Navy Awards $1.8 Billion Contract for F-35 Block 4 Capabilities

Three F-35C Lightning II complete a flight over Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, in February. The U.S. Navy awarded Lockheed a contract for Block 4 upgrades to the Joint Strike Fighter. U.S. Navy/Chief Mass Communication Specialist Shannon E. Renfroe

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy has awarded to Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. a contract to continue development of Block 4 capabilities for the F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter.

Naval Air Systems Command awarded a $1.8 billion "cost-plus-incentive-fee, cost-plus-award-fee, cost-plus-fixed-fee contract for continued design maturation and development of Block 4 capabilities in support of the F-35 Lightning II Phase 2.3 Pre-Modernization for the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and non-U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) participants," according to a Defense Department announcement.

Details of the Block 4 capabilities have not been released by the F-35 Joint Program Office, but they are mainly incremental software and sensor upgrades intended to add to the aircraft's agility, lethality and situational awareness to enable the aircraft to keep ahead of the threats anticipated in the future.