Pratt & Whitney Completes Assembly of Boeing JSF Engine

The Boeing Joint Strike Fighter X-32A took another decisive step toward first flight last week when Pratt & Whitney completed final assembly of its JSF119-614 flight-test engine.

Pratt & Whitney formally completed assembly at a "Last Bolt" tightening ceremony at its facility in West Palm Beach, Fla. After acceptance testing, the engine will be delivered to Boeing in Palmdale, Calif., where the X-32A is undergoing final systems installation and check out.

"This is a critical milestone in the completion of our JSF concept demonstrator aircraft," said Frank Statkus, Boeing vice president and JSF general manager. "Pratt & Whitney is to be complimented for producing such a superb fighter engine in just three years."

Pratt & Whitney is a member of the Boeing JSF One Team, which consists of 34 top-performing aerospace companies from around the world. They all share a dedication and common approach to winning and successfully completing the JSF program, Statkus said.

"Pratt & Whitney has been very efficient in their use of advanced design tools, such as three-dimensional solid modeling and assembly simulations, to reduce technical concerns and minimize engine assembly issues," said Steve Kyle, Boeing propulsion system integrated product team leader.

The Boeing JSF One Team is achieving affordability targets by designing highly common engines and airframes for the JSF variants for the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, and the U.K. Royal Air Force and Royal Navy. The engines for all variants share exactly the same core, fan, augmentor and cruise nozzle - an approach that maximizes the commonality of the Boeing design and lowers the life-cycle costs of the JSF119-614 engine.

In all, Pratt & Whitney is building two developmental engines, two qualification engines and two flight-test engines for the Boeing JSF program. Engine qualification testing for the X-32A aircraft continues, as does developmental testing of the short takeoff and vertical landing propulsion system, which will be used to demonstrate the Boeing direct-lift design on the X-32B concept demonstrator later next year.

The JSF119-614 engine is based on the F119 engine used on the F-22 air superiority fighter.

The two X-32 aircraft will meet the JSF program's three concept-demonstration objectives: 1) demonstrate commonality across the variants, including design/build processes; 2) demonstrate the Boeing direct-lift propulsion concept for short takeoff/vertical landing hover and transition; and 3) demonstrate low-speed carrier approach flying qualities.

The X-32A will begin flight testing in spring 2000.

Boeing is competing to build the JSF under a four-year U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps concept demonstration phase contract, while also defining the characteristics of the preferred weapon system concept - the operational JSF. Boeing is the world's premiere designer and manufacturer of fighter aircraft.

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