

# 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Fwd)

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'Purple Foxes' add fourth deployment to squadron history books



Lance Cpl. Michael Stevens

AT-TAQADDUM, Iraq (June 13, 2008) – Currently on their fourth deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), provides important services to Marines and service members throughout the Anbar Province.

As the only CH-46 Sea Knight squadron operating in country, the "Purple Foxes" provide key support functions such as command leader transports, troop inserts and extractions and cargo transport.

"On previous deployments the squadron has been the primary means for casualty evacuations, but we're not doing that anymore," said Sgt. Brian Dinning, a CH-46 crew chief with HMM-364. "It's a sign of good improvement in the province now that there are less and less evacuations necessary."



The Foxes know the level of support they bring to the war effort and take pride in everything they do.

Their efforts in getting the aircraft flying directly correlates with how much support the unit can give to each Marine, sailor, soldier, airman or coalition partner out on the ground, explained Lt. Col. Mark G. Schrecker, the squadron's commanding officer.

Although CH-46 squadrons are being phased out to make room for the Corps' newest medium-sized aircraft, the MV-22 Osprey, the Sea Knight



continues to serve as a valuable asset.

"Right now, we have the oldest aircraft in country and we're arguably carrying the highest maintenance readiness percentage. That's simply due to the Marines' efforts," said Schrecker.

As a reminder of the age and history behind the aircraft and

the squadron, painted on the side of each CH-46 is an exact replica of the logo used during its tour in Vietnam.

"The squadron history reminds the Marines how important our job is," said Schrecker. "My Marines are awesome and absolutely blow me away everyday. It's amazing how hard they work and how motivated they are."

*Posted by 3rd MAW (Forward)*

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