

Photo Release: First asymmetric weapons load test for F-35B



(Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin)

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – On June 14, F-35B Joint Strike Fighter test aircraft BF-2 completed the first test flight for the short takeoff and vertical landing variant with an asymmetric weapons load. Cmdr. Eric Buus flew BF-2 with an AIM-9X Sidewinder inert missile on the starboard pylon, a centerline 25 mm gun pod, and a GBU-32 and AIM-120 in the starboard weapon bay. Significant weapons testing for the F-35B and F-35C variants is in progress, including fit checks, captive carriage environment characterization, and pit drops. Aerial weapons separation testing is scheduled for this summer.

The F-35B is the variant of the Joint Strike Fighter for the U.S. Marine Corps, capable of short take-offs and vertical landings for use on amphibious ships or expeditionary airfields to provide air power to the Marine Air-Ground Task Force. The F-35B is undergoing test and evaluation at NAS Patuxent River prior to delivery to the fleet. (Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin)