



Written by [Dennis Behreandt](#) on September 20, 2023

F-35 Found; Was It Hacked?

In an unusual situation, on Sunday the U.S. Marine Corps lost one of its \$135 million F-35B Lightning II stealth fighters. The mysterious loss occurred when the pilot ejected from the plane under circumstances that remain unclear.



F-35 Lightning II

JUST IN: Footage of the debris field of the F-35 jet has been released after it was located in a field in Williamsburg County, South Carolina.

The crash site was about 80 miles from Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina.

The F-35 fighter jet appeared to run through a group of...
pic.twitter.com/mqOdRSpUOt

— Collin Rugg (@CollinRugg)
[September 19, 2023](#)

The wreckage of the plane has since been found, according to an official statement from the Marine Corps, in an area “two hours northeast of Joint Base Charleston.”

The loss of the F-35 was met with derision in some quarters when authorities asked for help from the public in locating the missing aircraft.

Now that I got that out of the way. How in the hell do you lose an F-35?

How is there not a tracking device and we’re asking the public to what, find a jet and turn it in?

— Nancy Mace (@NancyMace) [September 18, 2023](#)

“How ... do you lose an F-35?” asked Representative Nancy Mace (R-S.C.) in an obviously sarcastic tone in a post on X, the site formerly known as Twitter.

The answer to that seemingly reasonable question seems to be that the plane was on autopilot when the pilot exited the craft. But, this fact only contributes to a larger mystery: What caused the pilot to abandon a plane that may have still been able to fly?

One troubling possibility could be that the plane’s software was hacked. Speculation to that effect also appeared in posts on X.



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Green Hills Software produces the Integrity 178B Operating System that powers the F-35, F-22, F-16, and B-2. It also powers the Airbus A380. It was also quite possibly leaked. Now you understand why the entire USMC air fleet has been grounded.

Fun fact: the CEO of Green Hills... <https://t.co/jKSWaKYL4p> [pic.twitter.com/sFTx2fKEBB](https://t.co/jKSWaKYL4p)
— Ian Miles Cheong (@stillgray) [September 19, 2023](#)

Independent journalist Ian Miles Cheong alleged in a post on the Elon Musk-owned platform that the operating system of the F-35 was “quite possibly leaked.” That operating system, Cheong stated, “powers that f-35, F-22, F-16, and B-2.”

Bryan Larkin, a U.S. Defense Department contractor and founder of the Obsidian Intelligence Group — which describes itself as “a strategic partner of the United States Government” supporting intelligence communities and national security — replied to Cheong’s post affirming that possibility.

“I just wanna state for the record I have been warning the U.S. Govt about a potential leak” of the F-35’s operating system “for literally over a year and half now,” Larkin commented.

Whether the aircraft in question was hacked remains speculative at this time. But, what we know for sure is that the F-35 — as with other modern weapon systems — is highly computerized. And computerized systems anywhere can be vulnerable.

The question of F-35 cyber security was raised by Kris Osborn of Warrior Maven and the Center for Military Modernization. In a report on Air Force cyber resilience efforts in 2021, Osborn [observed](#) that F-35s have “complex computer systems ... that need careful monitoring to fend off enemies on many fronts.”

In response to the incident, the Marine Corps ordered a two-day aviation stand down and the service has begun an investigation. But multiple Marine aviation incidents in recent weeks raise significant concerns. According to [Joseph Trevithick at The War Zone](#), the loss of the F-35 “over the weekend is ... the third major Marine aircraft accident to occur in the past six weeks.



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