

Italy's F-35A Lightning II Flies Inaugural European Flight

PR Newswire

CAMERI AIR BASE, Italy

CAMERI AIR BASE, Italy, Sept. 7, 2015 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Italy's first F-35A Lightning II, known as AL-1 and assembled at the Cameri Final Assembly and Check Out (FACO) facility, flew for the first time today marking the program's first-ever F-35 flight outside the United States.

Lockheed Martin F-35 test pilot Bill "Gigs" Gigliotti, lifted off the runway at 1:05 p.m. European Standard Time for a 1:22 hour check flight in AL-1 marking a historic milestone for Italy, Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi manufacturing cooperation and Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT).

"The first flight of AL-1 is a monumental achievement thanks to the hard work and dedication of our Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi and Lockheed Martin teammates," said Lorraine Martin, Lockheed Martin F-35 Program General Manager. "Italy's 'primo volo' (first flight) sets a firm foundation for Italy's F-35 program and future opportunities for the Cameri FACO. My heartfelt congratulations to all who worked tirelessly to bring us to this major international program milestone."

Today's first flight for AL-1 went as planned. "As expected, the jet performed exceptionally well and without any surprises," Gigliotti said. "I'm honored to have flown AL-1 on its maiden flight and grateful to the Cameri team for providing a great jet. We look forward to continued successes leading up to aircraft delivery later this year."

The Cameri FACO is owned by the Italian government and operated by Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi in association with Lockheed Martin. The Cameri FACO's F-35 production operations began in July 2013 and 'rolled out' Italy's first F-35A aircraft, AL-1, in March. AL-1's official delivery to Italy is expected by the end of the year. The facility will assemble both Italy's F-35A conventional takeoff and landing variant and the F-35B short takeoff/vertical landing variant, and is planned to assemble the Royal Netherlands Air Force's F-35A aircraft in the future. The F-35A and F-35B will replace Italian Air Force and Italian Navy AV-8 Harriers, Panavia Tornados and AMX fighters.

In addition to its responsibility in the operations of the FACO, Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi also produces the F-35A's full wing-sets. The work contracted to Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi, a strategic co-supplier of F-35A full wing assemblies, is one of the largest manufacturing projects for the Italian F-35 program, with 835 full wing assemblies planned. Finmeccanica participates in the F-35 program also with Selex ES, responsible for various onboard electronics.

The F-35 Lightning II, a 5th generation fighter, combines advanced low observable stealth technology with fighter speed and agility, fully fused sensor information, network-enabled operations and advanced sustainment. More than 130 production F-35s have been delivered to customers and have flown more than 38,700 cumulative fleet flight hours, fleet-wide.

For additional information, visit our website: www.f35.com.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 112,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's net sales for 2014 were \$45.6 billion.

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