

State Of South Carolina Declares Jan. 30 F-16 Fighting Falcon Day

COLUMBIA, S.C., Jan. 30, 2024 – Today South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster read a formal proclamation from the South Carolina House of Representatives and Senate declaring Jan. 30 as F-16 Fighting Falcon Day.

The proclamation was created in honor of the 50th anniversary of the F-16 this year. The jet, which has flown out of South Carolina Air Force bases for decades, is now built in Greenville – and holds the distinction of being the reigning [Coolest Thing Manufactured in South Carolina](#).

“The F-16 production line in Greenville is truly a national security asset, providing 21st Century Security capabilities to allies around the world who rely on this platform for peacekeeping and defense missions within their own borders and those of their partners,” said Trish Pagan, vice president, F-16 Program and Greenville Site Lead, Lockheed Martin. “The deep roots and partnerships we have in South Carolina have made it possible for Lockheed Martin to successfully produce and deliver F-16s to these allies. We are proud and honored to be part of the fabric of this state.”

Gov. McMaster added: “South Carolina is proud to be the Global Home of the F-16. Our rich military tradition, superb business-friendly environment, and world-class workforce are why manufacturers like Lockheed Martin have firmly established their roots in the Palmetto State. Lockheed Martin has long been a tremendous partner for South Carolina, contributing significantly to our prosperity. We look forward to building upon our already strong relationship in the years to come.”

Lockheed Martin has made significant investments to cultivate the Greenville workforce. Within the past few years, the company has offered retention and incentive packages to bolster staffing, and invested substantial time and resources into on-the-job training and apprenticeships to establish a strong aviation manufacturing base in South Carolina. Greenville currently has approximately 1,700 employees, contributing to a total of about 2,200 employees across South Carolina.

“Lockheed Martin has continued to be a strong partner in the state – producing, delivering and sustaining mission-critical aircraft for the world, from right here in South Carolina,” said Murrell Smith, Speaker of the House of Representatives for South Carolina. “I am proud to see the F-16 fly right in my community of Sumter, and I am even more proud to know they are made right here in South Carolina.”

Thomas Alexander, President of the Senate for South Carolina, added: “On this 50th year of the F-16, South Carolina is a proud supporter of the aircraft and the capabilities we’re bringing to the world from right here in Greenville.”

To date, Lockheed Martin has delivered six F-16 Block 70 jets from the Greenville production facility to international partners Bahrain and Slovakia. There are currently 134 F-16s for six countries in the production backlog, and Bulgaria has signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance for an additional eight jets for its fleet.

Sara Hazzard, president and CEO, South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance, said: “Lockheed Martin is one of South Carolina's many outstanding corporate citizens, and it's no wonder its Greenville location is the Global Home of the F-16. Their innovative and highly skilled workforce produces one of the most advanced fighter jets for America's allies. We're proud of the deep roots Lockheed Martin has established in the Palmetto State and of the work they do to help ensure global security.”

About the F-16

The [F-16](#) is a strategic and valuable choice for many customers around the world seeking advanced fighter aircraft capabilities, regional and worldwide partnerships, and affordable lifecycle costs. More than 3,100 F-16s are operating today in 25 countries. The F-16 has flown an estimated 19.5 million flight hours and at least 13 million sorties. Today's latest version, the Block 70/72, offers unparalleled capabilities and will be flown by six countries and counting.

About Lockheed Martin

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin Corporation is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 122,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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