



F-35 Lightning II Program

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J S F B R E A K S G R O U N D - M A R I N E C O R P S A I R S T A T I O N B E A U F O R T

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION BEAUFORT, S.C. - Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and Hensel Phelps Construction Company hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the expansion and renovation of the new Joint Strike Fighter F-35B Pilot Training and Simulator Center, and Aircraft Training Hangar on Sept. 1.

The new training center and hangar will support the training of approximately 78 pilots a year, park seven F-35B aircraft inside the hangar and up to 18 F-35B aircraft on the parking ramp. The training and simulator center will include classrooms, briefing and debriefing rooms, flight simulator spaces, network equipment rooms, faculty and administrative offices.

The hangar will include an aircraft maintenance bay, data network areas and pilot brief and debrief rooms. Also new for the maintainers aboard the Air Station are the sunshades for the aircraft parking area to ensure the aircraft are well protected from the elements to keep them in service longer.

"[Marine Corps Air Station] Beaufort's existing hangars are reaching the end of useful life at fifty-years old and must be replaced to meet the changing mission of the Air Station," stated Col. Brian C. Murtha, Air Station commanding officer. "This construction project moves MCAS Beaufort one step closer to receiving the Joint Strike Fighter and ensuring that we continue to meet the training and operational requirements as America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness."

The many guest speakers remarked on topics such as the overwhelming amount of support from the community, the history and intent for the new project and the revolutionary advancement in expeditionary capabilities for Marine air-ground combat power, further solidifying our enduring commitment to America.

"This is a historic day for Beaufort and a historic day for our Corps," said Maj. Gen. Jon Davis, the commanding general for 2nd Marine Air Wing. "I'm really proud of Beaufort. You've been supportive of the military, and you know the importance of this, not only for the Lowcountry, but for our nation. You've earned this."

The groundbreaking ushered in construction of two facilities, the training facility and hangar, both of which were awarded by Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast totaling over \$70 million to Hensel Phelps Construction Company of Orlando, Fla.

"This airplane will help us continue to stay mission ready," said Davis. "This aircraft will help take care of the Marines and provide the very best air support possible."

"This [groundbreaking] is about the future," said U.S. Rep. Paul C. Broun, the honored guest from Georgia's 10th District. "I am very excited to be here during this groundbreaking to show my support for the Corps. We will be providing the necessary resources to the rifleman in the field to help provide the support they need on the battlefield and keep them safe."

The construction for the two facilities has an expected date of completion of September 2013. The facilities are the beginning of many new construction projects preparing for the Joint Strike Fighter.