Navy to deploy SDB-II smart weapon aboard F/A-18 aircraft



An F/A-18 conducts testing with the Small Diameter Bomb (SDB) II at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md. (U.S. Navy photo)
Release from the Naval Air Systems Command

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NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, Patuxent River, Md. – The Navy is set to field the Small Diameter Bomb-II on the F/A-18E/F after declaring Early Operational Capability (EOC) in October.

The F/A-18E/F is the Navy's first platform to carry the SDB-II, giving the aircraft the capability to hit moving targets in harsh weather and address targets in dynamic scenarios.

“The Navy and Air Force team, along with the test community and fleet stakeholders, worked relentlessly to expedite the fielding of this weapon,” said Tyler Alt, Navy SDB-II program manager. “This weapon will give our warfighters a much-needed capability and provide the basis for future network enabled weapons.”

The team will complete two additional operational test events before achieving Initial Operational Capability (IOC) in 2024.

SDB-II is an air-launched, precision-strike standoff weapon that enables the warfighter to defeat moving and fixed targets. It can operate in adverse weather conditions through its tri-mode seeker that employs infrared and millimeter wave radar to see through fog, smoke and rain.

The weapon has the capability to receive updated target coordinates mid-flight via two-way datalink communications. Using these network options, SDB-II allows airborne or ground controllers the ability to send in-flight target updates.

SDB-II is a Joint-Interest, Air Force Lead program and is currently fielded on the U.S. Air Force’s F-15E aircraft. SDB-II will also be compatible and fielded on F-16C/D and F-35 aircraft.

The Navy component of the SDB-II program is executed by the Precision Strike Weapons Program Office (PMA-201), which provides naval aviation with dominant lethal, integrated precision strike solutions for any conflict anytime, anywhere.