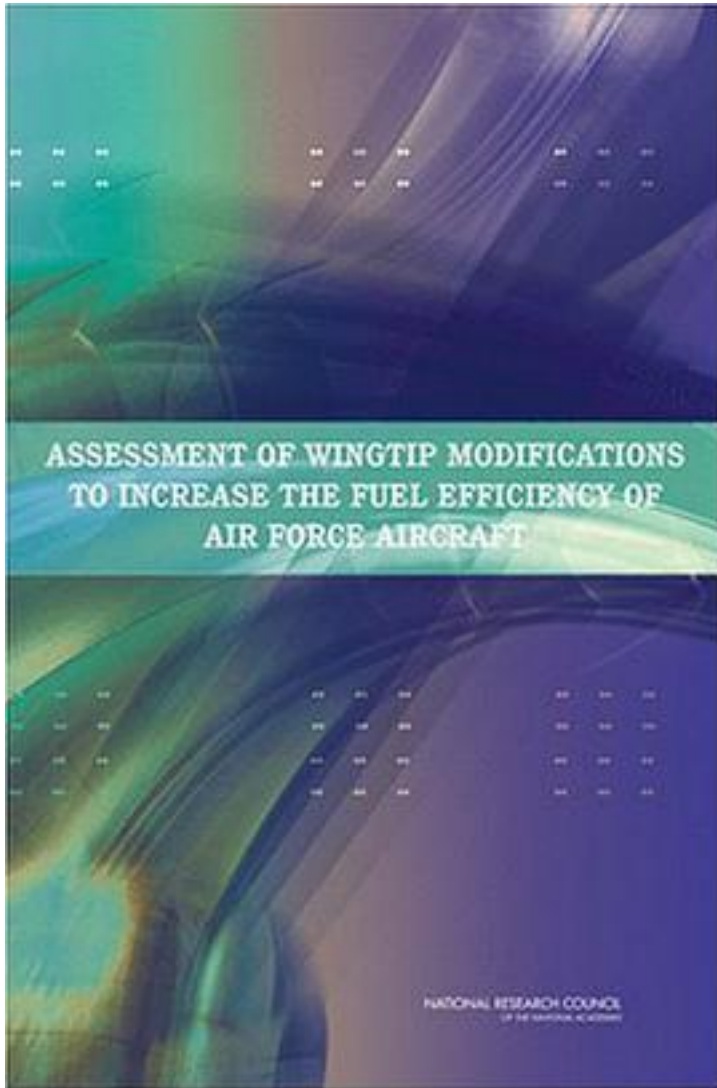


Assessment of Wingtip Modifications to Increase the Fuel Efficiency of Air Force Aircraft



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The high cost of aviation fuel has resulted in increased attention by Congress and the Air Force on improving military aircraft fuel efficiency. One action considered is modification of the aircraft's wingtip by installing, for example, winglets to reduce drag. While common on commercial aircraft, such modifications have been less so on military aircraft. In an attempt to encourage greater Air Force use in this area, Congress, in H. Rept. 109-452, directed the Air Force to provide a report examining the feasibility of modifying its aircraft with winglets. To assist in this effort, the Air Force asked the NRC to evaluate its aircraft inventory and identify those aircraft that may be good candidates for winglet modifications. This report - which considers other wingtip modifications in addition to winglets - presents a review of wingtip modifications; an examination of previous analyses and experience with such modifications; and an assessment of wingtip modifications for various Air Force aircraft and potential investment strategies.

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目录:

[Assessment of Wingtip Modifications to Increase the Fuel Efficiency of Air Force Aircraft_下载链接1](#)

标签

评论

[Assessment of Wingtip Modifications to Increase the Fuel Efficiency of Air Force Aircraft_下载链接1](#)

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