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Fastems delivers automated cleaning line to Lockheed Martin for F-35 wing production



Fastems is delivering two **Automated Structure Laser Cleaner (AutoSLC)** units for the **Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II Wing Line**. The delivery of the new project is estimated to be completed at the end of 2021.

The AutoSLC solution is based on a robotised system, which is equipped with a laser ablation scan head, designed to automatically remove primers and other protective coatings from F-35 wing components.

Laser ablation provides a pristine surface to which nutplates can be mechanically bonded without using attach rivets. Previous methods of coating removal entailed manual sanding and solvent wiping which proved to be timely and yielded inconsistent bonding results. The Fastems AutoSLC system will process more than 3,000 drilled holes, reducing touch labour hours and improving aircraft quality for the end customer.

The AutoSLC's new technical advancements, such as automated image processing, gathers information on quality anomalies for traceability and process improvement. It will also include a tailored operating system based on Fastems MMS (Manufacturing Management System). The solution is expected to shorten lead-times by approximately 88 hours per unit, driving down the cost of the F-35.

Fastems and Lockheed Martin have previously collaborated to integrate the F-35 Lightning II Forward Fuselage Machine Tool Transfer Line (MTTL) in 2012. The MTTL has been critical in improving safety, quality,

and efficiency for the F-35 forward fuselage manufacturing process.

"We are proud and excited to continue our collaboration with Lockheed Martin on the production of their advanced, fifth-generation stealth fighter, the F-35," commented Mikko Nyman, CEO, Fastems.

"The path to successful cooperation with Lockheed Martin has been open and frequent collaboration from the very beginning and, together, developing a clear unified vision for the project. This has made processes and decision making much faster and has allowed us to deliver and even exceed the expected results. This has been a truly unique project for our Finnish company, and we look forward to continuing and further expanding our cooperation with Lockheed Martin."

"At Lockheed Martin, we test and validate any new complex solution from the initial concept, through design and build, and after delivery. The fact that Fastems understands and shares this attention to detail positions them well to deliver a quality product at every phase," added Steve Callaghan, vice president, F-35 business development and strategic integration.

"Fastems' AutoSLC solution will help us achieve full rate production at our targeted costs and will provide our customer with a high-quality product."

■ Fastems

www.fastems.com

■ Lockheed Martin

<https://www.lockheedmartin.com/en-us/products/f-35.html>