

# Historic First: Fighter Jet Takes Flight Powered Only by Biofuel



Continuing its quest to maximize the use of renewable fuels, the Navy successfully used a 100 percent biofuel blend to power fighter jets during a test at Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland this month.

Until now, the Navy has used biofuel blends to fly its “Great Green Fleet” — the brainchild of Secretary Ray Mabus, who sees shifting to renewable fuels as key to energy security. The testing of the EA-18G “Green Growler” jet this month is the first time the Navy has examined whether it could power the fleet on biofuels alone.

“Today is a further example of how the Navy and Marine Corps continue to lead in energy innovation and, in doing so, remain the greatest expeditionary fighting force the world has ever known,” Mabus said in a statement.

Test pilot Lt. Cmdr. Bradley Fairfax said the jet “flew completely the same” as it would on petroleum fuel.

“From takeoff to landing, you couldn’t tell any difference,” he said.

The fuel is produced by Florida-based Applied Research Associates and Chevron Lummus Global. The fuel uses the same feedstock as another 50 percent advanced biofuel blend already used by the Navy but goes through a unique conversion process to provide a fully synthetic fuel that does not need to be blended, according to Rick Kamin, energy and fuels lead for the Naval Air Systems Command.

The Navy first used the fuel in a ground test in August before using it to power a jet in flight this month.

“We shot for this 100-percent drop-in fuel from the beginning,” Kamin said in a statement. “We wanted to know if a fully synthetic JP-5 from a non-petroleum source could work in our systems and we proved that it could.”

