



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

IN THE NEWS

US Navy's Sixth-Generation F/A-XX Fighter: Just a 'Super' Super Hornet?

July 26, 2016 | *National Interest*

By: Dave Majumdar

Related Expert: Bryan Clark

Bryan Clark, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, said that the Naval Integrated Fire Control Counter-Air (NIFC-CA) will be the key for the Navy's carrier-based air operations in the post-2030 environment. One option is "using F-35Cs or Bs as stealthy ISR platforms that passively find targets, which are communicated using secure datalinks to F/A-18 E/F 'missile trucks' located at standoff range from threat air defenses or aircraft," Clark said. But the Navy might also be "conducting strikes like today with F/A-18 E/Fs launching standoff weapons while protected by E/A-18Gs, but complemented by F-35C as a stealthy stand-in jamming platform." Additional, the Navy might eventually be able to use the future MQ-21 Stingray unmanned aerial refuelers "as ISR platforms, which send targets via secure datalinks to F-35Cs. The F-35Cs act as C2 platforms and assign targets to F/A-18 E/F," Clark said.