

Tucker Hamilton

Email: tucker.hamilton@jsf.mil Cell: 443-537-3906



Lt Col Tucker "Cinco" Hamilton is a Experimental Fighter Test Pilot for the United States Air Force. He is also the Director of the F-35 Integrated Test Force and Commander of the 461st Flight Test Squadron at Edwards Air Force Base, California. He directs an integrated team of over 600 active duty, government civilians, and contractors in the planning, execution and reporting of F-35 Developmental Testing. Cinco started his Air Force career as an operational F-15C pilot. He supported multiple Red Flag Exercises and real world Operation Noble Eagle missions where he protected the President of the United States; at times escorting Air Force One. He then served as an Air Liaison Officer in Germany where he was the director of operations for a key command and control squadron. While serving in Germany he was hand-selected to be the initial cadre for the first MC-12 squadron in Afghanistan; heralding in the Air Force's first tactical Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance aircraft. He served as the Chief Instructor for 200+ aircrew and accumulated over 400 combat hours directly supporting ground forces. After his time in the MC-12 he attended the USAF Test Pilot School (TPS) where he flew 30 different aircraft, wrote 38 technical reports, and took part in the first Automatic Air Collision Avoidance System testing. After TPS graduation he became an F-15C and F-15E Instructor Experimental Test Pilot and the Technical Director for the Operational Flight Program Combined Test Force at Eglin AFB, FL. He was the lead test pilot on 11 test programs; supporting the newest software, systems, and weapons for the 450+ F-15 fleet. He then served at the Pentagon as the Developmental Test & Evaluation (DT&E) Lead for the Joint Strike Fighter, F-35; overseeing the entire DT&E effort for the U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Marines. He managed an 18 test-aircraft fleet of specially equipped F-35s across multiple operating locations with a \$3B budget. After his F-35 work in D.C. he transitioned to Edwards AFB, CA as the Director of F-35 Operations. After a year in that role he took Command of the F-35 Integrated Test Force where it current serves. Lt Col Hamilton is a senior pilot with combat experience and more than 1,700 flying hours in the F-35A/B/C, F-15C/D/E, F-18, F-16, A-10, T-38A/C, T-34, T-6, and 20 additional aircraft. Cinco currently lives in California with his wife and four young children.

Lt Col Hamilton has a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Colorado ('02), an M.S. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Tennessee ('09), and an M.S. in Flight Test Engineering from the USAF Test Pilot School ('12).

Notable Achievements

Society of Experimental Test Pilots Annual Herman Salmon Award, 2017

USAF STEM Contributor of the Year, 2016

Ten Outstanding Young American Award, 2015

USAF ISR Officer of the Year, 2010

University of Colorado Thomas Jefferson Award, 2002

ABSTRACT: What's the F-35 really fly like? Does it have the capability to be the preeminent fighter of the 21st century? How has F-35 flight test progressed and tackled challenges? Through personal experiences, photos, and videos I will answer these questions and discuss 21st century military airpower, the use of military aircraft technology/autonomy and lessons learned from the largest aircraft acquisition program in the history of the Department of Defense.