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### Skunk Works Mailing List

## Re: ATF testing

From: betnal@ns.net  
 Subject: Re: ATF testing  
 Date: Sat, 19 Jun 99 17:55:23 GMT

A question and some follow-ups to Jim's two posts:

"...nor can the F-22 supercruise much further than the F-15C it is designed to replace." Jim, are you saying that the F-22's supercruise distance @ M1.4-5 isn't much farther than F-15C can fly subsonically (which would actually be very impressive, going the same distance .6M faster), or F-15 "supercruising" (which is marginal at best with the Pratt engines and still would be much slower with a smaller payload) or has same supersonic persistence as F-15 in afterburner [any level] which means we've got a major problem here?

"...the F-18E/F wing drop problem re-emerged. The production fix functions more poorly than the interim fixed used to gain the production approval." It also induces two forms of buffet, which they're working on fixes for "...with minimal impairment to other performance parameters".

"...in a low level range comparison, an F-18C flew further than the F-18E,

defeating in large part, the justification to build the F-18E in the first place." Although the E/F has a number of improvements over the C/D [for what it costs, it better], it does not accelerate better in subsonic or negative g environments, and accelerates slower to supersonic speeds. Climb performance above 30,000 ft. has been judged substandard.

"...the problems < with performance and enemy-missile detection < could cause the attack fighter to fail its ongoing evaluation by the U.S. Navy." The evaluation will probably fall out like this:

Parameter 1: The Hornet E/F will pass its evaluation.

Parameter 2: Should the test force recommend a no pass, see parameter 1.

"The Super Hornet has met all its requirements...". The requirements have been defined to be whatever the Super Hornet is capable of.

You know, the Rafale is looking better and better :(.

Hopefully, these levels of shenanigans can be avoided on the F-22 if the lessons of the Hornet E/F program can be taken to heart.

Art

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