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Once Just F-22, Raptor Now Is the "F/A-22"

Gen. John P. Jumper, Air Force Chief of Staff, announced Sept. 17 a change in designation for the service's new fighter. The F-22 is now the F/A-22.

The new designation, Jumper told an audience at the Air Force Association's National Convention in Washington, D.C., more accurately describes the fighter's true role.

"Secretary [of the Air Force James G.] Roche and I have decided to adopt the name F/A-22, using the A [attack] prefix to emphasize the multiple roles and many dimensions of the Raptor," he said.

In a written statement, Jumper said, "Advances in technology and emerging Air Force doctrine make today's Raptor very different from the fighter envisioned when the F-22 program was first planned."

He went on, "The Raptor's most significant contributions over the next 30 years will be its attack role, particularly against the most lethal next two generations of surface-to-air missiles."