



THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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For Open Publication

3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

Sep 26, 2023

ACQUISITION  
AND SUSTAINMENT OFFICE OF PREPUBLICATION AND SECURITY REVIEW

Department of Defense

SEP 19 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
CHIEFS OF THE MILITARY SERVICES  
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

SUBJECT: 2023 Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards Selection

The Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards Program recognizes the Department of Defense's most outstanding military maintenance units in four categories: Sustainment Training, Advice, and Assistance of Foreign Military Forces Award; the Robert T. Mason Award for Depot Maintenance Excellence; the Rear Admiral Grace M. Hopper Award for Software Maintenance Excellence; and the field-level awards. I am pleased to inform you of the 2023 Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award winners listed below. A brief narrative of each unit's accomplishments is attached.

An awards banquet and ceremony will be held in conjunction with the 2023 DoD Maintenance Symposium at the San Diego Convention Center in San Diego, California on Tuesday, December 19, 2023.

SUSTAINMENT TRAINING, ADVICE, AND ASSISTANCE OF FOREIGN MILITARY FORCES AWARD

Ministerial Category

- Ministry of Defense Resident Advisor Team – Kyiv, Ukraine, Institute for Security Governance, Defense Security Cooperation University, Defense Security Cooperation Agency

Operational Category

- 95th Transportation Company, 498th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Camp Carroll, Republic of Korea, United States Army

ROBERT T. MASON AWARD FOR DEPOT MAINTENANCE EXCELLENCE

- Submarine Maintenance, Modernization and Overhaul Program, Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility, United States Navy

REAR ADMIRAL GRACE M. HOPPER AWARD FOR SOFTWARE MAINTENANCE EXCELLENCE

- 76th Software Engineering Group, Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex, Air Force Materiel Command, United States Air Force

## FIELD-LEVEL AWARDS

### Large Category

- 1st Maintenance Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Forces Pacific, United States Marine Corps
- 18th Maintenance Group, Kadena Air Base, Pacific Air Forces, United States Air Force

### Medium Category

- Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39, Marine Aircraft Group 39, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, United States Marine Corps
- Southeast Regional Maintenance Center, Naval Station Mayport, United States Navy

### Small Category

- Forward Support Company, 84th Engineer Battalion, Schofield Barracks, United States Army
- 912th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Edwards Air Force Base, Air Force Materiel Command, United States Air Force

From the six field-level award winning units, one is singled out as the very best and named the Phoenix Award winner. The winning unit will be announced at the awards ceremony.

My points of contact in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Materiel Readiness are Mr. John Shultz, john.h.shultz6.civ@mail.mil, (703) 571-2356, and Mr. Chuck Field, charles.e.field4.ctr@mail.mil, (703) 459-0701.

Please extend my sincere congratulations on behalf of the Secretary of Defense to each of your Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award winners and to all nominees for their outstanding efforts.



William A. LaPlante

Attachment:  
As stated

**2023 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
MAINTENANCE AWARD WINNERS' SUMMARIES**

**Secretary of Defense Sustainment Training, Advice,  
and Assistance of Foreign Military Forces Award  
Ministerial Category**

**Ministry of Defense Resident Advisor Team – Kyiv, Ukraine  
Institute for Security Governance  
Defense Security Cooperation Agency**

The Ukraine Ministry of Defense Resident Advisor team faced unprecedented challenges when the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv ordered a departure in February 2022 ahead of the Russian large-scale invasion. The team quickly developed evacuation plans and procedures to maintain contact with key counterparts within the Ministry of Defense, General Staff, and Cabinet of Ministers. Their conduct of critical security cooperation activities while operating out of the U.S. European Command headquarters effectively leveraged a well-established network of government contacts and deep knowledge of the Ukrainian defense and security sectors. The team expertly managed efforts aimed at countering Russian aggression, including enhanced strategic communications, substantive information exchanges, in-depth analysis of Ukrainian logistics operations, and development of security assistance support packages associated with Presidential Drawdown Authorities and Ukraine Security Assistance Initiatives. Their efforts highlighted unwavering resolve in the face of an active enemy threat, and substantially strengthened the U.S.-Ukraine relationship. The Ministry of Defense Resident Advisor Team's superior professionalism and dedication reflect great credit upon themselves, the Institute for Security Governance, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, and the Department of Defense.

**Secretary of Defense Sustainment Training, Advice,  
and Assistance of Foreign Military Forces Award  
Operational Category**

**95th Transportation Company  
498th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion  
Camp Carrol, Republic of Korea  
United States Army**

The 95th Transportation Company maintained an exceptional “fight tonight” capability by providing transportation of bulk and retail fuel across Area IV of the Korean peninsula in support of strategic operations. The unit maintained a high state of readiness throughout the year despite a high operations tempo, which included traveling 85,000 miles and successfully conducting multiple fuel missions with zero accidents. The company worked shoulder-to-shoulder with members of the host nation's 53rd Regional Defense Division to improve integration and involvement with foreign security forces for contingency operations. They conducted joint training exercises to ensure effective teamwork and interoperability while building individual fighting skills, which ultimately increased operational readiness and strengthened the alliance between the Republic of Korea and the U.S. Army. Furthermore, the company provided game-

changing assistance and support to the Republic of Korea's Multiple Launch Rocket System by repairing components locally, saving the nation second destination costs and increasing readiness in South Korea. The 95th Transportation Company's actions are in keeping with the finest traditions of the 498th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Material Support Command-Korea, the United States Army, and the Department of Defense.

**Robert T. Mason Award**  
**For Depot Maintenance Excellence**

**Submarine Maintenance, Modernization, and Overhaul Program**  
**Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility**  
**United States Navy**

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility's astounding team of military, civilian, and contractor professionals completed strategically significant repairs to vital naval assets, ensuring operationally available and combat ready ships. They provided a capable, ready, and "fit to fight" fleet, as one of the nation's leading strategic assets in the Indo-Pacific theater through excellence in repair, overhaul, and maintenance of submarines. The well-trained workforce successfully returned the USS TOPEKA and USS MISSISSIPPI in war fighting condition ahead of schedule and under cost. Additionally, crews performed upgrades and overhauls on the USS HAWAII and USS MINNESOTA with a focus on multiple key metrics, including on-time starts, finishes, and overall production throughput. Project teams for these Virginia-Class submarines faced significant challenges with severe parts shortages coupled with very long procurement lead times. They implemented game-changing technologies and innovations across logistics process to ingeniously provide short-term solutions, which drove long lasting impacts across the fleet. The professionalism, precision, and insurmountable dedication of the men and women at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility are in keeping with the highest expectations and traditions of the United States Navy and the Department of Defense.

**Rear Admiral Grace M. Hopper Award**  
**For Software Maintenance Excellence**

**76th Software Engineering Group**  
**Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex**  
**United States Air Force**

The 76th Software Engineering Group distinguished itself with the ability to rapidly innovate, develop, integrate, and deploy warfighting capabilities through its in-depth weapon system engineering knowledge, paired with agile and DevSecOps principles. The group achieved phenomenal results supporting a diverse portfolio of mission requirements and facilitated the delivery of 176 software programs encompassing countless lines of code. A few of their major accomplishments included delivering software packages for E-3G communications network upgrades, fielding a tool for Space Force operators to compare multiple data sources for orbital states of satellites, and implementing major software upgrades for the Air Force's bomber fleet of B-1B Lancer, B-2 Spirit, and B-52 Stratofortress. Additionally, the Avionics Team delivered software supporting long-range standoff missile development programs, which provided a

hypersonic strike capability to destroy high-value, time sensitive targets in anti-access/area-denied environments as a key component to shoring up the nation's nuclear triad. The professionalism and commitment to excellence demonstrated by the men and women of the 76th Software Engineering Group reflect great credit upon themselves, Air Force Materiel Command, the United States Air Force, and the Department of Defense.

**Field Level Awards**  
**Large Category**

**1st Maintenance Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group**  
**I Marine Expeditionary Force**  
**Camp Pendleton, CA**  
**United States Marine Corps**

The 1st Maintenance Battalion consistently provided the highest quality of overflow and intermediate maintenance support to the 47,000 Marines of I Marine Expeditionary Force by completing 56 maintenance contact team missions to 38 units. The Battalion utilized a comprehensive intermediate maintenance efficiency strategy that oversaw the management of over 19,294 new service requests, resulting in the completion of over 95 percent of the requests and an incredible 50 percent backorder reduction in customer wait times. The Battalion was also an innovation catalyst as it leveraged new digital manufacturing methodologies and technologies to rapidly prototype and fabricate parts that had immediate impact on readiness in austere and expeditionary environments. Additionally, the steely resolve of the Battalion's Marines embodied the tenet of "train as we fight" by proactively deploying engineering, ordnance, utilities, and motor transport support across the entire I Marine Expeditionary Force area of operation. These deployments provided training and education to unit personnel that resulted in increased proficiency and a high state of equipment readiness. The 1st Maintenance Battalion's actions reflect great credit upon itself and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Marine Corps, the United States Naval Service, and the Department of Defense.

**18th Maintenance Group**  
**Kadena Air Base, Japan**  
**United States Air Force**

The 18th Maintenance Group Shoguns distinguished themselves by accomplishing superior aircraft and munitions maintenance for 80 aircraft providing air interdiction, combat search and rescue, aerial refueling, aeromedical evacuation, and command and control battle management capabilities that safeguarded national interests in the Indo-Pacific theater. In total, the group generated 7,601 sorties and 17,600 flight hours with its fleet of F-15C, F-15D, KC-135, HH-60, and E-3 aircraft. The group provided intermediate-level maintenance, engine maintenance, and test equipment calibration for the entire Indo-Pacific region as the engine centralized repair facility and hosted the only active duty Air Force base-level Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratory. Additionally, the group fulfilled the combatant commander's requirement to support a high visibility Speaker of the House trip to Taiwan. They generated 30 aircraft, 45 million dollars in munitions, and the command's longest combat search and rescue sortie ever. As a result of their epic work, the Congressional Delegation was the highest-ranking American official to safely visit Taiwan in 25 years. The professionalism and commitment to excellence

demonstrated by the men and women of the 18th Maintenance Group reflect great credit upon themselves, Pacific Air Forces, the United States Air Force, and the Department of Defense.

**Field Level Awards**  
**Medium Category**

**Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing**  
**I Marine Expeditionary Force**  
**Camp Pendleton, CA**  
**United States Marine Corps**

The Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39 Hellhounds admirably fulfilled their mission by providing superior aviation logistics support to six tactical air squadrons, one fleet replacement squadron, and one reserve squadron comprised of 178 AH-1Z Viper, UH-1Y Venom, and MV-22B Osprey aircraft. During this reporting period, the squadron performed over 64,000 maintenance actions, processed 23,000 aeronautical components, and repaired more than 16,000 items, which facilitated the execution of 23,445 flight hours and the expenditure of 1,670,000 pounds of munitions. Furthermore, the squadron established itself as the preeminent authority in the field of additive manufacturing and paved the way for greater capabilities across the Marine Corps aviation communities. Squadron maintainers used polymer three-dimensional printers to build components, job aids, and expendables that were unavailable from the supply system and utilized cold spray technology to repair metal components that were typically only repairable at the depot-level. The initiative, perseverance, and total dedication to duty of the Marines and Sailors assigned to Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39 reflect great credit upon themselves and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps, the United States Naval Service, and the Department of Defense.

**Southeast Regional Maintenance Center**  
**Naval Station Mayport, FL**  
**United States Navy**

The Southeast Regional Maintenance Center team of officers, enlisted, and civilian professionals provided cost effective quality maintenance and technical support for 9 Guided-Missile Destroyers, 10 Littoral Combat Ships, 1 Coast Guard Cutter, plus visiting ships and crafts operating within the Southeast area of responsibility. The center ensured operationally available, combat-ready ships for the fleet by successfully planning and executing three Chief of Naval Operations availabilities, 157 continuous maintenance availabilities, 3,623 fleet technical assists, 33 total ship readiness assessments, and resolving 611 casualty reports including emergent repairs with a 96 percent on-time completion rate. In addition, the center christened a cost-saving expeditionary maintenance department with over 100 Sailors joining the Maintenance Execution Team to complete local and deployed planned maintenance events on Mayport-based ships. The expeditionary maintenance teams were frequently used to complete required routine and non-major maintenance on Freedom-class Littoral Combat Ships operating in multiple areas of responsibility without the need to return to Mayport for planned maintenance. Southeast Regional Maintenance Center's professionalism and dedication to duty are in keeping with the highest expectations and traditions of the United States Navy and the Department of Defense.

**Field Level Awards**  
**Small Category**

**Forward Support Company**  
**84th Engineer Battalion**  
**Schofield Barracks, HI**  
**United States Army**

The Forward Support Company, 84th Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade is recognized for exceptionally meritorious service and excellence for mission execution by providing outstanding logistical support while accumulating more than 11,000 accident and incident free miles. The tireless efforts of the company's officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and, most importantly, its soldiers enabled rapid support of multiple field exercises, operations, and task forces throughout their area of responsibility. The Titans maintained a fleet of 180 pieces of reportable equipment, 14 ground support equipment, 101 communication equipment, 80 weapon systems, and 83 pieces of chemical defense support equipment, all while delivering an incredible operational readiness rate of 97%. Due to the tropical weather and salty environmental conditions of Hawaii, the unit faced increased rust and corrosion of equipment. To overcome the corrosion issues and prevent significant equipment down time, the company created a program that constantly repaired minor corrosion and averted any equipment from entering major stage three corrosion. The Forward Support Company's contributions reflect great credit upon the unit, the 130th Engineer Brigade, the 8th Theater Sustainment Command, the United States Army, and the Department of Defense.

**912th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron**  
**Edwards Air Force Base, CA**  
**United States Air Force**

The 912th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron distinguished itself by accomplishing superior aircraft maintenance as the premier developmental, operational, test, and evaluation squadron in the Department of Defense. The Griffins unleashed power and potential at the center of the aerospace testing universe by conducting ground and flight tests on 13 highly modified aircraft consisting of C-17, KC-135, and KC-46 tankers, B-1, B-2, and B-52 legacy bombers, and the world's first sixth generation aircraft, the B-21 Raider. They executed 22,655 maintenance actions leading to the generation of 398 missions and 1,427 flight test hours. The squadron backstopped the National Security Strategy when they generated a B-52H that live fired a Long-Range Standoff weapon, displaying nuclear modernization efforts that will deter the nation's adversaries. Furthermore, they excelled at the tip of the spear with emerging hypersonic weapons technology by successfully generating the first live fire of the Air-launched Rapid Response Weapon and the first Hypersonic Air-breathing Weapons Concept which exceeded Mach 5. The professionalism and commitment to excellence demonstrated by the men and women of the 912th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron reflect great credit upon themselves, Air Force Materiel Command, the United States Air Force, and the Department of Defense.