

Boeing Begins Flight Testing F-22 Avionics Block 3.0 Ahead of Schedule

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Boeing recently began flight-testing the F-22 Avionics Block 3.0 integrated software on its 757 flying test bed (FTB), a month ahead of schedule. Achieving this critical milestone helps to keep the program on track for software delivery by the end of the year.

The U.S. Defense Department's Defense Acquisition Board requires Block 3.0 software to fly on an F-22 before year end in order for the program to receive its initial production contracts.

"We are encouraged that beginning early dynamic testing of Block 3.0 on the flying test bed will reduce the risks and challenge of meeting this year's avionics system goal," said Bob Barnes, Boeing F-22 program manager.

Testing of the Block 3.0 software on the FTB will include the use of multi-sensor fusion and complete F-22 radar and electronic warfare (EW) integration. The testing of this software in a dynamic flight environment on the FTB will enable avionics engineers to identify, evaluate and resolve anomalies, as well as to make adjustments to the avionics software and hardware, prior to the software being delivered as an Operational Flight Program (OFP) to the F-22 Raptor.

The F-22 team has been testing the Raptor's advanced avionics software packages in both the avionics integration lab (AIL), since 1998, and on the FTB since March 1999.

Both the AIL and FTB are helping reduce avionics risks and contain development costs by enabling extensive evaluation and troubleshooting before full avionics are installed on the F-22. Testing in the AIL and aboard the 757 will allow for early delivery of a more developed avionics package.

To date, more than 15,000 hours of avionics testing has been completed in the AIL and 562 hours on the FTB.

Boeing is teamed with Lockheed Martin and Pratt & Whitney to design and build the F-22 Raptor for the U.S. Air Force. Boeing supplies the F-22's wings, aft fuselage, radar, mission software, avionics integration and testing, as well as training and life-support systems.

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For further information:

Dina Weiss

(206) 655-8052

dina.m.weiss@boeing.com
