EA-6B Prowler Naval Electronic Attack Aircraft Set for Retirement



CHERRY POINT, N.C. (Feb. 28, 2019) Two U.S. Marine Corps EA-6B Prowlers assigned to Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron (VMAQ) 2, fly off the coast of North Carolina, Feb 28, 2019.

ARLINGTON, Va. —The Northrop Grumman EA-6B Prowler electronic attack aircraft will be retired from naval service on March 8 in ceremonies at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.

The last squadron to operate the Prowler, Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron Two (VMAQ-2) will say farewell to its last two —which reportedly are bound for museums—of six Prowlers as the squadron is deactivated.

VMAQ-2 returned to Cherry Point in November from its final deployment ata base in the Central Command area of responsibility.

VMAQ-2 is the last of four VMAQ squadrons to operate the Prowler. The other three squadrons —VMAQ-1, VMAQ-3 and VMAQ-4, two of which were formed from detachments of VMAQ-2 and one of which became a fleet replacement training squadron (VMAQT-1) until it was no longer needed —have been deactivated, one each year —over the past three years.

The VMAQ squadrons have deployed their EA-6Bs to numerous bases and aircraft carriers over their service, providing electronic jamming and attack in support of joint forces, including participation in combat operations in Libya, Kuwait, Iraq, Syria, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

The Marine Corps is not fielding a direct replacement for the

EA-6B, instead relying on other platforms like the F-35B, organic electronic warfare systems such as the Intrepid Tiger pod and the Navy’s electronic attack squadrons.

The Navy retired the EA-6B from operational squadron service in 2015.The Prowler entered combat during 1972 over North Vietnam and served in numerous conflicts and crises since, most notably in Operations El Dorado Canyon, Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Allied Force, Desert Fox, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The service now flies the EA-18G Growler electronic attack aircraft from aircraft carriers and in expeditionary roles from land bases to support joint forces.