

Sentinel: what the reset does—and does not—prove

The program has documented progress, but not a delivered operational capability or a final replacement baseline established by this review. Evidence cutoff: September 24, 2026, 10:55:44 UTC. This is a dated accountability brief, not live status.

1. Preserve the original promise

The September 2020 baseline's **initial operational capability objective was June 2029**, with a June 2030 threshold. The Air Force now targets initial capability in the **early 2030s**. That broad target is neither an exact replacement IOC date nor proof that the formal capability definition is unchanged. The July 2024 decision allowed the program to continue but rescinded Milestone B; a new decision is targeted for end-2026. [1, 2, 3]

2. Compare like dollars—and dated estimates

The historical MSAR comparison is **\$77.7407bn → \$106.4269bn**, both constant FY2020 dollars, with the same 659 acquisition end items. That is **+\$28.6862bn / +36.90%**. Military construction accounts for about **42.0%** of that increase. These are pre-recertification estimate comparisons, not 2026 spending or a newly approved baseline. [1]

The later July 2024 release reports **\$140.9bn and 81% growth** without explicitly labeling the dollar basis. Preserve that attribution; do not mix it into the historical chart or subtract it from the MSAR's then-year estimate to claim savings. GAO's 2026 current cost row remains under review. [2, 4]

3. Do not confuse an earlier test with recovered capability

GAO explains that the **2027 pad-based first-flight target** has a different scope from the previously planned silo-based flight. The revised silo-based target is **Q3 FY2030**. On September 14, the Air Force reported completed **inert assembly** and a first-flight-specific design review—not a flight or IOC. [4, 5]

4. Keep funding, contracts and outcomes separate

The FY2027 budget requests **\$4.521370bn for GBSD EMD RDT&E**. The same exhibit shows FY2026's **\$4.805352bn total** as \$2.616352bn discretionary enacted plus \$2.189bn mandatory spend plan. That is one program element, not the complete acquisition bill; a request is not an outlay. [6]

The 2020 development award was **\$13.293562839bn**, with **\$85m obligated initially**. A separate 2026 training-facility award was **\$113.852388m**, with the same amount reported obligated. The facility's March 2029 contract-completion estimate and later early-2030s opening target are different observations, not a verified extension. [7, 8, 9]

The next decision needs receipts, not a new headline

Look for a signed replacement baseline with a price basis and scope; a completed flight test with its definition preserved; a defined initial-capability declaration; and a reconciled funding/transition record. Groundbreakings and assembly are real progress, but none independently answers those questions.

Read the full record: programreceipts.com/sentinel. The accompanying report contains the source register, preserved comparisons, timeline, calculations and limitations. This brief is AI-assisted research, not an independent operational certification or human peer review.

Source key

1. [Air Force MSAR, December 2023 label](#), pp. 11, 13, 16–17.
2. [DoD review announcement, July 8, 2024](#).
3. [Air Force restructure targets, February 17, 2026](#).
4. [GAO-26-108457, July 2026](#), printed pp. 91–92; interim assessment, not September status.
5. [Air Force inert-assembly report, September 14, 2026](#).
6. [FY2027 R-1](#), printed p. 42, PE 0605238F.
7. [September 8, 2020 contract announcement](#), AIR FORCE.
8. [June 10, 2026 contract announcement](#), Korte Construction entry.
9. [Air Force training-unit report, September 1, 2026](#), August 17 event and opening forecast.