



# F-35 Lightning II Program

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## JPO STATEMENT ON F-35 TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF GROUND AND FLIGHT TEST OPERATIONS

3 August 2011 – The F-35 Joint Program Office issued a fleet wide precautionary suspension of ground and flight operations earlier today. This action was taken as a result of an incident involving the F-35 conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) variant AF-4 at Edwards AFB, Calif.

Yesterday, at approximately 8:30 a.m. PDT during a standard ground maintenance engine run, aircraft AF-4's Integrated Power Package (IPP) experienced a failure. Following standard operating procedures, the engine was immediately shut down and the jet was secured. No injuries to the pilot or ground crew occurred. The F-35's Integrated Power Package is a turbo-machine that provides power to start the engine and generates cooling for the aircraft.

The government and contractor engineering teams are reviewing the data from the incident to determine the root cause of the failure. Implementing a precautionary suspension of operations is the prudent action to take at this time until the F-35 engineering, technical and system safety teams fully understand the cause of the incident. Once the facts are understood, a determination will be made when to lift the suspension and begin ground and flight operations of the 20 F-35s currently in flying status. These aircraft are part of the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) and Low Rate Initial Production (LRIP) fleet.

Determinations of root cause and potential mitigating actions have the highest priority of the F-35 Team. Impact to SDD execution and production operations is being assessed. The program has built schedule margin into the test schedule to accommodate these kinds of incidents that occur in a development effort. Periodic updates concerning this situation will be released as warranted.