Boeing JSF X-32A Completes Successful Flight-Test Program

The Boeing Joint Strike Fighter X-32A concept demonstrator completed one of the most successful flight-test programs in history on Feb. 3, returning to the company's facility in Palmdale, Calif., on its 66th flight. Since its first flight on Sept. 18, 2000, the X-32A completed 50.4 flight hours with six different Boeing and government pilots at the controls. Throughout the test program the aircraft demonstrated unprecedented matching of actual performance with predictions based on years of simulation. To underscore the commonality if its design, Boeing used the X-32A to demonstrate conventional takeoff and landing for the U.S. Air Force and carrier approach flying qualities for the U.S. Navy. The company's second demonstrator, the X-32B, will demonstrate the company's direct-lift approach to the short-takeoff-and-vertical-landing requirements for the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.K. Royal Air Force and Royal Navy.