



THE NAVAL AVIATION ENTERPRISE AIR PLAN



...One Vision, One Team

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“USMC defines IOC as a squadron of 10 F-35B aircraft capable of executing close air support, limited offensive and defensive counter air, air interdiction, air support escort, armed reconnaissance and limited suppression of enemy air defenses.”
- Lt. Gen. Jon Davis, U.S. Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Aviation

F-35B Lightning II Initial Operating Capability (IOC)

The F-35 B/C Lightning II brings strategic agility, operational flexibility and tactical supremacy to naval aviation and represents the centerpiece of Marine Corps aviation transformation. The F-35 will lead the way ashore, disabling information nodes and grids, while providing the air-ground task force unprecedented awareness of opposing challenges and fusing information from combat aircraft and other sensors into a single battle picture.

The F-35B will revolutionize tactical air support of ground forces by leveraging unmatched fifth-generation stealth, enhanced precision strike, and multi-spectral, integrated sensors with the expeditionary responsiveness of a short takeoff/vertical landing (STOVL), fighter-attack platform operating as part of our sea-based Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESGs) and Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs)/Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) or from expeditionary bases ashore. The F-35C will provide the same fifth-generation capability to our Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs). From the sea and from austere forward bases, the F-35 will support all U.S. forces by providing wide-ranging capabilities from the soft kill of electronic warfare to the precision delivery of kinetic effects in support of our troops in contact.

Recent and upcoming developments related to the F-35B:

- **Type/Model/Series (TMS) Team Stand-Up.** Marine Col. Chris McPhillips, Marine Aircraft Group (MAG)-13’s commanding officer, currently leads the TMS team, established in June 2013. The initial TMS team stood up in MAG-31 and was subsequently reassigned to MAG-13 coincident with the stand-up of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA)-121 Green Knights. The team began participating in the full Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) briefing cycle in June 2014.
- **Key Performance Indicator Development.** Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT)-501 and VMFA-121, in conjunction with MAG-13 and MAG-31, are currently manually collecting NAE current readiness metrics. The TMS team has developed draft Ready Basic Aircraft (RBA)/Ready for Tasking (RFT) standards and population of the Maintainer Core Competency metric is ongoing.
- **Joint Program Office (JPO) Support.** The JPO has assigned a Program Management Activity (PMA) and an Assistant Program Manager for Logistics (APML) equivalent to participate in all NAE briefing activities. Additionally, the TMS lead, the Headquarters Marine Corps Plans and Policies Branch, and the PMA equivalent conducted a TMS Team Readiness Summit at the JPO on Jan. 29, 2014. The TMS team is working hard with its providers to find solutions to its top eight readiness challenges.
- **Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS) Stand-Up at Beaufort.** FRS VMFAT-501 returned to Beaufort, South Carolina, July 11, 2014, and the squadron should begin producing pilots there this fall. Likewise, F-35 maintainer training will begin in Beaufort this fall. VMFAT-501’s mission is to conduct effective training and operations in the F-35B in coordination with joint and coalition partners in order to successfully attain the annual pilot training requirement. According to the 5400 Bulletin, F-35 maintainer training will continue at the F-35 Aviation Training Center at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, for the foreseeable future.
- **IOC Letter.** The Deputy Commandant for Aviation established that the Marine Corps would reach F-35B IOC by the winter of 2015. IOC, in general, is a point in time during production and deployment where a system can meet the minimum operational capabilities for a user’s stated need. For the F-35B in particular, IOC is defined as a squadron of 10 mission-capable F-35B aircraft. The NAE, the JPO and contractor procedures, processes and infrastructure will provide critical support to the IOC F-35B squadron. Looking past IOC, VMFA-121 is scheduled to deploy to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan in the fall of 2017.

Latest NAE Award Winners

Questions? Ask: nae@navy.mil

May 2014: Lt. Cmdr. William Gray, Commander, Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet
June 2014: Capt. Christopher Kennedy, Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet

Main Points

- The F-35 Lightning II is the first “Fifth-Generation, Strike Fighter aircraft” in the Department of the Navy.
- F-35B IOC is supported by:
 - TMS Team stand-up
 - Development of RBA/RFT standards
 - JPO support
 - The VMFAT-501 moves to Beaufort, South Carolina

Facts/Figures/Resources

- F-35B student pilot production to date*: 39 pilots
- F-35B maintainer production to date*: 434 Marines (363 transition, 71 initial accession)
- F-35B aircraft deliveries to date*: 36 F-35B (5 Developmental Test, 14 Block 2A, 17 Block 1B)

*Figures as of July 2014