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# THE Desert Talon



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## Task Force 49 shifts focus to BIAP

■ *After eight months in Balad, HHC, Task Force 49 takes on a new role at BIAP*

By SGT. DALE SWEETNAM  
Task Force 49 PAO

In September 2007, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 49 was told it would have 60 days to deploy and replace Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force XII in Balad as the Combat Aviation Brigade Headquarters for Multi-National Corps-Iraq.

After eight months in theater, Task Force 49 was on the move again.

HHC, Task Force 49 completed a transfer of authority July 25 with the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade at Baghdad International Airport (BIAP). It now supports the 10th Mountain Division as the Multi-National Division-Center Combat Aviation Brigade.

"Our team has responded exceedingly well," Col. Chandler Sherrell, Task Force 49 commander said. "I think everybody has reacted well because they understand the importance of what we're being asked to do."

In its new home Task Force 49 will support Multi-National Division-Center ground forces which patrol an area ranging from the southern region of Baghdad all the way to Basrah in the south of Iraq. Multi-National Corps Iraq Commander, Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III has called this region the most important battle space in the country.

"We've accomplished the mission [in Balad] and then some," Sherrell said. "Now we've been given the opportunity to make a difference in the Corps Commander's most critical battle space."

One of the missions of Task Force 49 is to provide peace and stability to regions that were bypassed during the initial invasion, according to Sherrell.

Before Task Force 49 settled in to its new position, they received Task Force



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

A 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment AH-64 Apache lifts off for a mission at Camp Taji. 4/3 ACR, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and C Company, 412th Aviation Support Battalion's Forward Logistics Element all made the move from Camp Taji to Baghdad International Airport in early July to fall under Task Force 49.

XII back to Balad from Camp Taji and were performing two transitions simultaneously.

"There were so many moving pieces," Task Force 49 Brigade Operations Officer, Maj. James Jones said. "So many teams were out trying to set the conditions at the next location. What makes this so hard is that you still have the mission [at your original location] you are performing."

When HHC, Task Force 49 received

word that they would be moving to BIAP, the staff immediately jumped into action, according to Jones. Because the headquarters was familiar with last-minute changes, the planning process went smoothly.

The headquarters deployed an advance party to BIAP to assess equipment needs and basic living requirements. Once the initial plans were

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# Talon 6 sends . . . New mission for TF49

On 12 July, Task Force 49 cased its colors at Joint Base Balad, and the last members of the brigade headquarters boarded a pair of Black Hawks and flew about 50 miles south to join up with the rest of Task Force already at the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) setting up tactical operations. After two weeks of intense preparation and equipment set-up, Task Force 49 completed all of the requirements to undergo the transfer of authority from the 3rd Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade. On July 25, we uncased our colors at our new headquarters as we assumed the mission as the Combat Aviation Brigade for Multi National Division-Center. MND-C is currently led by the 10th Mountain Division, under the command of MG Michael L. Oates.

Just as we did in Balad, we will continue to provide the maneuver commander with the flexibility and lethality required for this dynamic battlefield. During the past eight months, the task force was flying all over Iraq, now with this new mission we are much more focused in a single area that roughly starts from Baghdad and goes south to the Kuwaiti border. Our mission focus is still much the same in that we safely launch, recover and launch aircraft around the clock. Often the pilots are the stars in the spotlight of Task Force 49's achievements. But the brigade's



dedicated and talented mechanics and support personnel deserve an equal measure of credit. Of the approximately 1,200 personnel, only about 300 are pilots. The remainder is composed of maintenance, refueling and rearmament, communications, food service and TOC Soldiers. These Soldiers' devotion to excellence has helped make this brigade and deployment something we all can take pride in. These are the Soldiers getting dirty every day and making the mission happen.

As we form our new team of all-stars, I would like to give a warm welcome to organizations that make up Task Force

49. The 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (Longknife), 3-158 Assault Helicopter Battalion (Task Force Storm) and the members of the 412th Aviation Support Battalion's Forward Logistics Element (Professionals). I am looking forward to facing our new mission and the related challenges that await us. I ask that leaders at all levels continue to enforce the standards to ensure the Soldiers mitigate all risks. After months of hard work, and now amid triple digit temperatures, it's easy to become complacent as we settle into our routines. The saying "complacency kills," might be considered a cliché, but it's not something to be taken lightly. All leaders and Soldiers must ensure the repetition of their schedules does not lead to avoidable mistakes. Let's successfully complete the remainder of this deployment so every one of us can arrive home safely with accomplishments we all can be proud of. One can view our move south to BIAP as one step closer to home; which we will see in a matter of months.

To the entire Task Force 49 team: Thank you for all that you do. I am proud to serve with you and I sincerely appreciate your selfless service to our nation.

**One Team! Arctic Talons!**  
Col. Chandler C. Sherrell  
Commander, Task Force 49

## Editor's note

# TF49 public affairs sets up shop at BIAP

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 49 is settling into its new home at Baghdad International Airport and is already deep into its daily battle rhythm.

The public affairs staff is looking forward to telling the story of Task Force 49's newly inherited units. We welcome your photos and story ideas. Because we can't be everywhere at once, we need your help to tell your unit's story.

Please stop by and meet with us at our office in the Task Force 49 headquarters area in Staff Annex trailer 13. If you'd like to phone us, our NIPR number is 822-8291 and our SIPR number is 241-8371. You can reach Public Affairs NCOIC Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt at [eric.reinhardt@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:eric.reinhardt@iraq.centcom.mil), or Public Affairs NCO Sgt. Dale Sweetnam at [dale.sweetnam@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:dale.sweetnam@iraq.centcom.mil).

## Correction

On page 5 of the July edition, *The Desert Talon* incorrectly referred to the Army Aviation Association of America as the sponsor of the Army Aviation Magazine photo contest. AAAA was not associated with the contest.

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*This issue of The Desert Talon and back issues can be found on the Task Force 49 website at:*  
[http://www.wainwright.army.mil/49TF/BDE\\_WEB/](http://www.wainwright.army.mil/49TF/BDE_WEB/)

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# Talon 7 sends . . . A month of transitions

Well, Task Force 49 is finally settling down into its new role as the Multi-National Division – Center Combat Aviation Brigade. It's been a very busy month for Task Force 49: a move, setting up a new headquarters, two transfer-of-authority ceremonies and a whole new mission set.

All of you have been working hard over the last few weeks. I'm extremely proud of each and every one of the Soldiers in the brigade. A lot has been asked of you, but you made it happen through your dedication and professionalism.

Life here at BIAP is a little more austere than Balad, but it has plenty to offer, including a large PX and Iraqi bazaar, an MWR facility that offers cardio machines and weights, volleyball, on-line gaming, movies and a computer lab. There are also many facilities available elsewhere throughout the Victory Base Complex.

We're now well past the halfway point in the deployment. Even though the end of our tour is in sight, don't let your guard down. Statistically, the last few months of a deployment can be the most dangerous, because Soldiers get comfortable with their rou-



tines and allow complacency to set in. Leaders, continue to enforce the same high standards to ensure everyone returns home safe. I ask all Soldiers to use the buddy system and look out for one another. Give your Soldiers some well-deserved down time as your mission allows – it's an important factor in keeping them fit to fight. They've been working hard and there's no sign of our mission slowing down anytime soon.

Personal issues and stress are also end-of-deployment hazards we all need to be aware of. Don't be afraid to seek

help if you need it – from your chain of command, medical personnel or chaplain. Now that triple-digit temperatures are the norm, let's do all we can to prevent heat injuries. Make sure you're drinking enough water, eating right and getting enough rest.

Our comrades in Task Force Dragon (B Company, 1st 52 Aviation Regiment), who are assigned to Task Force 49, are now on their way home after a 13-month combat tour in Iraq. I'd like to wish them a safe and happy return and congratulations for a job well done. Task Force Dragon was based at Al Taqaddum Air Base (TQ) where they provided CH-47 support to the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, operating throughout Al Anbar province. They played an important role in helping to quiet the violence that plagued that area of the country.

I would like to close by thanking all the families and friends of our Arctic Warriors for the support and the care they continue to show our Soldiers. As the end of our deployment comes closer, I ask for your continued support – it's more important now than ever.

**Talon 7 Out!**

CSM Richard A. Mitchell  
Command Sergeant Major  
Task Force 49



Courtesy Photo

## Sea of Soldiers

1,215 Soldiers participate in a mass reenlistment ceremony at al-Faw Palace at Camp Victory on July 4th. Gen. David Petraeus administered the oaths and personally shook the hand of every Soldier. Six Soldiers from Task Force 49 attended the ceremony, and along with the other participants, received a coin, a certificate and an American flag for their extended commitment to the Army.



# Task Force Storm on the move again

■ *3rd Battalion, 158th Regiment works through its third change of location in 13 months*

By SGT. BRANDON LITTLE  
Task Force XII PAO

It starts with a few letters and cards; next, a box stuffed with snacks and candy. Pretty soon there's a constant stream of care packages, from loved ones and friends, jam-packed with everything from home-made cookies to electric fly-swatters.

In the span of a few months, these trinkets, and those must-have items from the PX, have grown into mountainous piles. When Soldiers and equipment must relocate, because of a mission change, something must be done with these accumulated items.

For the Soldiers of Task Force Storm, who have endured their third move in the last 13 months, this is a situation they know all too well.

The move to Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) is now complete, but to make that happen the Soldiers had to coordinate to move their equipment and personal items; all while training the units coming to replace them and continuing to perform their regular mission.

"Conducting in-theater moves between posts in Iraq are fairly easy when compared to moves in and out of theater," said Sgt. 1st Class Derrick Mims, the Task Force Storm movement noncommissioned officer. "There's not as much paperwork and planning, because all you have to do is fill out a couple of forms, and then they just put the equipment containers on a trailer and convoy them where they need to go."

Even though the original move, from Joint Base Balad to Camp Taji, might have been an inconvenient experience for the Soldiers; it was definitely a learning experience that helped them with this move, said



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Derrick Mims



(Top) Sgt. Raymond Speed, the unit movement noncommissioned officer for Company D, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, carries the base for an equipment container being shipped to Baghdad International Airport. (Left) Sgt. Roberto Rivera, a Soldier in 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, operates one of the forklifts to stage the battalion's equipment containers for transport to their new home on Baghdad International Airport.

Mims.

Working closely with each company's movement control officer is why this move has gone more smoothly than the previous one, according to Mims.

As for their personal items, many Soldiers decided to mail them either to BIAP or back to Germany. Other things, such as televisions and refrigerators ended up with the incoming Soldiers.

While equipment and personal items were shipped

to BIAP, the Soldiers also performed a relief in place with the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, from Fort Hood, Texas.

While stationed at BIAP, Task Force Storm will be part of Task Force 49 and will fall under Multi-National Division – Central.

Moving a few times has really helped the time pass and it's also kept the Soldiers from getting complacent, said Mims, who is on his third deployment.

Even though this will be

their third move during this deployment, every tunnel has a light at the end and Task Force Storm Soldiers say they can definitely see it.

"When we get to BIAP, hopefully we'll be doing more air assaults and more night missions; we want to go out with a bang," said Greer. "I think everybody's pretty excited about getting down there and doing something new; and before we know it, it'll be time to pack up and go home."



# New mission, new home, same family

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David Vanderjagt  
*Task Force 49 Chaplain*

Home sweet home....well not quite.

We have all done it before. The PCS orders come and off we go. Sometimes it's just down the street and other times it's around the world. Boxes we forgot we had are reopened and then taped closed again. Closets are searched and we rediscover precious treasures we had forgotten we had stored away. Our days are interrupted, our normal schedules are tossed aside and our lives feel like a little boat in a big storm. Moving days come and go over the years for those who have chosen the military life.

Yes, we have all done it before.

With those moves we experience that small bit of discomfort. We are often creatures of habit so when we move, we feel uneasy, unsettled and sometimes a little bit lost. We live out of boxes as we wait to settle in. We feel like strangers living in temporary quarters.

We reflect back to where we were and make comparisons to where we are

now. Sometimes we say, "I never want to go back there again." Other times we say, "Why can't this place be like ..." and we fill in that space with those places we loved.

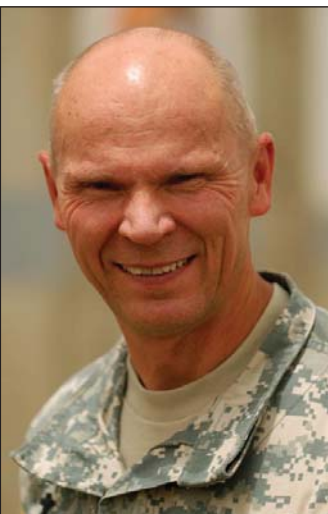
But the people who go with us often make that move more bearable.

Yes, we might get frustrated at the delay of our household goods (or where did you say our connex was?).

Yes, we might not like the prospect of finding our way to the commissary (or how far away did you say the dining facility was?).

Yes, we might grumble a bit, (but no Soldiers I know would ever grumble...) But in the end we know we have our family.

So here we are in a new place. BIAP is our new home, for now. While I write this we are still living out of boxes, our places of work are in disarray, our



Chaplain David Vanderjagt

schedules are all changed and yes it is not the same as where we came from. But as I walk around and talk to the great Soldiers of Task Force 49, I see the one thing that makes it all work out.

We have become like a family and our family is with us. We didn't make this move alone. Familiar faces in unfamiliar places sharing the turmoil together. Familiar faces of family supporting each other.

Home sweet home....well not quite, but we will make the best of where we are. We will face the inconveniences,

the changes, the trials and we will accomplish the mission we have been sent to do.

We are Task Force 49 and we are family.

Blessings to you all and remember to support one another for that makes all the difference.

## Andrew Jackson laid down the law early in his career

COMMENTARY BY CAPT. JOSEPH WILKINSON  
*Task Force 49 Staff Judge Advocate*

A bit of Judge Advocate General Corps history this month.

Andrew Jackson, our seventh President, in his younger days worked as a lawyer and judge; he also served as judge advocate for a Tennessee militia cavalry regiment. An incident in 1802 illustrates his courage and ability to express his authority.

A huge, strong frontiersman named Russell Bean had been convicted of mutilating a child's ears (because he believed the child was his wife's but not his own). He escaped from jail and was at large in Jonesborough when Jackson arrived to hold court. He was arrested and brought to court, but he cursed the court officials and left the building. Jackson ordered the sheriff to arrest Bean. The sheriff left, but returned and said he could not do it. Jackson ordered him to summon a posse. The sheriff returned to tell Jackson that no one would approach Bean, who was armed and said he would "shoot the first skunk that comes within 10 feet."

"Mr. Sheriff, since you cannot obey my orders, summon me; yes sir, summon me." Jackson said.

"Well, judge, if you say so, though I don't like to do it; but if you will try, why I suppose I must summon you," the sheriff replied.

Jackson adjourned court for 10 minutes and armed himself with two pistols. He marched to the center of town, where Bean was holding off the crowd. Jackson strode forward, pointed one of his pistols at Bean, and shouted: "Surrender, you infernal villain, this very instant, or by God Almighty I'll blow you through as wide as a gate!"

Bean surrendered.

Later, when asked why, Bean said, "When he came up, I looked him in the eye, and I saw shoot, and there wasn't shoot in nary other eye in the crowd; and so I says to myself, says I, hoss, it's about time to sing small, and so I did."

Years later, Andrew Jackson helped Bean to be reconciled with his wife, and Bean ended up as the marshal of Memphis.



Photo by Sgt. Dale Sweetnam

## Troops on the move

Sgt. Vernon Smith, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 49, watches from a UH-60 Black Hawk as the last few members of Task Force 49 leave Joint Base Balad. Smith was one of last 11 Soldiers from Task Force 49 to leave Balad after the transfer of authority ceremony between the headquarters of Task Force XII and Task Force 49 on July 12. Task Force 49 spent eight months in Balad and will now continue its deployment at Baghdad International Airport.



# TF49 leaves lasting impression in Balad



Photo by Sgt. Dale Sweetnam

Two UH-60 Blackhawk crews from 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment approach their aircraft during Task Force 49's involvement in Basrah in late March.

**By SGT. DALE SWEETNAM**  
*Task Force 49 PAO*

During Saddam Hussein's reign, Iraqi aircraft circling the skies were seen as signs of oppression and domination, now many see U.S. coalition aircraft as signs of hope and a promise of a brighter future for Iraqi citizens.

In their time as the headquarters for the Multi-National Corps – Iraq Combat Aviation Brigade, the Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 49 helped keep that perception alive and well.

There was little room for error when Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 49 received word it would soon be navigating the Iraqi skies. The headquarters had 60 days to mobilize, deploy and assume the MNC-I aviation mission at Joint Base Balad.

Now eight months later, Task Force 49 has accomplished its mission and is handing responsibility back over to Task Force XII, the unit it replaced last year.

Task Force 49 touched down in November 2007 and took over MNC-I aviation operations from Task Force XII which, in turn, moved on to Taji to head up the Multi-National Division – Baghdad Combat Aviation Brigade Headquarters.

"The transition between Task Force XII and Task Force 49 could not have gone better," Col. Chandler Sherrell, Task Force 49 commander said. "We've seen nothing but tremendous success and this is exhibited by less violence and more stability in Iraq. Those that would do us harm, or destabilize a growing government have been marginalized and are less likely to threaten progress throughout the country."

Sherrell said Task Force 49 made a significant difference at Joint Base Balad. He said while in country, Task Force 49 has denied al Qaeda safe haven in Iraq and provided stability through an extensive aviation presence. During the Balad mission, Task Force 49 moved 20,885,130 pounds of cargo, 206,256 passengers, evacuated 4,243 patients and logged 63,034 flight hours.

"To say our Soldiers made an impact would be an understatement," Sherrell said. "We were asked to come here as a

component of the surge, to make sure it was successful. By all accounts the surge has led to a decrease in violence and an increase in security. I think it's valid to say our Soldiers had something to do with that success."

Maj. James Jones, brigade operations officer, said much of the credit for that success goes to the units it inherited from Task Force XII.

"The unique thing was that we were a brigade headquarters taking over units that were not organic [to Task Force 49] and that we hadn't worked or trained with," said Jones.

While in Balad, Task Force 49 assumed control of 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Battalion, 2nd Battalion, 159th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and Task Force Hawk, a fixed wing aviation unit. The units fell back under control of HHC, Task Force XII following the transfer of authority ceremony on July 12.

When Task Force 49 originally received the mission back in September 2007, it prepared for the mission with a site visit, communication with Task Force XII and 60 days of training in Alaska.

HHC, Task Force XII was already preparing for its next

mission, so the training back in Alaska had to be swift.

"When we hit the ground here, we already knew what the mission was," Jones said. "We were already prepared to do that mission and that's what made the transition easier for the Soldiers."

HHC, Task Force 49 is now based at Baghdad International Airport supporting the 10th Mountain Division as the Multi-National Division-Center Combat Aviation Brigade Headquarters.

When all is said and done and Task Force 49 is on its way home, Sherrell said the Soldiers of this unit can look back at both their role at Joint Base Balad and at BIAP with pride.

"When we leave here in December, I know we can look back and say we made a difference," he said. "Despite two months warning to leave and being away from our families, we made a difference. And the improved security and stability for the Iraqi people is something our families and Soldiers can take great pride in."



Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

A 2nd Battalion, 159th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion takes off during a mission at Joint Base Balad. Task Force 49 spent eight months in Balad before moving to BIAP.



# Ex-XO brings advice to BIAP

By Maj. James Jones  
Former Task Force 49 Executive Officer

It’s that time again – time for the advice to flow like the crap out of a goose. For those of you who don’t know who I am, let me formally introduce myself. I am the Ex-XO; the man who answers all those hard-to-answer questions that life throws at us. Thousands have already reaped the benefits of my candid advice, that only the “master of the obvious” can deliver. If you have a problem, I have the answer. I am the Ex-XO.

Dear Ex-XO,

I heard you “Polar Bears” got taken care of *real* well by the outstanding unit you RIPed with at BIAP.

Blue Falcon,

By “well,” I assume you mean they took all the monitors, power cords, converters, TVs, pens, paper, scissors, printers, computers, communications systems, NTVs, paperclips, tape, mice, mouse pads, phones, cable boosters, projectors, servers, and MWR equipment. Yes, the transition went quite well for them.

Dear Ex-XO,

Was looking for some TTPs (Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures) for utilizing the Porta-John during the mid-day period. It is so hot here, I don’t want to become a statistic.

Pvt. Ian B. Regular

Pvt. I.B. Regular

First and foremost, hydrate before you go in for the real thing. I once had to pull a Soldier out of a john where he had passed out from the heat – head fell right into the urinal. He was brushing urinal cakes out of his teeth for weeks. On the bright side, his breath did smell minty fresh. If you’re going for No. 1, not a big issue, but No. 2 requires some major preparation. Necessary equipment: Camelbak full of water, oven mitts, duct tape strip, spray bottle, beach towel, pancake flipper, and squeegee. Optional equipment: wrist and head sweat bands with TF49 logo, gas mask.

Do not try the mid-day plopper without practicing your entry and exit procedures first in an air-conditioned environment, or during the middle of the night when it is only around 90 degrees. When you’re proficient then you can go for the real thing. First, securely grip Camelbak mouthpiece between teeth and start drinking.

Do not stop until the process is complete. Don oven mitts to open black handle on door to avoid instant blisters. Use oven mitts to lower black seat on john. Use duct tape to tape seat down so the thing won’t keep popping up. Use the spray bottle to cool down seat (see blister comment above). No need to wipe seat, as any moisture will evaporate in exactly 2.3 seconds. Hurry and sit down before seat heats up again. Use beach towel to soak up profuse sweat that will emit from every pore in your body. Save one dry corner of the towel so when you are done you can dry your hands before you reach for the TP.

You must be quick, and make sure the TP does not touch any other part of your body, or you will look like a

paper mache doll at a kindergarten craft hour. Next grab the pancake flipper: by this time your sweat has formed a tight seal between your butt and the toilet seat and you will need this device to break the seal and pry yourself off. I prefer the Teflon flipper, less chafing if you’re on a regular schedule. Once you pried yourself off be sure to towel off one last time. By this time the inside of the john looks like the steam room at a downtown Korean bath house and smells just as nice. Use the squeegee to clear the toilet seat and walls so the next guy doesn’t slip and fall into the black hole. Trust me, I’ve seen it happen and it’s not a pretty sight. And that blue dye doesn’t wear off for weeks – end up looking like a Smurf with chocolate-brown hair. Hope this helps.

Falcon

Dear Ex-XO,

I heard your rooms in BIAP are much smaller than the ones you had in Balad. Is this true?

Capt. Closter Phobic

Capt. Phobic

If, by “smaller,” you mean that I know my roommate’s eyes are green, he has three nose hairs in his left nostril, two in his right, a freckle on the top of his head and he needs to cut his toenails; that I can hear Maj. Brown snore two doors down through the thin walls; that, in California, due to the proximity, my roommate and I could probably be considered legally married; then, yes, I guess they are a little smaller.

Dear Ex-XO,

I saw pictures of you with no hair. What happened? You better grow it back before you come home.

Susan Jones

Hey honey,

I’m glad you asked. Kids, pay attention: When someone comes up to you and says “Hey, we’re going to shave our heads and grow horrible mustaches – you in? Just say NO! But hey, since it’s already gone I figured, what the heck, it saves me the \$3 haircut at the barbershop every week and since I just bought a new Harley I figure that, with those savings, it will only take me 6,666.66 repeating weeks to pay the thing off. What a deal. Plus, I don’t have to worry about the pain of pulling it out on those stressful days -- it’s already gone. And, by the way, if you hadn’t heard, it’s hot here. Plus, I think my Cancun photo shoot sums it all up: It’s not about the hair.

Please send your questions to:  
Maj. James Jones  
“Ask the Ex-XO”  
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APO AE 09322-3394  
Or email them to: [hawktwosix@yahoo.com](mailto:hawktwosix@yahoo.com)



Ask the Ex-XO



# New Mission

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made, Soldiers from each section went to BIAP to meet with their 3rd CAB counterparts and learn about their new mission.

Time to prepare was limited, but Jones said the headquarters performed well under pressure.

“We’re making it work and I think it’s going really well,” he said.

HHC, Task Force 49 assumed control of 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored

Calvary Regiment, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and C Company, 412th Aviation Support Battalion’s Forward Logistical Element in BIAP.

The movement of so many units around the battlefield has reinforced the necessity of thorough and extensive communication, Jones said.

“Everyone has worked together,” he said. “They understand this is a no-fail mission.”

After the transfer of authority ceremony July 12 in Balad, Task Force 49 turned around and participated in

another transfer of authority on July 25 to take over its current mission.

It’s been a busy few months for Task Force 49, but Sherrell said the Soldiers of the unit are steadfast in their mission and will continue to approach their new duties in BIAP with the same intensity and dedication they showed in Balad.

“That is one of the good things associated with a change of mission,” Sherrell said. “It allows us to focus, to learn, to study and to fight in a new area and make a difference somewhere else.”

## On to the next mission



Photo by Sgt. Dale Sweetnam

Col. Chandler Sherrell (left), Task Force 49 commander, and Task Force 49 Command Sgt. Major Richard Mitchell case the unit colors during a ceremony at Joint Base Balad on July 12. The ceremony marked the end of Task Force 49’s eight months as the headquarters for the Multi-National Corps – Iraq Combat Aviation Brigade in Balad. Since December 2007, the 2,700-Soldier Task Force safely flew more than 63,000 hours, evacuated more than 4,000 patients, and moved more than 200,000 passengers and 20 million pounds of cargo throughout Iraq. The brigade also conducted 88 air-assault missions and 300 missions supporting Other Coalition Forces - Iraq, and was involved in nearly 90 direct enemy engagements.

Col. Chandler Sherrell (right), Task Force 49 commander, and Task Force 49 Command Sgt. Major Richard Mitchell unfurl the Task Force 49 colors during a transfer of authority ceremony at Baghdad International Airport on July 25. Task Force 49 now supports the 10th Mountain Division as the Multi-National Division-Center Combat Aviation Brigade. The Task Force replaced the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, which redeployed to Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.



Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt