Boeing Develops Stealthy "Topcoat" for F-22 Raptor

The Boeing Company has developed a new paint that will reduce the F-22 Raptor's vulnerability to infrared threats. The paint, referred to as a "topcoat," was applied today to the second F-22 at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

Boeing developed the topcoat to protect the aircraft against threats that use a broad range of wavelengths. The new paint replaces conventional topcoats, performing all the required environmentally protective functions while also reducing vulnerability to detection.

The new topcoat does not add to the F-22's weight, and provides performance enhancement at a very modest cost. It is applied in a two-tone camouflage design, patterned after the F-15 "Mod-Eagle" paint scheme.

Boeing began developing the new paint during the early stages of the F-22 program. Since that time, a small team in Seattle has worked to refine the paint and improve its application characteristics in the production environment.

While F-22 teammate Lockheed Martin will paint the first few aircraft by hand, robotic application is planned. Raptor 04 will be next to receive its new topcoat. Each application is expected to take one to two days.

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For further information:
Chick Ramey
(206) 662-0949