Navy Air Warfare Director: Report on Next-Generation Fighter Due in Summer



WASHINGTON – The Navy's analysis of alternatives (AoA) for its next-generation air-dominance fighter aircraft is almost finished, a Navy admiral told Congress.

"That AoA will be complete this spring," Rear Adm. Scott D. Conn, director of air warfare in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, said during an April 4 hearing of the Tactical Air and Ground Forces subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee.

"The final report will come out this summer, and that will inform future choices reflected in future budget cycles in terms of what we need to do to get after the lethality that we need at a cost that we can afford."

The F/A-XX air-dominance fighter will be a sixth-generation aircraft that eventually will succeed the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighter in the Navy's carrier air wings.

The F-35C Lightning II joint strike fighter achieved Initial Operational Capability in February and will join the Super Hornet in carrier air wings. Strike Fighter Squadron 147 is the Navy's first fleet F-35C squadron.

Conn said the Navy expects to attain a 50-50 percentage mix of F-35Cs and F/A-18E/Fs by about 2030. The Navy has ordered 78 Block III Super Hornets and plans to modify more than 100 older Super hornets to the Block III configuration.

"Any additional resources that would be available from an F-35 perspective would provide us some buffer to meet our

transition schedule as we get transition squadrons from Super Hornets into the Joint Strike Fighter," Conn said.