

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Joint Strike Fighter Inquiry
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

18 February 2016

Dear Chairman and Committee Members,
AUSTRALIA'S TEST AND EVALUATION STRATEGY FOR THE F-35 JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

I'm a retired Lieutenant Colonel from the Royal Danish Air force. I have flown the F-16 for 16 years. Been Squadron Commander, Base Commander Operations, Base Commander and Inspector General Flight Safety Armed Forces Denmark.

In my career I also worked at Air Force Tactical Command and was responsible for the operational requirements for new fighter aircraft.

In this connection I repeatedly took part in simulated flights with Joint Strike Fighter at Wright Patterson AFB in the United States and also in England.

To make the simulations as realistic as possible, we participated with operational pilots.

On one of these simulations, I had a Danish test pilot with me. In addition, there were participants from a number of other countries.

We also simulated Joint Strike Fighter against Russian fighter aircraft where we flew two against two.

In the forenoon I and the Danish test pilot was flying Joint Strike Fighters against two Russian fighters. In the afternoon we swapped, so we flew Russian fighter aircraft against the Joint Strike Fighter.

In the afternoon the first thing the test pilot and I noticed was that the Russian fighters was not loaded with the best air-to-air missiles as the Russians have in real life. We therefore asked about getting some better. It was denied us. We two pilots complained but it was not changed.

My test pilot and I decided in our simulated Russian combat aircraft to fly "line abreast", but with 25 nautical miles distance. Then at least one of us could with radar look into the side of the Joint Strike Fighter and thus view it at long distance. The one who "saw" the Joint Strike Fighter could then link the radar image to the other. Then missiles could be fired at long distance at the Joint Strike Fighter.

It was also denied us, although we protested this incomprehensible disposition.

It was now quite clear to us that with the directives and emotional limitations simulations would in no way give a true and fair view of anything. On the other hand, it would show that the Joint Strike Fighter was a good air defense fighter, which in no way can be inferred from the simulations. We spoke loudly and clearly that this way was manipulating with the Joint Strike Fighter air defence capability.

Because of these circumstances, I would not let the Danish Air Force be included as part of the totally misleading/non-transparent results, which alone would show Joint Strike Fighters superiority in the air defence role, which it would not have been against an opponent with missiles with a far better

performance than those who we were given permission to. Also there was given major obstacles in the way flying tactically against the Joint Strike Fighter.

We therefore left simulations, returned to Denmark and complained to the Chief of Staff Tactical Air Command and technical manager Air Material Command.

Due to these conditions and having insight into what else was going on, attempts were made from the Danish side to get an operational pilot to the Joint Program Office but due to some special circumstances it at that time failed.

With my speech, I would like to draw attention to the fact that at least some of the air to air simulations that have been carried out, in no way give a true and fair view of the Joint Strike Fighter in the air defence role.

I consider it to be a disaster if simulations as mentioned above are accepted and thus forms part of a possible decision to choose the Joint Strike Fighter.

Yours Sincerely,

Anker Steen Sørensen

Denmark