

AFCENT Airpower Summary

Multinational Strikes on Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities

In response to the Syrian Regime's use of chemical weapons against its own people, AFCENT aircraft struck Syrian chemical weapons production facilities as part of a multinational response to the regime's actions April 14. B-1B Lancers and multiple strike and ISR aircraft protected ground forces and enabled U.S., British, and French air and naval forces to strike three chemical weapons production facilities with precision munitions, decimating the regime's ability to produce chemical weapons.

Notably, the strikes occurred just days after B-1B bombers arrived in the AFCENT area of responsibility as part of a scheduled deployment, and this marked the first operational use of the AGM-158 Joint Air to Surface Standoff Munition. The strikes demonstrated the international community's resolve against the use of chemical weapons.

F-22 Raptors played an integral role in protecting ground forces during and after the multinational strikes against Syrian chemical weapons production facilities. Thanks to its unique fifth generation capabilities, the F-22 was the only airframe suited to operate inside the Syrian integrated air defense systems, offering an option to neutralize IADS threats to our forces and installations in the region, and provide protective air support for U.S., Coalition and partners on the ground in Syria.

Operation Freedom's Sentinel & Resolute Support Mission

In April 2018, U.S. airpower participating in Operation Freedom's Sentinel continued to degrade the ability of the Taliban to fight. The number of U.S. weapons released in support of Freedom Sentinel increased to 562 in April, the highest monthly total of 2018 and the second highest total for any month since October 2011. A re-shift in focus on operations in Afghanistan combined with a gradual build-up over the last few months in tankers positioned in Afghanistan has enhanced AFCENT's ability to provide agile combat support to forces in Afghanistan while applying continuous pressure on the enemy.

U.S. airstrikes targeted Taliban narcotics labs as part of a deliberate aerial campaign to disrupt Taliban revenue sources, degrade their ability to fight, and drive them to reconcile with the Afghan government. Combined, Afghan and U.S. airpower set a new record in April by destroying 29 Taliban narcotics labs as part of an aerial counter-revenue campaign that began in November. Of note, A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft newly-stationed at Kandahar Airfield completed 34 airstrikes employing 121 weapons against narcotics production facilities. From April 3-5, U.S. F-16 Fighting Falcons, A-10s, and MQ-9 Reapers struck 11 Taliban narcotics labs in Farah and Nimroz Provinces in Western Afghanistan, and the April 25 destruction of five narcotics labs in one day in Helmand and Nimroz Provinces. The Farah and Nimroz strikes also signaled an expansion of the counter-revenue campaign beyond Helmand and Southern Afghanistan.

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Operation Freedom's Sentinel & Resolute Support Mission (Continued From Page 1)

However, the Taliban weren't alone in experiencing setbacks thanks to airpower in April. ISIS-K suffered a major blow when ISIS-K commander Qari Hikmatullah was killed by a U.S. airstrike April 5. At the time of his death, Hikmatullah was the senior IS-K commander and the main facilitator of ISIS-K fighters into northern Afghanistan.

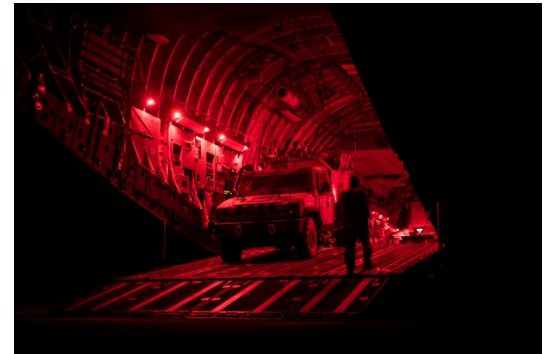
Operation Inherent Resolve

For April 2018 AFCENT defensive counter air missions to protect Coalition and partner forces remained AFCENT's priority for Operation Inherent Resolve, accounting for the majority of hours flown. AFCENT remains focused in defeating ISIS in designated areas in Iraq and Syria, setting the conditions for follow-on operations to increase regional stability, and protecting Coalition ground forces, Iraqi Security Forces, and the Syrian Democratic Forces. Other developments highlight progress made by the Iraqi Air Force due in part to the Coalition Aviation Advisory and Training Team in Iraq.

Although sorties decreased slightly to 1,193, air assets were able to achieve their desired effects of continuing to disrupt and destabilize ISIS in the Middle Euphrates River Valley. Additionally, the Coalition was more efficient in conducting airstrikes in April in support of Inherent Resolve, resulting in a smaller number of sorties with at least one weapons release and the total number of weapons released. The decrease is driven by the desired effect and target set for the month, in which U.S. aircraft frequently struck cave and tunnel systems with multiple weapons on multiple occasions to destroy them.

Notable airpower achievements and operations in April in support of Inherent Resolve included multiple instances of Iraqi cross-border airstrikes against ISIS in Syria in order to defend the Iraqi people and Iraq's interests, especially in preparation for Iraqi elections to be held in May. The Iraqi F-16s were supported in the strikes by U.S. F-15E Strike Eagles and MQ-9 Reapers.

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Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2013-2018 Airpower Statistics

As of April 30, 2018

OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL/RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION

Strike Aircraft (manned)

Sorties	
2013	21,900
2014	12,978
2015	5,774
2016	5,162
2017	4,603
2018	2,238

Sorties with at least one weapon release

2013	1,408
2014	1,136
2015	411
2016	615
2017	1,248
2018	280

* Number of Weapons Released (Manned & RPA strike assets)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2013	193	297	250	284	368	337	256	158	232	189	118	76	2,758
2014	92	114	95	115	164	272	205	437	441	217	87	126	2,365
2015	40	30	47	31	41	109	79	156	111	203	69	31	947
2016	127	115	58	62	89	94	160	108	162	205	92	65	1,337
2017	54	200	203	460	328	389	350	503	414	653	352	455	4,361
2018	378	469	339	562									1,748

*Statistics provided includes numbers of sorties (not strikes) and munitions expended by aircraft under CFACC control

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Intel, Surveillance and Recon Sorties	31,049	32,999	21,634	19,681	15,404	1,767
Airlift Sorties	32,000	17,040	6,900	10,300	11,166	5,545
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)	201,000	158,400	50,000	69,200	84,208	40,764
Airlift Passengers	506,000	202,700	78,000	111,100	120,554	64,275
Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	10,883,000	28,000	0	0	33,423	135,840
Tanker Sorties	12,319	9,085	5,323	4,910	5,714	831
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	723	636	201	150	170	29
Aircraft Refuelings	53,266	46,793	26,162	18,137	17,989	3,272

- Some figures may have changed due to data re-calculation and re-verification
- Assets under CFACC control include a compilation of aircraft from all U.S. military branches of service, as well as Coalition aircraft; however, not all aircraft flying in the AOR fall under CFACC control.

Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2015-2018 Airpower Statistics

As of April 30, 2018

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

Strike Aircraft (manned)

* Number of Weapons Released (Manned & RPA strike assets)

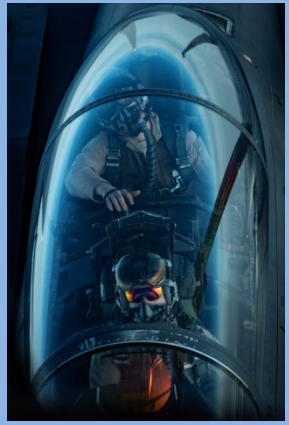
Sorties		Sorties with at least one weapon release	
2015	21,116	2015	9,912
2016	21,181	2016	11,825
2017	19,680	2017	9,944
2018	5,374	2018	346

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2015	2,426	1,853	1,685	1,862	2,145	1,683	2,823	2,758	2,380	2,694	3,242	3,145	28,696
2016	2,718	2,090	2,052	2,582	2,341	3,160	2,439	2,244	2,427	3,038	2,709	2,943	30,743
2017	3,600	3,439	3,878	3,274	4,374	4,848	4,313	5,075	3,550	1,642	1,000	584	39,577
2018	780	747	294	254									2,075

*Statistics provided includes numbers of sorties (not strikes) and munitions expended by aircraft under CFACC control

Iraq & Syria

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Intel, Surveillance and Recon Sorties	9,514	12,270	14,015	2,423
Airlift and Airdrop Sorties	10,050	8,400	9,448	3,339
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)*	78,500	72,800	68,537	17,994
Airlift Passengers*	47,200	46,900	76,802	32,479
Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	111,200	822,171	641,746	32,480
Tanker Sorties	14,737	13,064	13,243	2,163
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	912	804	778	162
Aircraft Refuelings	84,381	80,912	70,536	15,153



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United States Air Forces Central Command
Combined Air Operations Center