Lockheed martin f 35 deliveries

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The F-35 JPO (Joint Program Office) and Lockheed Martin on Jul. 19, 2024 announced the deliveries of the first two TR-3 Technology Refresh-3 (TR-3)-configured F-35 aircraft. One F-35A Lightning II was delivered to Dannelly Field, Alabama, and the other to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada.

"We have initiated a phased approach to the delivery of TR-3 F-35 aircraft," said Lt. Gen. Mike Schmidt, the JPO"s Program Executive Officer. "The first phase will deliver jets with an initial training capability in July and August. By the end of August, we will be delivering jets with a robust combat training capability, as we continue towards the delivery of full TR-3 combat capabilities in 2025. Our focus has been on providing our customers with aircraft that are stable, capable, and maintainable, and this phased approach does that."

The deliveries come after a full year of delays, owing to problems with the TR-3 hardware and software. Comprising additional computing power, Pentagon officials have described TR-3 as the "backbone" for the Block 4 upgrades, needed for newer weapons, sensors, data processing and target acquisition and identification capabilities.

Several jets had been piling up at Lockheed Martin"s facilities since July 2023, when the deliveries were halted, leading to significant backlog. TR-3 was supposed to be ready by April 2023, and the upgrade overshot the budget by $1 billion.

Lockheed Martin announced the development on X: "We recently began delivering TR-3 configured F-35s. These upgraded aircraft are equipped with combat training capabilities - a crucial step toward achieving full operational capabilities."

According to JPO, the newly delivered aircraft follow standard government acceptance procedures that include final airworthiness certifications and check-out flights. "TR-3 and Block 4 represent a critical evolution in capability and their full development remains a top priority for us," said Lockheed Martin vice president and general manager for the F-35 program Bridget Lauderdale.

"These and further software updates over the life of the program will ensure the F-35 continues to be an effective deterrent and the cornerstone of joint all-domain operations now and decades into the future."

"I am extremely proud of all the hard work the government and industry team have put into the delivery of TR-3 configured F-35s," Schmidt added. "This is an important first step, and although much work remains, I am confident our team will work tirelessly to achieve the desired and necessary results that our warfighters, allies and customers require."

Since July 2023, the Pentagon had stopped accepting new F-35 jets owing to issues between the F-35"s

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hardware and the TR-3 software coding. Specifically, the TR-3 software had trouble supporting the F-35"s radar and electronic warfare systems. Some test pilots had even claimed about having to reboot their radar and EW systems mid-flight, according to a GAO (Government Accountability Office) report from May 2024.

"Program officials stated that early versions of radar and in-flight systems software can commonly experience rebooting issues," the GAO said. "However, even after being nearly a year delayed, TR-3 software continues to be unstable, according to test officials."

The latest delivery is consistent with a September 2023 filing by Lockheed Martin with the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission), saying at the time that it anticipates "delivering the first TR-3 jet between April and June 2024."

The issues had led the Pentagon to stop accepting the deliveries before certain tests were complete. Subsequent reports said that the F-35 JPO, Lockheed Martin and the DoD were working on a plan for the DoD to accept F-35s with an interim version of the TR-3, with reliable and maintainable software.

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