

# Marine Corps Adds 5th F-35B Squadron to its Force



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Alexander Goodno, the incoming commanding officer, left, and Sgt. Maj. Collin Barry, the incoming sergeant major, with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 225, Marine Aircraft Group 13, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, exchange the organizational colors during the redesignation and assumption of command ceremony at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Jan. 29, 2021. U.S. Marine Corps / Lance Cpl. Juan Anaya

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Marine Corps is converting a fifth squadron to the F-35B Lightning II strike fighter.

In a Jan. 29 ceremony at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Yuma, Arizona, the “Vikings” of Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 225 (VMFA(AW)-225) were re-designated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 225 (VMFA-225) as they engaged in the process of learning to operate and maintain the F-35B version of the Lightning II, according to a release from the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

The squadron retired its last F/A-18D Hornet strike fighter a year ago, on Jan. 23, 2020.

VMFA-225 follow VMFAs 121, 211, 122, and 242 as the Corps' fifth operational F-35B squadron. VMFA-225 moved from MCAS Miramar, California, to MCAS Yuma, Arizona, to join 211 and 122, both of which have flown combat missions in the Middle East. VMFAs 212 and 242 are based at MCAS Iwakuni, Japan.

“It’s an exciting day for [VMFA-225],” said Lt. Col. Alexander Goodno, the commanding officer of VMFA-225, in the release. “We will grow over the next 18 to 24 months to a full, combat-ready, capable squadron and be ready to do the nation’s bid in the war.”

“We have aircraft afloat right now from VMFA-122; we’re flying combat missions,” said Col. Benjamin Hutchins, commanding officer of Marine Aircraft Group 13, in the release. “We have VMFA-211 getting ready to deploy on [HMS Queen Elizabeth]. This is a busy business, this is our nation’s business, this is our Corps’ business.”

The Corps’ single F-35C squadron, VMFA-314, is scheduled to be ready for a deployment on the USS Carl Vinson in early fiscal 2022.