# Boeing Super Hornet Successfully Completes EMD

The F/A-18E/F Super Hornet has arrived at yet another milestone -- the successful completion of engineering and manufacturing development (EMD). The seven Super Hornets at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., completed more than 15,000 test points, a total of 3,172 flights and 4,673 flight hours in less than three and a half years of flight testing.

"Completing EMD on the original schedule and within the original budget established for the program in 1992 is a major accomplishment," said Pat Finneran Boeing F/A-18 vice president and general manager. "We have achieved a level of performance that is virtually without precedent thanks to the dedication and sacrifices of the men and women who are the Super Hornet Team."

The next major milestone for the Super Hornet is the start of Operational Evaluation (OPEVAL) scheduled to begin in May at Naval Air Station China Lake, Calif. Seven production aircraft will be used for OPEVAL by Air Test and Evaluation Squadron Nine (VX-9). The seven flight-test aircraft at Naval Air Station Patuxent River are slated for follow-on test and evaluation.

"We have all worked very hard to get to this point," said Capt. James Godwin, Navy F/A-18 program manager. "It took perseverance and dedication to complete this phase of testing, and you have set a high standard in integrated test teaming."

The EMD flight-test program was a true government-industry partnership. Flight testing was conducted by an integrated test team (ITT) that consisted of government and industry members who shared all of the program's data and assets. The F/A-18E/F program is one of the first programs in which the new testing model has been completely -- and successfully -- implemented.

"The Super Hornet's ITT approach reduced costs and schedule," explained Finneran. "Instead of Boeing conducting flight test and then the Navy conducting flight test, industry and Navy pilots were flying concurrently and sharing data. Working as a team enabled us to schedule flight-testing for a year and a half less than we would have under a more traditional approach."

During flight tests the team cleared 29 weapons configurations, compared with only two on the F/A-18A/B Hornet at the same stage of development. Data collected by the team shows that the Super Hornet meets the U.S. Navy's required flutter safety margins and has no speed restrictions with carriage of external stores.

Flight tests of the reconfigurable flight control system successfully demonstrated superior flying qualities with only one operational horizontal tail actuator. The reconfigurable flight control system is one of the Super Hornet's many survivability improvements that make it five times more survivable than the F/A-18 Hornet.

The Super Hornet also completed initial and follow-on sea trials demonstrating an impressive reduction in final landing approach speed, use of the automated carrier landing system, and the first successful night carrier launch and recovery. Both series of sea trials were completed ahead of schedule.

Boeing has delivered the first five production model Super Hornets to the Navy on or ahead of the contractual delivery schedule. The Navy has ordered 62 F/A-18E/Fs and plans to buy a minimum of 548 of the aircraft.

The Super Hornet is the newest edition to the combat-proven family of F/A-18 Hornets. Both the single-seat E and two-seat F models offer longer range, greater endurance, more payload-carrying ability, more powerful engines, increased carrier bringback capability, enhanced survivability and the growth potential to incorporate future systems and technologies to meet emerging threats.

An industry team led by Boeing builds the Super Hornet. Boeing builds the forward fuselage and wings, and conducts final assembly. Northrop Grumman Corp. is the principal airframe subcontractor, supplying the center and aft fuselage. General Electric Co. produces the F414 engines, and Raytheon Co. builds the APG-73 radar.

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