

NORTH AMERICAN AVIATION INC.

INGLEWOOD CALIFORNIA



February 2, 1942.

Subject: Production of P-51 Mustang Fighter
Airplanes.

North American
Address reply to
North American Aviation, Inc.
Inglewood, California

Reference: 10384

To: Asst. Chief, Materiel Division, A. C.
Wright Field,
Dayton, Ohio.

Through: Air Corps Resident Representative. FEB - 3 1942 *RB*

Enclosure: (A) Report No. 1778-A.

1. The subject aircraft were originally contracted for by the British in May 1940, without prototype, and a total of 620 were ordered at this time and in subsequent orders. Under the Defense Aid program, 150 additional were ordered by the Army, making a total of 770 aircraft.

2. Approximately 220 have been delivered and the production rate is now 78 per month. Starting about March 1, the production rate will be 104 per month in conjunction with the Inglewood production of 104 B-25 bombers per month. At this rate the fighters will all be delivered by August, 1942, and no additional orders have been indicated.

3. As a quick review, the Mustang is powered with an Allison engine of 12,000-foot critical altitude with a maximum speed of 386 M.P.H. at 15,000 feet without backfire screens (allowing for ram), and is armed with four (4) 50 caliber and four (4) thirty caliber machine guns. The last one hundred and fifty (150) will be armed with four (4) 20 mm. Hispano-Suiza cannons. The airplane has been tested with a new blower raising the engine rating from 1150 H.P. at 12,000 feet to 1125 H.P. at 15,000 feet. The actual speed in military trim was increased to 395 M.P.H. at 18,000 feet. The Allison Company is preparing to bring out a two-speed engine which can be mounted upon the same engine mount which will increase the speed to substantially more than 400 MPH at at least 21,000 feet. Current studies are at hand indicating that a 300-pound bomb rack may be provided on each wing and that dive flaps can be installed. Extra fuel tanks can also be carried increasing the present maximum range from about 1550 miles to 1700 miles without difficulty.

4. This airplane has been thoroughly tested by the British and most of the information available is in the hands of the British representatives and military pilots. However, two airplanes have been turned over to the Air Corps in accordance with our original contract. Based on all available information and comment, this Company believes that this airplane is the best combat fighter and ground support plane currently in production in this country, all

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Auth. Dir. AAC

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points considered. It is certainly the most adaptable to production and easiest to maintain in service. It is fitted with substantially all the features desired by the British representatives.

5. Consequently it is felt that within a few months there will be a great demand for additional quantities of these airplanes, particularly after actual combat experience is obtained. The flying characteristics and maneuverability are reported to be exceptionally good. Admittedly, this is only our point of view and it does not take all factors into account. However, it is our duty to so inform you and to point out that the time has come, if not actually past, when continuity of production of this model can be maintained. If additional airplanes are ordered at once, the new features can be engineered and incorporated and comparatively little loss of production will result. If such an order is not forthcoming, arrangements will be made to dismantle and store the tools and the plant will be re-arranged to produce only B-25 airplanes.

6. We are enclosing a copy of the latest engineering studies on this airplane.

7. Your immediate comment is urgently requested.

NORTH AMERICAN AVIATION, INC.

J. H. Kindelberger
J. H. Kindelberger,
President.

JHK:mfr

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