13th MEU Forms Complete Marine Air-Ground Task Force with Full F-35 Squadron



A U.S. Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II aircraft assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 211, Marine Aircraft Group 13, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, conducts a vertical landing on the flight deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli (LHA 7) as part of Steel Knight 24 while underway in the Pacific Ocean, Dec. 3, 2024. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Luc Boatman)

From the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, March 16, 2026

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – The 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) has officially formed as a complete Marine Air-Ground Task Force with the addition of its major subordinate elements, bringing the MEU's full capability together under

one command.

The 13th MEU Command Element welcomed Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 2/4, which will serve as the Ground Combat Element; Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) 13, which will serve as the Logistics Combat Element; and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 364 (Reinforced) and Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 211, which together form the Aviation Combat Element. VMFA-211 will provide a full squadron of F-35B Lightning II aircraft, significantly expanding the aviation capabilities of the unit.

Together, these units form a Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF), enabling command and control of ground, aviation, and logistics capabilities and forming a single, rapidly deployable force capable of executing a wide range of missions from the sea.

“Compositing the 13th MEU brings together the full capabilities of a Marine Air-Ground Task Force,” said Col. Richard Alvarez, commanding officer of the 13th MEU. “That integration gives national leaders another flexible, lethal, sea-based force ready to respond when needed.”

As the Ground Combat Element, BLT 2/4, provides the infantry forces of the MEU and serves as the principal ground maneuver element of the MAGTF.

The Aviation Combat Element, comprised of VMM-364 (Rein.) and VMFA-211, provides the MEU with a full spectrum of Marine Corps aviation capabilities in support of MAGTF operations.

CLB-13, the Logistics Combat Element, provides a broad range of sustainment capabilities that allow the MEU to operate and sustain itself in any environment.

“The strength of The Fighting 13th has always been its Marines and Sailors,” said Sgt. Maj. Gerald Furnari, the senior enlisted advisor of the 13th MEU. “Every generation that

serves in this unit adds to its legacy, and today’s team stands ready to answer the nation’s call.”

The composite of the MEU marks the beginning of an intensive training cycle during which the command, ground, aviation, and logistics elements will train together before deploying aboard U.S. Navy amphibious ships as part of an Amphibious Ready Group.

The 13th MEU was established at Camp Pendleton on Feb. 1, 1985, as the 13th Marine Amphibious Unit, and was redesignated as the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit on Feb. 5, 1988. Known as “The Fighting 13th,” the unit has deployed around the world in support of combat operations, crisis response missions, and humanitarian assistance efforts.