

# Sting like a Hornet !

Boeing's F/A-18 Block III Super Hornet is arguably the most lethal, advanced, combat-proven, multirole, frontline fighter-jet currently operated by the US Navy. Introduced in 2007, the aircraft is the next-generation evolution of F/A-18 Hornet and was envisaged as a naval platform from day one.

The F/A-18 Super Hornet was designed to bring together the power of the air and the might of the sea. Beyond the advanced technology that went into F/A-18, the creators had to keep in consideration complex requirements related to carrier-based operations including high loading which results in higher stresses on the airframe among other issues that come with integrating an aircraft on a carrier.

The history of Super Hornet is as interesting as is the history of naval aviation itself. Within a decade of the Wright brothers successfully demonstrating the first controlled flight in 1903, Washington Chambers and Eugene Ely successfully flew their Curtiss biplane off-and on -American naval cruisers using wooden planks, sandbags and ropes, in 1910. In 1983, F/A-18 Hornet replaced another iconic US fighter, the F-14 Tomcat because the Hornets offered multi-role capability, were technologically superior to meet advanced threats and was much more economical to operate. The Super Hornet introduced

in 2007 provided further enhancement in the form of long range and greater payload carrying capability.

The Block III version of Super Hornet that is currently being built for the US Navy incorporates several key enhancements including advanced mission computer, data fusion capability and improved stealth characteristics to name few. Typically every decade, the US Navy has inducted a new fighter or a significantly advanced version of an existing frontline fighter to match evolving threats. With every new induction of fighters, carrier integration technologies, training, and tactics were revised. The US

Naval Aviation ecosystem of today has come a long way.

Boeing's F/A-18 Block III Super Hornet offers unmatched opportunity for the Indian Navy to get access to the US naval ecosystem, collaborate on carrier integration know how, equipment, weapon systems, training and cooperation initiatives

Currently, more than 700 Hornets and Super Hornets operate with the US Navy and serve with several navies or air forces of other countries. With orders of 116 additional Block III orders, Super Hornet will be in service for decades to come. The long life and growth potential of Super

