Boeing JSF X-32B Landings at 90 Knots Move Plane Closer to First Hover

The Boeing Joint Strike Fighter X-32B concept demonstrator completed significant flight-test accomplishments June 19 and 20 that pave the way for another historic program milestone; hover. In four flights each day, the X-32B demonstrated rock-solid stability at various altitudes and airspeeds, and transitioned from conventional to short-takeoff-and-vertical-landing (STOVL) flight mode and back again numerous times. The eight flights culminated in "slow" landings, in which the pilot transitioned to the lift nozzles and STOVL mode for approach and landing down to 90 knots. The aircraft is expected to progressively reduce forward speed over the next several flights, demonstrating hover flying qualities and vertical landing performance within the coming weeks. Successful demonstrations of short takeoff, hover and vertical landing will complete the customer requirements for the Boeing JSF flight test program.

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