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Skunk Works Mailing List

Re: Edwards AFB

From: "wayne binkley"
Subject: Re: Edwards AFB
Date: Thu, 02 Sep 1999 09:04:14 PDT

The US Air Force's new air superiority fighter, the F-22 Raptor, flew in excess of 60 degrees angle of attack during flight testing Aug. 25, at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., reaching another milestone and satisfying another flight-test requirement mandated by the Department of Defence.

The milestone, combined with extensive, high angle-of-attack manoeuvring, completed the fourth of five flight-test criteria established by DOD and the Air Force for 1999. The flight-test criteria, along with other programme requirements, must be completed successfully to demonstrate to defence department officials that the F-22 is ready for Low Rate Initial Production.

"We've met the requirement to demonstrate high angle of attack post-stall flight with thrust vectoring for the Defence Acquisition Board's programme review later this year," said Brig. Gen. Michael Mushala, F-22 programme director. "With only one more '99 flight-test requirement to meet, I'm confident that our team will rise to the challenge."

Flight-test criteria already met this year includes: flying at an altitude of 50,000 feet; opening side and main weapons bay doors in flight; and supercruise (flying at 1.5 Mach or greater without afterburner). A fifth requirement, flight in specific, high-speed regions of the F-22's envelope, is expected to be completed before the Defence Acquisition Board convenes in December.

The DAB, chaired by Dr. Jaques Gansler, under-secretary of defence for acquisition and technology, will determine if the F-22 programme is mature enough to move to the LRIP phase of building fighters that will be flown in the field by operational line pilots.

Meeting the five prescribed flight-test criteria is necessary for the board to grant full contract award for the programme's first six production F-22s, or Lot 1, and advanced-buy contract award for Lot 2, which represents 10 production F-22s.

So far, the programme's two flight-test aircraft, located at the F-22's Combined Test Force at Edwards have flown more than 150 sorties and 330 hours; collected more than 4,500 ground and flight-test data-points; and

demonstrated flight at 7 G's. The F-22 also made its first supersonic run at 1.2 Mach with weapons bay doors open, and the engine has remained stall-free throughout the high-alpha flight envelope explored to date.

"We're delighted with the results of the high angle-of-attack testing," said Tom Farmer, director of Pratt &Whitney's F119/F-22 programme. "This test demonstrates that attention to engine stability and operability in the design phase has paid off. "

A third flight-test F-22 is expected to fly early next year. The fourth flight-test F-22, the first Raptor with its advanced avionics installed, is scheduled to fly next summer. In all, there will be nine flight-test F-22s in the engineering and manufacturing development phase of the programme. The first six production F-22s will support operational test and evaluation at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. The F-22, the Air Force's chosen replacement for the ageing F-15 air superiority fighter, is being developed by ASC to counter lethal threats posed by advanced surface-to-air missile systems and next-generation fighters equipped with launch-and-leave missiles

>From: Wei-Jen Su <wsu@its.caltech.edu>
>Reply-To: skunk-works@netwrx1.com
>To: Skunk Works <skunk-works@netwrx1.com>
>Subject: Edwards AFB
>Date: Wed, 1 Sep 1999 22:53:58 -0700 (PDT)

>
> Hey guys, today I was in Edwards AFB and saw the F-22 Raptor 01
>taxing to her hangar, and next to the hangar was a SR-71 with the two
>vertical stabilizer removed! Anyone know which SR-71 was and what was
>doing there? Also saw the Raptor 02 with a orange cylinder attached to the
>top back of the airplane, anyone know what is it? Looks like a camera or a
>spin recover chute. Ah, I also saw the SR-71B with the tail number 831.

> May the Force be with you

> Wei-Jen Su
> E-mail: wsu@cco.caltech.edu

> "Every man dies; not every man really lives"

> Braveheart

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