M., and Hickam AFB, Hawaii.

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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