

B-21 RAIDER WILL BE ROLLED OUT IN EARLY DECEMBER

THE B-21 IS ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT US MILITARY AVIATION PROGRAMS IN RECENT YEARS,
AND ITS ROLLOUT IS HOTLY ANTICIPATED.

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Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Andrew Hunter has disclosed that one of the Pentagon's most ambitious and critical projects in years, the B-21 Raider stealth bomber, will be rolled out before the end of the year. Northrop Grumman has now confirmed that this is the case and says this will be an invitation-only event at its facility at Plant 42 in Palmdale, California.

Hunter first announced the B-21 rollout plans at the Air & Space Forces Association's 2022 Air, Space, and Cyber Conference. The Assistant Secretary had provided no additional details about the forthcoming event, including whether or not it would open to the public in any way, as was the case with the rollout of the B-2 Spirit stealth bomber in 1988. However, Northrop Grumman's subsequent press release added that the event would provide an "exclusive view" of the bomber, which might indicate that a first-ever public look at the aircraft could accompany the event regardless of who is allowed to attend in person.



"The B-21 is the most advanced military aircraft ever built and is a product of pioneering innovation and technological excellence," Doug Young, sector vice president and general manager of Northrop Grumman Aeronautics Systems, said in a statement.

"The Raider showcases the dedication and skills of the thousands of people working every day to deliver this aircraft.

"Northrop Grumman is proud of our partnership with the U.S. Air Force as we deliver the B-21 Raider, a sixth-generation aircraft optimized for operations in highly contested environments," Tom Jones, corporate vice president and president, Northrop Grumman Aeronautics Systems, added.

Northrop Grumman's press release today confirms that the total number of B-21s in various stages of production at Plant 42 is still six.

AMERICA'S B-21 RAIDER IS GOING TO BE A STEALTH BOMBER ASSASSIN



The development of the nuclear-capable B-21 has been heavily shrouded in secrecy since Northrop Grumman first won the contract for what was then known as the Long Range Strike-Bomber (LRS-B) program in 2015. Based on all the public statements from the Air Force, as well as members of Congress, since then, the B-21 has been a model procurement program. Public details about its costs and schedule, and whether either has shifted significantly over the past seven years, remain limited.

The Raider is currently set to make its first actual flight sometime next year, instead of this year as originally expected. "The actual timing of first flight will be based on ground test outcomes," according to Northrop Grumman's press release.

However, there are no indications that the Air Force's overall plan to begin fielding operational B-21s sometime in the mid-2020s has shifted significantly. Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota is set to host the first B-21 squadron, with additional units then standing up later at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri and Dyess Air Force Base in Texas.

THE COST \$\$ OF FREEDOM

The Air Force expects to spend close to \$20 billion on producing the B-21 Raider through fiscal 2027, but it doesn't say how many of the advanced bombers it will buy for that cost.

Including research and development, USAF will spend more than \$32 billion on the Raider through fiscal 2027, according to [service budget documents](#)



In the meantime, whatever the exact plan for the initial rollout is, it is likely to be one of the most hotly anticipated military aviation events to occur in recent memory.

THE SOURCE

<https://www.airforcemag.com/producing-new-b-21-bomber-will-cost-20-billion-through-2027/>

The U.S. Air Force's next-generation B-21 stealth bomber program will likely cost taxpayers at least \$203 billion to develop, purchase and operate 100 aircraft over 30 years, according to new service estimates.

THE SOURCE

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-17/under-wraps-b-21-bomber-is-seen-costing-203-billion-into-2050s?leadSource=uverify%20wall>

