



First Production AIM-9X Rolls Out to the Warfighter

The first production next-generation AIM-9X Sidewinder was unveiled May 1 during a ceremony at Raytheon facilities in Tucson, Ariz. This delivery marks the beginning of an 18-year production plan to provide revolutionary dogfight capabilities to the warfighter.

"Air-to-air tactics as they exist today will no longer be the same," said Capt. Dave Venlet, Naval Air Systems Command program



The next-generation AIM-9X Sidewinder missile. NAVAIR photo

manager for Air-to-Air Missile Systems (PMA-259). "This is an advanced system design, which provides the warfighter with the firepower to ensure air superiority against any threat that exists today."

AIM-9X changes the rules of the dogfight through a system design approach that incorporates a fifth-generation staring focal plane array seeker for robust guidance per-

formance and infrared countermeasure capability and jet vane control for extremely agile turning performance.

The AIM-9X's seeker has near instantaneous slew rates, and achieves extremely high off-boresight angles for threat acquisition and first shot opportunity. Pilots are no longer required to point the aircraft's nose at the target to employ this advanced weapon system.

AIM-9X has undergone an extensive flight testing program, which has been complemented by an accredited modeling and simulation capability. The missile is fully reprogrammable in the field to allow for enhancements and growth in response to advances in threat capabilities.

The program has had an unprecedented 18 successes in 19 guided flights and a total of 37 successes in 39 launches in less than two years.

The missiles being delivered today will be initially used for pilot training, and for at-sea and forward deployments within the next year. Initial operating capability for the U.S. Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps is planned for the summer of 2003.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at www.navair.navy.mil.