

Edwards detachment stands up to test joint strike fighter

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KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. (AFNS) -- Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center officials here stood up Det. 1 at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., Oct. 2 to lead the operational test and evaluation of the F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter.

Det. 1 will bring an additional 581 personnel to Edwards AFB for joint strike fighter initial operational test and evaluation.

"AFOTEC Det. 1 will conduct operational test and evaluation on the JSF with three services and two international partners," said Maj. Gen. Stephen T. Sargeant, the AFOTEC commander. "The F-35 joint strike fighter will deliver joint and coalition multirole capabilities. AFOTEC will serve as the lead operational test agency for this the multi-service and multi-national initial operational test and evaluation, and we are already conducting operational assessments."

According to General Sargeant, "The stand-up of this detachment is in line with our role to be in the right place at the right time to provide the right information to senior acquisition decision makers and the warfighter. AFOTEC is actively supporting the chief of staff of the Air Force goal of acquisition excellence by continuing to improve acquisition processes and skills."

The F-35 is projected to be operationally capable by 2013.

"We are getting involved early in this program because we believe this approach to testing influences a program in a relevant, operational, and testable manner," General Sargeant said. "Early influence allows us to maintain an operational focus to ensure our combatant commanders have the right tools to win today's and tomorrow's battles."