# Contracts Launch F-22 Into Production

The F-22 Raptor, America's next generation air superiority fighter, soared smoothly into production as the U.S. Air Force exercised a firm fixed price contract option with the Lockheed Martin/Boeing F-22 contractor team totaling approximately $189 million for advance procurement of six low rate initial production aircraft.

The production option was exercised less than a week after the Air Force exercised firm fixed price contract options totaling approximately $503 million for two F-22 production representative test vehicle aircraft and associated program support for calendar year 1999. Aircraft deliveries are scheduled to commence in November 2001 and continue through December 2002.

A Combined (Air Force/Contractor) Test Force had to meet a number of criteria established by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to demonstrate satisfactory progress prior to exercise of these options. The criteria included several flight-test milestones, all of which were met or exceeded within the first 90 hours of flight test.

Final milestones met late last year include Boeing delivery of the first integrated avionics software package to the F-22 757 Flying Test Bed, and also two flight test aircraft soaring past a congressionally-mandated 183 flight-hour mark more than a month ahead of schedule and three days before a Thanksgiving target date set by Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Ryan.

"The recent contract awards cap off an extremely successful year for the F-22 program," said Bob Barnes, Boeing F-22 program manager. "We're part of a great team, and are looking forward to moving into the next phase of the F-22 program."

Lockheed Martin leads the contractor team working closely with the U.S. Air Force on the F-22 program. Team members include Lockheed Martin Aeronautical Systems and Tactical Aircraft Systems, Boeing and Pratt & Whitney. Pratt & Whitney received a separate contract for F-22 engine production.

Planning is already underway for the next production lot. The contractor team anticipates receiving a Request for Proposal for 10 aircraft in the first quarter of 1999 with award before 2000.

The F-22 will replace the F-15 as America's front-line, air superiority fighter, and is being developed to counter lethal threats posed by advanced surface-to-air missile systems and next generation fighters equipped with launch-and-leave missiles. It is widely regarded as the most advanced fighter in the world, combining a revolutionary leap in technology and capability with reduced support requirements and maintenance costs.

The F-22's combination of stealth, integrated avionics, maneuverability and supercruise will give Raptor pilots a first-look, first-shot, first-kill capability against the aircraft of any potential enemy. The F-22 is designed to provide not just air superiority, but air dominance, winning quickly and decisively with few U.S. casualties. The F-22 also has an inherent air-to-ground capability.

Boeing supplies the F-22's wings, aft fuselage, radar, mission software, avionics integration and testing, and training and life-support systems.

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