

## Maintenance Award Media Clips

1. *The Mayport Mirror*, "SIMA Wins DoD Maintenance Award", 9/18/03
2. *The Carolina Flyer*, "DOD-level winning squadron compete for Phoenix Award", 9/19/03
3. *The Sun Journal*, "DoD Recognizes Cherry Point Squadron", 11/1/03
4. *Windsock*, "MALS Receives Phoenix Awards", 11/6/03
5. *The Frontline*, "3/7 Inf. Wins DoD Maintenance Award", 11/6/03

## Anticipated Placements:

- *Surroundings* (Oceana)
- *Mayport Mirror* (Mayport) new article with photos next week
- *Beaufort Gazette* (Fort Stewart)
- *Tidewater Women* (Oceana)



## **The Mirror - Mayport Base Publication**

[http://www.mayportmirror.com/stories/091803/may\\_simadod001a.shtml](http://www.mayportmirror.com/stories/091803/may_simadod001a.shtml)

## **SIMA Wins DoD Maintenance Award**

*From DoD*

The Department of Defense announced the recipients of the 2003 Defense Maintenance Awards, including SIMA Mayport in the medium category. Each year the Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards Program recognizes outstanding achievements in military equipment and weapon systems maintenance by organizations of the military services. Awards are presented in the categories of small, medium, and large units.

As part of the 2003 DoD Maintenance Symposium and Exhibition, the awards will be presented at the Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards Banquet on Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2003, at the Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia, Pa. This year's Phoenix winner will be announced at the awards banquet and will be presented the prestigious Phoenix Trophy. The recipient of the Phoenix Award is selected from the six maintenance award winners and is recognized as the "best of the best" field-level maintenance unit within DoD.

The recipients of this year's Secretary of Defense maintenance awards are as follows:

Small category: Strike Fighter Squadron Eight One, Naval Air Station, Oceana, Va.; 74th Fighter Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, Fayetteville, N.C.

Medium category: SIMA Mayport; Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12, Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan.

Large category: 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Stewart, Ga.; Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 14, Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C.

Additional information regarding the 2003 DoD Maintenance Symposium and Exhibition can be found at <http://www.sae.org/dod>.

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DOD-level winning squadron compete for Phoenix Award

By Ed Drohan  
43rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Pope's 74th Fighter Squadron has been named winner of the 2003 Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award in the small category.

The A-10 Thunderbolt II unit is now in the running for Phoenix Award as the top maintenance unit in DOD. That award will be announced at the Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards Ceremony and Banquet Oct. 29 at King of Prussia, Pa. The 74th was the only Air Force winner out of six units in the small, medium and large categories.

According to Chief Master Sgt. Robert Blackburn, the 74th maintainers excelled in all four categories that were judged as part of the award criteria. Chief Blackburn is in the process of moving to Langley AFB, Va., but was the maintenance superintendent and chief enlisted manager during the award time frame, which was before maintenance was reorganized, out of the flying squadron and into the 23rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

The selection panel looked at mission accomplishments, effective use of maintenance resources, innovative management accomplishments and personnel quality of life programs when determining the award winners, Chief Blackburn said.

It was during the award time frame that the 74th made history by becoming the first Air Force unit to forward-deploy twice from a contingency base, Chief Blackburn said. The first was from a deployed location in Southwest Asia to a classified location to support Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan. The second deployment was to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, where they again made history by being the first U.S. fighter aircraft to operate out of the beleaguered country.

While operating out of austere camps, they were able to execute 100 percent of their air tasking orders with near-perfect maintenance effectiveness, Chief Blackburn said. At Bagram, squadron members worked to clear unexploded ordnance, set up a tent city and got maintenance and flying operations working to support 300 Air Force personnel and six aircraft.

Col. Vincent DiFronzo, the 23rd Fighter Group commander, happened to be the air operations officer during Operation Enduring Freedom at the time and had a front-seat view of the 74th's action during Operation Anaconda and their subsequent move to Afghanistan.

"It was the first time they decided to put A-10s into Afghanistan after the first night of Anaconda," Colonel DiFronzo said. "We called and the aircraft were airborne within 14 hours and into the fight. That was unprecedented.

"The maintenance piece was so impressive because they jumped right into recovering the aircraft," the colonel said. "It was a four-hour trip in an A-10 to get into the battle area, and then they had to recover into a classified area with no notice. They were there for a week, went back to (their original Southwest Asia location) and deployed to Bagram a few days later, and the whole time they met every A-10 tasking."

Even while the squadron wasn't deployed to Southwest Asia, it was supporting exercises such as Air Warrior II at Barksdale AFB, La., Red Flag at Nellis AFB, Nev. and a joint combat search and rescue exercise at Patrick AFB, Fla. Despite the extraordinarily high operations tempo, 74th maintainers were able to improve five key maintenance indicators, to include increasing the mission capable rate and lowering the mission abort rate for the A-10s, all of which are more than 20 years old, the chief said.

Quality of life issues were also important to the squadron. The 74th stood up their spouse's organization, a program which has now spread to other units on base, and started an Adopt-an-Airman program. The unit also boasts an awards program that has led to 80 percent of those submitted winning awards at the base, wing and higher headquarters level, Chief Blackburn said.

"I am tremendously proud of these people," Chief Blackburn said. "There is no doubt in my mind they are the best maintainers in the Air Force and in DOD."

Colonel DiFronzo agreed.

"I am extremely proud of them," the colonel said. "They are a great example of what happens when you have a can-do attitude and step up to meet the challenge when it's needed."



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DoD recognizes Cherry Point squadron, *The Sun Journal*

By Ken Buday/Managing Editor

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Defense named a Cherry Point logistics squadron one of the best in the world during a ceremony Wednesday night.

Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-14 received one of six awards presented during the Department of Defense Maintenance Symposium and Exhibition that honors the best military field-level maintenance units. The award is for outstanding achievements in military equipment and weapon systems maintenance.

MALS-14 is the largest maintenance squadron in the Marine Corps. The squadron is responsible for fixing airplane parts of AV-8B Harriers, F-18 Hornets and EA-6B Prowlers and services 10 jet squadrons. MALS-14 is also responsible for fixing parts of a squadron of unmanned reconnaissance planes.

Nicknamed the Dragons, the unit handled 33,500 components and parts, with Marines working 638,000 hours to produce a repair rate of 70 percent. The average repair time was less than 12 days, considered by the Department of Defense to be a "remarkable performance."

A lot of that work took place when MALS-14 was deployed to the Persian Gulf during operations in Iraq earlier this year. The unit left the Morehead City port Jan. 27 on the SS Wright, along with MALS-31 in Beaufort, S.C., and MALS-11 in Miramar, Calif. MALS-14 returned home on June 8.

MALS-14 was commanded by Lt. Col. Richard P. Flatau during the deployment and now is in the hands of Lt. Col. John A. Rutherford.

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<http://www.thewindsockonline.com/Repository/ml.asp?Issue=WSK/2003/11/06&ID=Ar00102&Mode=HTML>

*The Windsock*, Thursday, NOV 06, 2003; Section:Front Page; Page 1

"MALS receives Phoenix award"

By PFC. JESSE R. STENCE STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Without the proper technical and logistical support, aircraft aboard Cherry Point can't get off of the ground. That's why it is imperative for Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 14 to consistently perform at a high level. Now, MALS 14 is receiving national recognition for doing just that.

On Oct. 29, the Department Defense Maintenance Symposium in King of Prussia, Pa., awarded the Phoenix Trophy Award to the best maintenance department in the United States Armed Forces. It, an annual prize, is the most auspicious decoration possible for a maintenance squadron to receive.

Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 14, named one of two large-department winners of the 2003 Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award, was among seven departments vying for the Phoenix Trophy Award. MALS-14 went up against the other large department winner of the Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award, the two small department winners, the two medium department winners, and the joint-service winner.

In progressing this far, MALS-14 has already been evaluated by several panels and, according to Maj. Ryan Goulette, the squadron's operations officer, beaten out hundreds of other maintenance departments. In doing so, MALS-14 had to demonstrate a pattern of mission accomplishment, resourcefulness, and innovative management accomplishments superior to other large maintenance departments.

"We have between 11 and 12 hundred personnel working in various departments of [MALS-14]," said Goulette. "Anything over 1,000 is classified as a large department."

Because they are responsible for maintaining equipment for the largest and most complex air wing in the Marine Corps, all of the subdivisions within MALS-14 must communicate, understand each other's needs, and master their own duties.

According to Goulette, effectiveness as a maintenance squadron depends on "good communication between maintenance , supply, avionics and ordnance in terms of what there concerns are, and - on the grass roots level - having familiarity with the unique characteristics of different aircraft."

Maj. Marc Howell, the aviation maintenance officer with MALS-14 said the speed with which the squadron has to adapt to developing situations necessitates this close cooperation.

"It was a tough year with everything that went on," said Howell. "We had Marines on the USS Bataan, USS Nassau and SS Wright. We had guys on shore. We had Marines in Saudi Arabia, and we had Marines deployed to Iwakuni, Japan. We have several work centers that operate around the clock. We have guys that are on call every weekend. We work hand in hand - tied together almost like Siamese twins."

In spite of the constant flux of change and challenge that flows through Cherry Point, the quality of the work done by MALS-14 remains outstanding. The elimination of all "bare firewalls" - or aircraft without engines - aboard the air station is a bench-mark of MALS-14's standard of exemplary work.

"If everything that we produce comes out defective, we 're not doing anything to support our troops," said Howell. "Quality control, or quality assurance, is my number one concern."

According to Howell, MALS-14's ability to work quickly while preserving the quality of their labor is a credit, not only to himself and his unit, but to every unit at Cherry Point that plays a part in putting aircraft in the sky. "It 's not a MALS award, it's a MAG award," he said, referring to the efforts of each individual element in the Marine Air Ground Task Force. But he was not belittling the effort of the Marines in his unit.

"It 's a credit to our staff non-commissioned officers and our junior enlisted Marines. They 're kicking some butt. They 're making the unit look real good. We 've got a lot of young folks out there that want to make a difference."

The assistant operations officer with MALS-14 agreed. "I 've been here almost a year and a half, and from what I 've seen, I think the squadron is well deserving of this honor," said Capt. Eric J. Grimm. "I think everyday is worthwhile. Walking away from here everyday, it feels like something was accomplished, something has been fixed, something has been resolved."

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*The Frontline*, "3/7 Inf. Wins DoD Maintenance Award", 11/6/03  
By Plc. Benjamin T. Brody

<http://www.stewart.army.mil/frontlineonline/archivedpages/FrontlineOnline11-06-03News.pdf>

See .pdf file