

Avionics for Boeing Joint Strike Fighter Pass Major Development Milestone

Boeing has successfully completed the first in a series of avionics demonstrations of its operational Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) for the U.S. government and is moving significantly closer to defining an avionics package that will deliver high performance and affordability.

"Boeing has a strong legacy in the area of complex, large-scale systems integration," said Steve Alberts, JSF chief of avionics for Boeing. "This progression of avionics demonstrations displays our ability to leverage the company's fighter and systems integration expertise to make the JSF more affordable while reducing technical risk."

Using commercial computing technology, Boeing and its supplier team demonstrated emerging avionics and computing capabilities and operational flight programs. Additional discussions with the U.S. Department of Defense JSF Program Office focused on emerging pilot-to-vehicle interface technologies, cockpit display symbology and sensor technologies.

As initial software and hardware capabilities are matured, they will be integrated and tested in a series of demonstrations leading to a flight test program using a JSF flying laboratory. The flight test program will demonstrate JSF integrated avionics performance in a real-time, dynamic environment.

"Proving the applicability of emerging military and commercial technologies to the aircraft early on will help ensure a low-risk and well-developed entry to the next program phase," Alberts said.

Avionics development for the operational aircraft - the Preferred Weapon System Concept - is one of several technology maturation efforts Boeing is performing in parallel with designing and building two concept demonstrator aircraft (JSF/X-32).

The company's JSF avionics demonstrations build on a proven legacy of developing and integrating avionics for tactical fighter aircraft including the F-22, F/A-18E/F, F-15E and AV-8B Harrier.

Boeing is competing to build the JSF under a four-year Joint U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps concept demonstration phase contract, while also defining the characteristics of the operational aircraft. One X-32 aircraft will demonstrate characteristics of the Air Force's conventional takeoff and landing variant and the Navy's carrier variant; the second will demonstrate the short takeoff/vertical landing variant envisioned for use by the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.K. Royal Navy. A competition winner will be selected in 2001.

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