DEFENCE

Japan
outlines

F-16

selection

criteria
TOKYO

The Japan Defence Agency
has revealed the selection
criteria it used which led to
the choice of the General
Dynamics F-16 Fighting
Falcon as the basis for its
FS-X fighter/support aircraft
to replace the Mitsubishi
F-l.
The whole evaluation was
based on three principles
established by the JDA's
director, Gen Kurihara. The
first was "the operational,
technical, and cost merits of
an aircraft to meet Japan's
perceived threat in the 1990s".
The second was "to consider
the importance of the Japan-
USA co-operative defence
structure and to maintain
interoperability". The third
principle was "not to be
affected by any influence from
both domestic and foreign
defence industries (in order
not to create any
misunderstandings or bad
impressions)".
Japan originally studied
a totally indigenous "dom-
estic development" F-SX,
foreign aircraft—the General
Dynamics F-16, McDonnell
Douglas F-18, and the Pana-
via Tornado, as well as
conversion of the latter three
aircraft to meet the FS-X
requirement.
Eventually the latter solu-
tion, conversion or upgrading,
was chosen, by which time the
short-list had changed to the
McDonnell Douglas F-15,
already in Japanese service,
the F-18, and the F-16.
Of these three the JDA
came to the following conclu-
sions on the feasibility of an
upgrade programme: "The
modification plan of the F-15
has almost no performance
problems, except the stealth
characteristics, but has a
problem in that the cost
required will be too high.
"The modification plan of
the F-18 has almost no

Japan's upgrade plans for the F-16 include (1) Active phased array radar, new mission computer, new integrated EW system (2) Reprofiled nose and radome (3) Reinforced windshield (4) Radar absorbing

leadingedge (5) Larger composite-construction wing (6) Brake parachute (7) Increased-thrust engine (8 lage extension plug (9) Advanced structural technology construction (10) "Vertical canards" for sidefo
manoeuvring (11) Provision for four anti-ship missiles or four medium-range radar-guided air-to-air miss infrared-guided AAMs and 20mm cannon retained). The upgraded F-16 will have the Japanese designa

performance problems, but
development and mass pro-
duction unit costs are both
high, and there are no fore-
seeable possibilities of
lowering these. In addition
there are great development
risks, since it requires simul-
taneous development of the
airframe and engine.
"The modification plan of
the F-16 has advantages in
inexpensive development
costs and mass production
costs, but has problems in
its takeoff and landing
performance and stealth
characteristics."
The F-16 was chosen, and
the negative points noted by
the JDA are to be addressed
by providing a bigger wing,
more thrust, a brake para-
chute and stealth features (see
drawing).

USA fears

bomber gap
SANTA MONICA

A Rand Corporation study
points to a possible strategic
"bomber gap" in the period
between the deployment of
the US Air Force's Rockwell
B-1B and Northrop B-2
Advanced Technology
Bomber (ATB) by the mid-
1990s.

Rand warned Secretary
of Defence Caspar W.

Weinberger that if, as Air
Force officials admit, the
B-1B will be unable to breach
USSR defences beyond the
mid-1990s, and if the B-2
encounters delays in devel-
opment or testing, the USA
could have no dependable,
manned penetrating bomber
by the middle of the next

To date, 69 of the 100
B-lBs ordered before the end
of 1988 have been delivered to
Strategic Air Command.
However, the aircraft will not
fully meet specifications or be
able to . counter Soviet
defences fully until 1991.
The first of two B-2 proto-
types of the "stealth" bomber
is scheduled to roll out in
December. Altogether 132
ATBs are planned to be
purchased.
The B-2 is undergoing
concurrent development, test,
and production, the same
high-risk programme
management technique that,
together with a faster than
anticipated growth in Soviet
defensive capability, has
brought a series of problems
and delays to the B-1B
programme.
The Rand study is worried
that, if the same problems
beset the B-2 programme, a
"bomber gap" might result.
• The B-1B fleet is now flying
again after temporary ground-
ing to inspect the escape
system following the crash in
September.

USA may cut
Israeli aid

TEL AVIV ~

The Israeli Ministry of
Defence is bracing itself for
any possible cuts in US
military assistance. American
officials have hinted that such
cuts might result from the
current crisis in the US stock
market.
After the Lavi project was
cancelled the USA promised
to maintain the current level
of military aid to Israel for at
least two years. Israel
currently receives $1-8 billion
annually as Foreign Military
Sales (FMS) funds. Following
the Lavi's cancellation,
Israel was allowed to spend
$400 million of that sum
inside the country. In addition
to that, the USA agreed to
maintain its offset agree-
ments with Israel. These
agreements pour an addi-
tional $150 million annually
into the troubled Israeli
defence industries.
Israeli Defence Minister
Yitzhak Rabin expressed his
belief that, in spite of the
current crisis in the US stock
market, US military aid will
not be reduced. Rabin denied
reports that Israel intended to
voluntarily forgo part of the
US aid; a comment that the
Israeli Ambassador in Wash-
ington is alleged to have
made.

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