From: Media

**Sent:** Thursday, 3 March 2016 8:20 PM **To:** Tim Roxburgh; Sarah Dingle

Cc: Media

**Subject:** Response to your Defence media enquiry regarding Joint Strike Fighter test reports

[SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Importance: High

## **UNOFFICIAL**

Good evening Sarah and Tim,

Please find below a response to your Defence media enquiry regarding US test reports to the Joint Strike Fighter.

Please also see attached screenshots for reference.

Should you choose to use this information please attribute to a Defence Spokesperson and not a named individual.

Thank you.		

**Question:** Are the US test reports on the Joint Strike Fighter, received by Australia, formally put through Australian test agencies for comment or feedback?

## Response:

- Australia has qualified personnel embedded in the United States F-35 Program full time, including the Test and Evaluation Program, who are fully integrated and represent Australia's interests in the Program.
- This day to day engagement provides confidence and insight that enables Australia to understand the implications of issues as they arise and put them in the broader context of the Australian F-35 program.

In addition, Defence would like to take the opportunity to clarify ABC Tweets posted recently regarding the F-35 Program.

The Tweet "the F-35 Program is over budget and late" is misleading for the Australian public.

 Since the program was re-baselined\* in 2012, the F-35 Program has remained within the approved budget and is on schedule for the delivery of 72 Australian aircraft in accordance with the delivery schedule between 2014-2023.

(\*In March 2010, the US Department of Defense advised that the F-35 Program had breached certain US Government requirements. This, coupled with the impact of the Global Financial Crisis, led to a re-baselining of the F-

35 Program, including the deferral of production commitments. Since rebaselining in 2012, the Program has progressed within budget and schedule).

Further, Defence would like to clarify the point about the 2014 approval for 58 aircraft in 2014:

 The Australian Government announcement in 2014 was for approval for the acquisition of a further 58 aircraft at a cost of \$12.4 billion to be delivered in accordance with an agreed delivery schedule. It was not an order to start producing the 58 aircraft. The delivery of Australian aircraft is on schedule.

## **Defence Media** | Department of Defence

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From: Tim Roxburgh

**Sent:** Thursday, 3 March 2016 10:29

To: Clarke, John MR

**Subject:** Question on Joint Strike Fighter test reports

Hi John,

The question we were keen to get clarification on was the following one:

Are the US test reports on the Joint Strike Fighter, received by Australia, formally put through Australian test agencies for comment or feedback?

Our deadline on this is 2pm today. Thanks for your help with this.

Regards, Tim Roxburgh