Boeing Delivers Wing Set for 100th F-22 Raptor Ahead of Schedule

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] delivered the wings for the U.S. Air Force's 100th F-22 Raptor to teammate Lockheed Martin's [NYSE: LMT] Marietta, Ga., facility in late December, two weeks ahead of schedule.

"Nothing is better than exceeding your customer's expectations," said Paul Bay, Boeing vice president and F-22 program manager. "Not only have we improved our schedule performance, but since first delivery in November 1996 we've reduced the time it takes to build a wing set by more than 45,000 man-hours and cut cycle time by 70 percent."

Boeing manufacturing engineers streamlined production in late 1999 when they developed new tooling that utilizes a built-in overhead handling system. The new tool also improved wing quality, allowing more rapid and even application of pressure as the upper and lower wing skins are matched to the substructure. This reduced variability and ensured a better overall fit.

Designed entirely on a computer-aided design application, the wings are made primarily of titanium and graphite composites. They can withstand supersonic speeds for extended periods of time and extremely "high-g" maneuvers. Each Raptor wing measures approximately 16 feet (side of fuselage) by 18 feet (leading edge) and weighs about 2,000 pounds.

Teammate and prime contractor Lockheed Martin recently delivered the 82nd F-22 to the Air Force, with 49 additional Raptors currently on contract. The fighter is assigned to four U. S. bases: Testing is conducted at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB), Calif.; tactics development takes place at Nellis AFB, Nev.; pilots and maintenance teams receive training at Tyndall AFB, Fla.; and operational F-22s of the 1st Fighter Wing are assigned to Langley AFB, Va.

The F-22 Raptor is built by Lockheed Martin in partnership with Boeing and Pratt & Whitney. In addition to the wings, Boeing supplies the aft fuselage, integrates and tests the advanced avionics and has responsibility for the pilot and maintenance training systems. Parts and subsystems are provided by approximately 1,000 suppliers in 42 states. F-22 production takes place at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics facilities in Palmdale, Calif.; Meridian, Miss.; Marietta, Ga.; and Fort Worth, Texas, as well as Boeing's Seattle plant. Final assembly and initial flight-testing of the Raptor occur at the Marietta facilities.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2005 sales of $37.2 billion.
A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $30.8 billion business. It provides network-centric system solutions to its global military, government, and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer; a foremost developer of advanced concepts and technologies; a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in sustainment solutions and launch services.
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