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Stork Fokker Delivers First Hardware to Pratt & Whitney for first F135 Production Propulsion System Test (Joint Strike Fighter)

Stork Fokker, part of the Dutch Stork Aerospace Group, has signed an initial contract with Pratt & Whitney (P&W) to develop and provide advanced manufacturing processes for its F135 propulsion system for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). The contract covers a demonstration of high speed machining of titanium and inconel, which has provided improved quality, lower total costs and faster throughput for a number of critical F135 subsystems.

Under the terms of the contract Stork Fokker performs high performing machining trials on the F135 nozzle static structure and convergent support hardware. They are working together with software simulation provider Third Wave Systems, Inc. in the U.S., under the terms of the Small Business Innovative Research II Program. Stork Fokker is also teamed with The Netherlands' Technical University Twente for automatic parts programming. Hardware has been delivered to P&W and components from this contract will go into the first production configuration F135 Propulsion System to test in the 4th quarter of 2003. The tests have demonstrated a marked improvement in throughput rates for machined parts, as well as enhanced quality.

"Stork Fokker is very proud to participate in Pratt & Whitney's F135 system development and demonstration program," said Erick Vink, Vice President JSF, Stork Fokker. "This initial contract marks the beginning in what we expect to be a long term endeavor of technology and process development to benefit the F135 propulsion system. We look forward to advancing our cutting edge manufacturing technology to provide the best value for JSF, enhancing both affordability and quality".

"As a partner nation, The Netherlands stand to benefit greatly from their involvement in the JSF program," said Ed O'Donnell, director of F135 international programs, P&W. "Not only will the military receive a superb aircraft; their industry will benefit from advanced technology development, such as this advanced manufacturing process development work. Pratt & Whitney relies on our supplier base to provide a number of machined parts, to augment our own high tech manufacturing expertise. Fokker has demonstrated their capability in low cost, high quality, high speed machining technology." O'Donnell added, "This is Pratt & Whitney's fifth contract to industry in The Netherlands to support the JSF propulsion system. Clearly we are counting on their superb aerospace talent to provide best value to our F135's system development and demonstration program."

The F135 propulsion system team consists of Pratt & Whitney, the prime contractor with responsibility for the main engine and system integration; Rolls-Royce, providing the Rolls-Royce LiftFan™, 3 bearing swivel module and roll posts to the STOVL F-35B; and Hamilton-Sundstrand, provider of the F135's control system, external accessories and gearbox.

The F135 is an evolution of the F119 engine powering the F/A-22 Raptor.

The F135 propulsion system will power all versions of the F-35 JSF - CTOL (conventional takeoff and landing), CV (carrier variant), and STOVL (short takeoff/vertical landing). Among the aircraft the F-35 will replace are the AV-8B Harrier, A-10, F-16, F/A-18 and United Kingdom's Harrier GR.7 and Sea Harrier.

Pratt & Whitney, a United Technologies company, is a world leader in the design, manufacture and service of aircraft engines, space propulsion systems and industrial gas turbines.

Stork Aerospace designs and produces structural components and wiring systems for commercial and military aircraft and aerospace applications. The group achieved a turnover of EUR 411 million in 2002 with 3,225 employees, out of the total Stork turnover of EUR 2 billion.

Third Wave Systems provides machining modeling software used by Fortune 500 aerospace and automotive companies to dramatically reduce costs in product design and manufacturing. Headquartered in Minneapolis, MN, USA, Third Wave also has offices in Detroit, MI, and major distribution in Japan and Europe.

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