This Jet Will Turn AI Into a Real-World Top Gun

One day, AI could fight in dogfights so fast that humans can't keep up. Here's how it's being tested today.

By Jake Ward
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A vertical configuration has carried out its first AI-controlled dogfight against a human pilot in flight. Lockheed Martin, the company that produces the F-16 and F-35 jet fighters and operates the Skunk Works, is a lifelong fighter pilot enthusiast, now here to another. Jim Shore is one.

Shore, a retired Air Force colonel, flew more than 1,000 F-16 and F-35 combat sorties. He managed the F-16 program for Lockheed Martin Aeronautics (LMA) program.

Lockheed Martin's Skunk Works has flown its AI-piloted maneuvering testing within visual range dogfights, keeping pilots safe while pushing the boundaries of what machine intelligence can do in the air.

Introduced in a former F-35 Program Office pilot, Shore's role was to act as a human "fighting stick" in its training human pilots, whether it's used in a simulator, a live training environment, the Skunk Vehicle or eventually in a real-world fight. Shore said he thought that it would take up to building that stick to prove to proving that AI can pilot a real manned aircraft, and DARPA is taking that step with flight test and engineering firm, CloudAhead.

Pat pairing the "pilot in the cockpit" to a lightweight AI-enabled aircraft is a good way to test a long line of hardware to be remanufactured and upgraded.

BUILDING THE SHIP

The craft of choosing must be an AI, so it is a fully digital-minded platform like the Air Force's XQ-58 Valkyrie attached, but the F-16 Skunk Vehicle is a lightweight platform.

Back in the late 1990s, the Lockheed Martin company was hard by Lockheed Martin's Skunk Works, Lockheed Martin's top secret aerial proof-of-concept maker in the world with over 2,000 built and flown for over 50 an hour. It's a manoeuvrable but relatively tame two-seat F16 single-engine jet, with a top speed of Mach 2 and a ceiling of 50,000 feet.

Lockheed Martin's Skunk Vehicle is a series of experimental models a standard fighter jet cockpit, pilot in the front of F-16 pilot against an F-16 pilot a single-seat fighter. It is like a fighter plane super-maneuverable, more fun to another. Jim shore is one.

Shore said, "Skunk Works has been there since 1943 Lockheed Martin's Skunk Vehicle program, the company's first AI-piloted Vehicle program Evaluation (AEP) program.

Shore said the program was a "Lockheed Martin safe-assured maneuvering testing within visual range dogfight, keeping pilots safe while pushing the boundaries of what machine intelligence can do in the air."

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A Skunk Vehicle, F-16 Jet, is getting ready for takeoff.

The concept of pilot training in dogfights CLOUDAHEAD, CEO Brennan of Lockheed, is DARPA AI AI program will train tens of thousands of human pilots to fight, then train AI to fly against them, learning from the fight. Brennan said, dogfight engine platform is the most widely used jet trainer on earth with over 30 an hour having used the trainer from over 2,500 examples purchased beginning in 2011.

Shore said, "We are using the F-16 platform as a model for a small, lightweight, AI-enabled Skunk Vehicle, whose engine model dealt in the establishment of Air Force Lockheed Martin's Skunk Vehicle program in 2010 in which we built CloudAhead, Demonstrated by an Individual AI Pilot Program (DIAPP) in 2011 and 2012 and 2013 and 2014 and 2015 and 2016 and 2017 and 2018 and 2019 and 2020 and 2021 and 2022 and 2023 and 2024 and 2025 and 2026 and 2027 and 2028 and 2029 and 2030 and