



Metaltec Awarded AU\$2 Million F136 Contract by GE Rolls-Royce Fighter Engine Team

July 16, 2008 -- Farnborough, UK -- Metaltec Precision International, based in Victoria, Australia, has been awarded an AU\$2 million contract to manufacture assembly tooling for the engine that will power the world's most advanced combat aircraft, the F-35 Lightning II. The tooling will be used for engine components manufactured by Rolls-Royce.

The award of the contract to Metaltec further increases the role that Australian industry will play in the development, production and support of the F136 engine, which is being developed by the GE Rolls-Royce Fighter Engine Team for the F-35 aircraft. In 2007 Rolls-Royce signed agreements with the New Air Combat Capability team to explore and develop collaborative R&D activities and with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) enabling students to work on the F136 programme.

The F136 engine is a 40,000+ lb. thrust, combat engine that will be available to power all variants of the F-35 for the US military and eight partner nations, including Australia.

Commenting on the award of the contract, Mark Rhodes, Senior Vice President of the Fighter Engine Team, said, "This contract award recognises the world-class capability of Metaltec in the field of aerospace tooling. Australian industry, research establishments and academia are now involved in both engine design and manufacture and technology development on the F136 and we also believe that a number of exciting opportunities exist to work together on the sustainment phase of the programme."

"The development of industrial participation agreements with all of the partner countries is a key element of the Fighter Engine Team's activities and the Australian aerospace industry will derive huge benefits from its involvement in the F136."

Paul Hudson, Metaltec's Managing Director said, "Metaltec is proud to have been awarded the contract to work on this prestigious program and we look forward to working together with the GE Rolls-Royce Fighter Engine Team. This achievement is testament to the capabilities of Metaltec and the Australian aerospace industry and proves that we can offer value solutions to tomorrow's aerospace requirements.

"We'd like to thank the GE Rolls-Royce Fighter Engine Team for the timely up-front investment in its supplier due-diligence programme and to recognise the key role that the Australian Government's JSF Industry Team plays in helping company's like Metaltec to secure contracts on the world's largest military aircraft programme."

The GE Rolls-Royce Fighter Engine Team is currently engaged in the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) of the F136 engine and has recently achieved several notable milestones. These include the successful completion of both the Critical Design Review, validating the unique design of the engine, and the high-altitude afterburner testing programme. Pre-SDD engines have totaled more than 600 hours of test time, contributing significantly to risk reduction in the program.

The first full SDD engine is scheduled to begin testing by early 2009, with first flight in the F-35 to follow in 2010.

The F136 program remains on schedule and within budget and is fully funded by the US Government for FY 2008. More than 50 percent of the System Development and Demonstration funding for the engine has already been appropriated and the US Government has invested more than \$2 Billion in the program.