



Fighter Force Recapitalization

Fiscal Year 2027 Requirements for the Air National Guard

Invest to Divest Air National Guard Aging Fighter Fleets



F-35A Lightning II's assigned to the 134th Fighter Squadron, 158th Fighter Wing, Vermont Air National Guard line up prior to takeoff at the South Burlington Air National Guard Base, South Burlington, Vermont.

Problem

The USAF fighter fleet is the oldest, smallest, and least ready in its 78 year history. 13/24 Air National Guard Fighter Squadrons lack a recapitalization plan commensurate with combat capability needs identified in the 2026 National Defense Strategy.

ANG Fighter Units Represent...



At only 7% of the total USAF budget!



F-16C Fighting Falcon from the District of Columbia Air National Guard's 113th Wing, lands on the flight line at Prince Sultan Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Recommendation

The National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) urges Congress to support:

- Appropriations for multiyear contracts for maximum year-to-year production of F-35A and F-15EX at fully burdened cost
- Authorization for no less than 1,817 Total Aircraft Inventory and 1,162 combat-coded Primary Mission Aircraft Inventory
- Concurrent recapitalization across all AF components of remaining legacy F-16s into advanced fighters

Background

The ANG plays a critical dual role as both the Air Force's primary combat reserve and a key homeland defense force. Over the past 30 years, the ANG shifted from a strategic reserve to an operational force supporting continuous deployments. Although the Air Force has taken steps toward integrating the ANG into modernization planning, a fully executable recapitalization plan is still lacking, creating risk of divestment and loss of experienced pilots and maintainers.

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