Joint Strike Fighter (JSF)

Discussion

The Defense Department established the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program to develop a family of aircraft that would replace several legacy aircraft. The JSF will be the next generation strike fighter for the Marine Corps, Air Force, and Navy, and is being considered by the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force and Royal Navy. The JSF will replace the AV-8B and F/A-18C/D for the Marine Corps, the F-16C for the Air Force, and the F/A-18C and F-14A/D for the Navy. The JSF family of aircraft will include a Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) variant, a Conventional Take Off and Landing (CTOL) variant, and an Aircraft Carrier Capable (CV) variant. Commonality between the variants will help reduce both the development and life cycle costs, and will result in the greatest "bang for the buck" when compared to developing three separate aircraft.

The Marine Corps requires the STOVL variant to be capable of operations from large deck amphibious ships and austere sites, as well as from main operating bases. It will use the JSF for the following missions: Close Air Support, Air Interdiction, Armed Reconnaissance, Anti-Air Warfare, Suppression of Enemy Air Defense, Aerial Reconnaissance, Tactical Air Controller (Airborne), Assault Support Escort, support of Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel (TRAP/CSAR), and Strike Coordination and Reconnaissance (SCAR) with inherent Electronic Protection (EP), Electronic Attack (EA), and Electronic Warfare Support (ES). JSF will allow the Marine Corps to decrease its TACAIR inventory, while increasing affordability, lethality, survivability, and supportability when compared to legacy aircraft.

Marine Corps Position

The STOVL JSF is absolutely critical to the success of the Marine Corps and the MAGTF in the 21st Century as it will solve the significant problems of age/attrition currently facing Marine TACAIR. The STOVL JSF will provide the Marine Corps with a stealthy, state-of-the-art, high performance, multi-role jet aircraft that can operate within the expeditionary environment. The combination of stealth, basing flexibility and superior performance will revolutionize air warfare and Naval Aviation.