Boeing 27mm Cannon to be Weapon of Choice for JSF Design

The Advanced 27mm Aircraft Cannon, developed by a Boeing-led team, will be the weapon of choice for the next- generation Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) aircraft.

Both The Boeing Company and Lockheed Martin have targeted the cannon for their entries in the JSF competition. The Advanced 27mm Aircraft Cannon is based on the proven BK27 developed by Mauser-Werke Oberndorf of Germany.

Citing lower weight, improved integration and accurate lethality, Lockheed Martin recently announced its decision to use the single barrel, gas-operated cannon that fires 1,800 rounds a minute for its entry in the JSF combat aircraft competition. The decision follows a move by Boeing last year to select the cannon for its JSF entry.

The Boeing-led Advanced 27mm Aircraft Cannon team is operating independently in its efforts to secure the cannon for the JSF.

"Our goal at Boeing Ordnance and across the 27mm team has been to give the JSF the best gun option available," said Lee Ainley, program manager for the 27mm cannon. "The Lockheed Martin decision moves us one step closer to that goal."

Like Boeing, Lockheed Martin will use the 27mm cannon as the basis for the design of the gun system aboard the JSF.

"We've evaluated the candidates very closely, and we think the best one for the airplane is the 27mm. It's very accurate, it integrates best into the aircraft, and it meets JSF program requirements," said Doug Hayward, Lockheed Martin JSF Weapons Integration Systems chief. "Our next step is to continue to mature the system's design to ensure the best possible integration for the program."

The JSF next-generation combat aircraft will replace fighter and strike planes in the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy, and the U.K. Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. The U.S. government will select one of the two teams to build the JSF in 2001.

The team that is jointly developing the 27mm cannon system includes Boeing in Mesa, Ariz.; Mauser; Primex Technologies Inc. of St. Petersburg, Fla.; and Western Design of Irvine, Calif.

The 27mm cannon fires 27mm x 145 ammunition and is fed by a linear-linkless, case recovery ammunition handling system designed by Western Design. The 27mm cannon also incorporates a blast bottle affixed to the muzzle, which reduces blast effects, visual, infrared and acoustic signature, and provides additional recoil reduction.

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