

Glitch list grounds F-35 fleet

The entire fleet of F-35 fighter jets has been grounded for the eighth time. An engine fire during take-off at a Florida air base in June is the latest glitch to hit the \$398.6 billion F-35 Joint Strike Fighter programme

1 Roll port nozzles: F-35B jump-jet uses engine bleed air to control roll during low speed and hover. Actuators in wings that rotate nozzles overheat, limiting time aircraft can fly at speeds below 100km/h

2 Driveshaft: Unacceptable levels of compression and expansion

3 Lift-fan clutch: Clutch plates touch – friction generates excessive heat that exceeds temperature limit

4 Auxiliary inlet doors: Hinge system unreliable above 460km/h

5 Bulkhead 496: Cracks found in load-bearing alloy bulkhead

6 Cockpit: Large headrest impedes rear visibility

7 Flaky skin: Stealth coating peels off horizontal tail surfaces at maximum speed of Mach 1.6 (1,960km/h)

8 Fuel tanks: Threat of lightning-induced fire leads to ban on flights within 40km of thunderstorms

9 Vertical lift bring-back (VLBB): Increased weight of F-35B results in insufficient thrust to land vertically without having to jettison weapons or fuel

10 Helmet-mounted display: Problems with night vision, delays in displaying data and flickering

11 Engine: In-flight oil leak. Three of 104 jets fail inspection

