

Second Navy Squadron Ready for F-35C Transition



An F-35C Lightning II carrier variant joint strike fighter launches from the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68). U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Shauna C. Sowersby

ARLINGTON, Va. – The second Navy strike fighter squadron (VFA) slated for transition to the F-35C Lightning II strike fighter has made its last flight in the F/A-18E Super Hornet.

The Warhawks of VFA-97, based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California, flew the Super Hornet for the last time on Feb. 26. For more than a year, the squadron has operated older F/A-18Es in an adversary role to help train sister VFA squadrons in aerial combat.

The Warhawks will receive transition training at Lemoore from VFA-125, the fleet replacement squadron for the F-35C.

VFA-97 will become the Navy's second fleet F-35C squadron. The first, VFA-147, is scheduled to deploy later this year with

Carrier Air Wing Two on USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70).

VFA-97 had operated the F/A-18 Hornet since 1991, and the F/A-18E Super Hornet since 2013.

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 (VMFA-314) also has completed transition to the F-35C and is scheduled to deploy on a carrier in fiscal 2022.