



Nighthawk Sunset



Left: On the early morning of Friday 11 August 2006, Detachment 1 performed its very last dual-door JDAM release test. Flying at around 19,000 ft (5790 m) over the McGregor range, the 'Dragon' released nearly simultaneously two inertial GBU-31s with their antennas quickly picking up the satellite signals for orientation and guidance to their individual pre-programmed targets, in this case two armed vehicles parked at each end of a pontoon bridge.

Below: The aircraft is seen prior to the mission, with the two GBU-31s suspended from the bomb trapezes.



F-117 received a new single-tone grey paint scheme in January 2006. This was also done in preparation for a test plan called F-117 Advanced Threat Defeat – Tactics Development & Evaluation (TD&E), in which follow-on testing was scheduled to further explore the grey paint scheme and to continue to develop the related tactics and employment of the F-117 in conjunction with the F-22.

With preparations started in Fiscal Year '05, this test was also aimed at exploring ways to defeat emerging world threats by using better tactics. It

utilised different formation tactics, paint schemes, strike force compositions and jamming efforts. Flight testing was approved to take place in Fiscal Year '06. This test was itself a lead-in programme that was going to help support the Global Strike TD&E effort, which is the Air Force doctrine to obtain a strike capability anywhere on the globe. Phase 1 of the Global Strike TD&E was successfully completed in the summer of 2006, but as both tests were cancelled for Det 1, the Dragon Test Team was unable to demonstrate in this follow-on test the advances made using the grey

paint scheme and new tactics.

In Fiscal Year '06 tests continued on F-117 OPF-87 Combined DT/OT/FDE to expedite its fielding. They started on 26 October 2005 and lasted until 5 July 2006. Upon completion, Detachment 1 made the fielding recommendation to have the upgrade released, which was formally accepted 9 August 2006. It was another fine example of the combined Developmental Test and Operational Test effort.

In 2006, tests were finalised for F-117 Target Area Planning v17 and v18, and the latter was