

STATEMENTS FROM GOVERNMENT and INDUSTRY LEADERS:

PEO (Lt. Gen. Bogdan) IOC STATEMENT:

"On 31 May 2013, the U.S. Marine Corps sent a letter to Congress saying they would reach F-35B initial operating capability between July and December 2015. For more than two years, the F-35 Joint Program Office, along with industry, has been working hand-in-hand with the Marines to achieve that goal. The fact the Marines reached IOC at the beginning of their six-month window is a testament to the professionalism and dedication of the entire F-35 enterprise.

The U.S. Marine Corps decision to make the F-35B ready for combat is a significant event for the F-35 program. The weapons system is now in the warfighters' hands and can be called upon to do its mission. The F-35 Joint Program Office, our industry partners, and the Marines have worked through a number of challenges as we focused on delivering a stealth fighter that could fly faster than the speed of sound, carry its weapons internally, conduct short take offs and vertical landings, and be deployed from amphibious ships and austere bases. It took an entire team effort to deliver the combat capability of the F-35B, and today we've done it.

Congratulations to the Marine Corps for leading the way. The F-35 government and industry team will continue to deliver on our commitments to field the world's finest combat aircraft for the United States and our allies."

DoD statement -- Attributable to USD Kendall.

The U.S. Marine Corps' declaration of Initial Operational Capability marks a significant milestone in the continued evolution of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. The decision was made following a thorough Operational Readiness Inspection which assessed the Marine Corps' ability to employ this complex weapon system in an operational environment. This achievement is a testament to the efforts of the F-35 Joint Program Office and Industry team, as well as the hard work and support from the Marine Corps. This accomplishment is an affirmation that the F-35 program is on track to deliver essential 5th generation warfighting capabilities to our U.S. services and international partners. It is also a reminder that we still have work ahead to deliver the full warfighting capability required by all three services and our partners while we continue our successful efforts to drive cost out of the program.

DON statement -- Attributable to Sean Stackley, ASN (RD&A):

"Today's declaration of initial operating capability for the F-35B is an important milestone for the United States Marine Corps and the entire F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. The advanced warfighting capabilities of this aircraft make it a key component of our Navy and Marine Corps aviation strategy and the Nation's security. As the Department of the Navy and the F-35 Joint Program Office continue the rigorous process of validating and delivering this fifth generation strike fighter to the fleet, we must and will maintain our priority on performance and affordability."

LM Statement on USMC F-35B IOC Announcement

"Congratulations to the U.S. Marine Corps on achieving Initial Operating capability (IOC) with the F-35B Lightning II, a milestone achieved through dedication and perseverance – touchstones of the Marine Corps. The multi-service F-35 Lightning II represents a quantum leap in air dominance capability. With the F-35B, the Marine Corps has a fighter that combines next-generation radar-evading stealth, supersonic speed, fighter agility and advanced logistical support with the most powerful and comprehensive integrated sensor package of any fighter aircraft in history to provide unprecedented lethality and survivability. A capability we know they will use to defend America and our allies for decades to come.

Fifty years from now, historians will look back on the success of the F-35 Program and point to Marine Corps IOC as the milestone that ushered in a new era in military aviation. Lockheed Martin, along with its industry partners, and together with the F-35 Joint Program Office, is proud to have played a supportive role for the Marine Corps achieving IOC. Whether supporting ship deployments, ALIS installation, or aircraft production and modifications, our team is proud to partner with the Marine Corps as we continue to provide the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and its 5th Generation capabilities to the warfighter.

Again, to every Marine in the Corps, congratulations on this significant achievement and we look forward to supporting the Marine Air Ground Task Force as you execute your vital mission!

Pratt & Whitney/Rolls-Royce Statement on IOC

Pratt & Whitney and Rolls-Royce congratulate the U.S. Marine Corps on achieving initial operational capability (IOC) for the F-35B Lightning II. Two years ago, the Corps set an ambitious objective to achieve IOC in July of 2015. That goal became a rallying point for the propulsion team and the entire F-35 enterprise. And now, thanks to the unyielding commitment and leadership of the Marines, that objective has been achieved.

As the first service to achieve this milestone with the F-35, the Marines now operate an aircraft with the most advanced combat capability in the world. The flexibility of the short takeoff and vertical lift F135 propulsion system allows the Marines to base operations from even the most austere of environments, enabling a revolutionary capability for the integrated Marine Air Ground Task Force to carry out their vital mission – anytime, anywhere.

The Pratt & Whitney and Rolls-Royce propulsion team are proud to have supported the Joint Program Office and Marines on their journey to this historic accomplishment. We've partnered with you from the initial design of the propulsion system, to several successful ship trials, and through hundreds of vertical landings in between, and we will stand beside the Corps as you continue to prove the indispensability of the F-35B to our nation and our allies' security.