

# **Touchstone Advanced Composites, a Core Natural Resources Company, Supports Development of Northrop Grumman's YFQ-48A Talon Blue Autonomous Aircraft**

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Touchstone Advanced Composites, part of the Innovations business unit of [Core Natural Resources](#) (NYSE: CNR), is fabricating complex structural tooling for Northrop Grumman's next-generation YFQ-48A Talon Blue Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA). Touchstone Advanced Composites played an integral part in Talon Blue's successful autonomous taxi test in Mojave, California.

Touchstone is collaborating with Northrop Grumman to provide its unique CFOAM® tooling material and to fabricate certain parts for the aircraft. Northrop Grumman is developing Talon Blue as a modular, cost-effective and rapidly deployable autonomous wingman with the most advanced manufacturing techniques.

Aircraft like this are built with a different philosophy than traditional manned fighters, emphasizing scalability, adaptability, and cost. Touchstone's integrated capabilities make it well-suited for programs requiring specialized, streamlined production, with an approach designed to move quickly and evolve seamlessly from prototype to full-scale manufacturing.

In particular, Touchstone's innovative CFOAM® technology, which is used to make the tools or molds for manufacturing composite aerospace parts, supports this philosophy by providing high-precision, thermally stable tools that can be readily modified as the aircraft is designed and easily transitioned from development to initial production. CFOAM® is made from domestically sourced bituminous coal.

"Our focus is on bridging the gap between prototype and full-rate production without compromising performance," said Dan Connell, president of Core's Innovations business unit. "By providing a versatile material with tight control over thermal properties and material behavior, we're able to support a faster, more adaptable engineering process as aircraft continue to evolve. CFOAM® is a great example of how Core Natural Resources is creating new value propositions for coal, positioning it as a key material in next-generation applications across advanced manufacturing sectors such as aerospace and defense."

For more information about Touchstone Advanced Composites, please visit <https://touchstoneac.com/>

#### About Core's Innovations Group

Core's Innovations group continues to drive progress across its entire raft of next-generation coal applications and products. For instance, its aerospace business now includes 75,000 square feet of manufacturing space in West Virginia and Texas and has become a full-service provider of high-performance materials, tooling, parts, and assemblies to meet the growing needs of our nation's aerospace and defense sector. Its C-BATT joint venture has the potential to reduce America's heavy reliance on imported Chinese graphite, which is a key component in lithium-ion batteries. In addition, the Innovations team continues to explore the development potential of rare earth elements and critical minerals across Core Natural Resources' entire mining platform.

#### About Northrop Grumman

Northrop Grumman is a leading global aerospace and defense technology company. Our pioneering solutions equip our customers with the capabilities they need to connect and protect the world and push the boundaries of human exploration across the universe. Driven by a shared purpose to solve our customers' toughest problems, our employees define possible every day.

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