

# AFCENT Airpower Summary

## Operation Freedom's Sentinel & Resolute Support Mission – advising Afghan Air Forces & countering terrorism

In January, continued progress in Operation Inherent Resolve and the fight to defeat ISIS allowed U.S. Air Forces Central Command to reallocate aircraft, airmen and assets to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, in support of increased airpower requirements to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and U.S. forces conducting counter terrorism operations against extremist threats, as well as U.S. advisors supporting the South Asia Strategy under Operation Freedom's Sentinel and the Resolute Support Mission. These efforts required addition air power capacity in multiple mission sets to include Close Air Support, Personnel Recovery, and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance. AFCENT moved A-10C Thunderbolt IIs, MQ-9B Reapers, and HH-60G Pave Hawks to Kandahar throughout the month to complement F-16s, C-130Js, EC-130Hs and other aircraft supporting operations from Bagram Airfield, and a detachment of KC-135s that arrived at Kandahar in September 2017.

During this realignment, AFCENT conducted the first-ever transfer of MQ-9B Reapers from one combat operation (Operation Inherent Resolve) to another (Operation Freedom's Sentinel) by flying instead of shipping them, an innovative solution that preserved valuable ISR capacity for warfighters in both operations by taking less than 10 percent of the time.

With this additional airpower, U.S. Forces – Afghanistan increased pressure through a deliberate air campaign targeting the Taliban's primary revenue source – narcotics production. Within hours of their Jan. 19 arrival at Kandahar, the 303rd Fighter Squadron's A-10s conducted their first strikes of the campaign. Using A-10s, B-52s, F-16s and MQ-9s, precision air strikes have destroyed 35 narcotics processing and storage facilities and stockpiles from November through Jan. 31. This air campaign does not adhere to Afghanistan's traditional fighting seasons, but is relentless, as demonstrated by the 321 precision munitions released this January, compared to 54 in January 2017. This pressure will persist until the Taliban reconciles or faces defeat.

January heralded continued growth in the Afghan Air Force's ability to safeguard the country and defend against extremist groups. The AAF received four additional UH-60 Black Hawks as part of a five-year effort to grow the AAF by approximately 300 percent. The additional helicopters will be used for the second phase of the AAF's UH-60 training, called Mission Qualification Training (MQT). MQT prepares Afghan pilots on how to operate the aircraft in combat mission scenarios. The AAF also graduated an additional 15 UH-60 pilots from Aircraft Qualification Training (AQT), conducted at both Kandahar Airfield and Fort Rucker, Alabama.

## Operation Inherent Resolve – defeating ISIS, sustaining military gains

In Operation Inherent Resolve, Coalition aircraft continued to enable partner forces in Iraq and Syria as they hunted the remnants of ISIS, primarily in the Middle Euphrates River Valley. Throughout the month, B-52s, F-15s, MQ-9s and other aircraft released 448 weapons against ISIS targets, many of which were identified by surveillance and reconnaissance platforms that kept a persistent watch from above. To ensure we maintained our focus on ISIS, the Coalition continued to de-conflict operations with the Russians, averting a repeat of distracting incidents in December between Coalition, Russian and Syrian aircraft over the MERV.

As the Coalition prepared to shift its focus in Iraq from combat operations to a train, advise and assist mission, planners achieved an initial operating capability (IOC) at month's end as they prepared to stand up a Coalition Aviation Advisory and Training Team, Feb. 1. The CAATT's TAA mission is designed to help our Iraqi partners create a viable aviation enterprise that can sustain military gains and help the Iraqis safeguard their country from threats like a resurgence of ISIS. The CAATT will leverage Coalition airmen already in Iraq and will enhance inter-service integration of air-to-ground strike missions and mobility operations, while also focusing on train-the-trainer programs from basic technical school training all the way to front-line aviation units.

# Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2012-2017 Airpower Statistics

## OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL/RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION

### Close Air Support/Deliberate Strike\*

Sorties	
2013	21,900
2014	12,978
2015	5,774
2016	5,162
2017	4,603
2018	451

Sorties with at least one weapon release	
2013	1,408
2014	1,136
2015	411
2016	615
2017	1,248
2018	253

### Number of Weapons Released

	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	321												321

\*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	454
Airlift Sorties	32,000	17,040	6,900	10,300	11,166	1,047
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)	201,000	158,400	50,000	69,200	84,208	8,311
Airlift Passengers	506,000	202,700	78,000	111,100	120,554	9,815
Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	10,883,000	28,000	0	0	33,423	0
Tanker Sorties	12,319	9,085	5,323	4,910	5,714	297
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	723	636	201	150	170	12
Aircraft Refuelings	53,266	46,793	26,162	18,137	17,989	1,221

- 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.

Afghanistan

Combined Data (minus OIR)

# Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2012-2017 Airpower Statistics

United States Air Forces Central Command  
Combined Air Operations Center

Operation Inherent Resolve

**OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**

Close Air Support/Defensive Counter Air\*

Number of Weapons Released

Sorties	
2015	21,116
2016	21,181
2017	19,680
2018	1,693

Sorties with at least one weapon release	
2015	9,912
2016	11,825
2017	9,944
2018	125

	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	448												448

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

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Intel, Surveillance and Recon Sorties	9,514	12,270	14,015	654
Airlift and Airdrop Sorties	10,050	8,400	9,448	800
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)*	78,500	72,800	68,537	4,435
Airlift Passengers*	47,200	46,900	76,802	6,520
Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	111,200	822,171	641,746	32,480
Tanker Sorties	14,737	13,064	13,243	930
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	912	804	778	120
Aircraft Refuelings	84,381	80,912	70,536	5,569

\* Iraq only



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