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Submission: The dilemma over the suitability of the JSF project for Australia's needs is symptomatic of the dilemma the Air Force has faced since the Korean War. The F86 Sabre was ideal for its time and the Australian adaptations made the Avon -powered version the best of its type.

The Mirage 111 was by all accounts a great aeroplane but too difficult to support in any war fighting scenario. For all the drama of the time-so similar to the current debate over the F35- the F111 became with Australian modifications possibly the most effective aircraft the RAAF has ever operated. The 'Hornet' project was of particular note because it demonstrated again the capacity of Australian industry to manufacture- in even a limited way-a highly complex aircraft. The F18 also had the distinction of being proven in an operational context. The unanswered question is could the F111 have been deployed in Afghanistan in support of Army operations?

My point is what value is an expensive piece of aviation hardware if it cannot be used in a war fighting scenario of any kind. It becomes a very expensive toy with no practical use.

Apart from the US, Russia, the UK and France it seems that only Sweden and Israel can produce designs of their own. Many other countries provide local manufacture under licence as Australia has done in the past.

Conventional wisdom suggests that total project costs rule out the possibility of an Australian aerospace industry in support of our Defence efforts. The exceptions to the rules, Sweden and Israel have apparently been 'in the business' for decades and its too late and too expensive for Australia to start now.

I believe the answer is for any government to support the establishment of a viable aircraft manufacturing business which concentrates on the 'minor' projects essential to an Air Force such as surveillance satellites, air borne missiles, UAV's, 'Battlefield Airlifter' = replacement for the DHC4 Caribou, air to air refuelling aircraft and other projects well within current capabilities and useful means of reducing the depletion of foreign currency reserves.

Perhaps joint projects could be encouraged with companies already established in Australia such as Boeing, BAe Systems, Cobhams, Lockheed Martin and so on.

I agree to my submission being published on the Defence website

I agree to my submission being quoted in the Community Consultation Report