

# AFCENT Airpower Summary

## Operation Freedom's Sentinel & Resolute Support Mission

U.S. forces kept pressure on the Taliban in Afghanistan in May 2018 as part of Operation Freedom's Sentinel. The main weight of effort for U.S. aircraft was in the vicinity of Helmand and Nangarhar Provinces where aircraft struck Taliban weapons caches and staging areas and continued to devastate Taliban revenue sources as part of a deliberate air campaign to force the Taliban into negotiations with the Afghan government, all helping set the conditions for reconciliation.

"U.S. air operations in May put tremendous pressure on every branch of the Taliban's network," said Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Harrigian, Combined Force Air Component Commander. "We struck Taliban leadership with precision strikes, and consistently pummeled their revenue-producing facilities, weapons caches, and staging facilities."

For the second month in a row airstrikes increased overall, despite challenging weather mid-month. May 2018 set a new high for the number of airstrikes for the calendar year, rising to 591 this month. Overall, U.S. aircraft flew 726 OFS sorties for the month, and 73 of those sorties included at least one weapon release. ISR aircraft flew more than 800 sorties in May, as well.

"U.S. Airmen will continue delivering airpower, developing relationships, and working closely with our Joint partners and the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces to continue setting the conditions in Afghanistan to bring the Taliban to into negotiations with the Afghan government," Harrigian said.

May proved a notable month for air mobility operations in Afghanistan, as a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III performed the first C-17 airdrop in country in a year-and-a-half. In support of U.S. and Afghan ground forces, U.S. C-17s and C-130s airdropped more than 120 bundles weighing more than 190,000 pounds this month. In addition, aerial refueling tankers flew more than 400 sorties and offloaded 16 million gallons of jet fuel, enabling strike or armed over-watch assets to get to and stay in the fight.

*\*\*\*Correction: In the April 2018 Airpower Summary, AFCENT inaccurately stated that April 2018 was the highest number of airstrikes in Afghanistan for any month since October 2011. Rather, the October 2017 total was 653. AFCENT regrets the error, our misstatement, and the subsequent confusion.\*\*\**

# AFCENT Airpower Summary

## Operation Inherent Resolve

May 2018 was a historic month for Operation Inherent Resolve with the kickoff of the latest phase of the Defeat ISIS campaign and the Iraqi people participating in a democratic election just a few years after ISIS controlled large portions of Iraq. U.S. and Coalition forces began Operation Roundup May 1, with the goal of eradicating ISIS in northeastern Syria. Combined with our Syrian Democratic Forces and Iraqi Air Force partners, Coalition Airmen continued pressuring ISIS by striking fighting positions, tunnel complexes and underground storage sites. For Coalition air operations, the main weight of effort remained performing defensive counter air and armed over-watch to protect friendly forces and support ground maneuver.

“The complete annihilation of ISIS’s so-called physical caliphate in Iraq and Syria is at hand,” said Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Harrigian, Combined Force Air Component Commander. “While there’s more work to be done, the progress we’ve made as a Combined force in the last month is nothing short of remarkable.”

Due to increased operations tempo as part of Operation Roundup, Coalition airstrikes and aircraft operations increased in May 2018. Coalition strike aircraft flew more than 1,400 sorties in support of OIR in May, the highest total since January 2018. Coalition weapons releases for May were 70% and 47% higher than April and March, respectively.

ISR aircraft flew almost 600 sorties for the month and averaged 19 sorties flown a day in support of target development and battlefield surveillance and reconnaissance. Aerial refueling tankers flew almost 800 sorties, averaged about 145 refuelings a day, and offloaded more than 49 million pounds of jet fuel, enabling strike and ISR aircraft to complete their missions of striking or developing targets or providing armed over-watch of US and Coalition forces in Iraq and Syria. C-17s and C-130s flew 693 sorties combined and delivered almost 3,000 short tons of cargo for the month.

“In the face of a ruthless enemy and tremendous danger, our partners like the Syrian Democratic Forces and the Iraqi Air Force have demonstrated a tremendous level of commitment and professionalism in re-taking territory from ISIS and eradicating them from the battlefield,” Harrigian said.

# Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2013-2018 Airpower Statistics

United States Air Forces Central Command  
Combined Air Operations Center

Afghanistan

## 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	2,964

Sorties with at least one weapon release	
2013	1,408
2014	1,136
2015	411
2016	615
2017	1,248
2018	353

### \* 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	591								2,339

\*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	2,573
Airlift Sorties	32,000	17,040	6,900	10,300	11,166	6,456
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)	201,000	158,400	50,000	69,200	84,208	47,832
Airlift Passengers	506,000	202,700	78,000	111,100	120,554	76,131
Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	10,883,000	28,000	0	0	33,423	327,240
Tanker Sorties	12,319	9,085	5,323	4,910	5,714	1,588
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	723	636	201	150	170	58
Aircraft Refuelings	53,266	46,793	26,162	18,137	17,989	6,754

- 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

## 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	6,811	2018	417

	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	431								2,506

\*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	3,008
Airlift and Airdrop Sorties	10,050	8,400	9,448	4,032
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)*	78,500	72,800	68,537	20,920
Airlift Passengers*	47,200	46,900	76,802	40,657
Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	111,200	822,171	641,746	32,480
Tanker Sorties	14,737	13,064	13,243	3,665
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	912	804	778	321
Aircraft Refuelings	84,381	80,912	70,536	24,232

- 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

United States Air Forces Central Command  
Combined Air Operations Center

Iraq & Syria