



“OPERATION, DEEPWATER HORIZON”

United States Air Force Reserve

by Senior Master Sergeant Darby Perrin, 2016

“OPERATION, DEEPWATER AND HORIZON”

BY SMSGT DARBY PERRIN, 2016

On April 20, 2010, a large explosion rocked the BP Deepwater Horizon Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit which created a blast that devoloped into a fireball visible from 40 miles away and instantly killed 11 crewmen. Two days later, the raging fire that followed caused the Deepwater Horizon to sink in 5,000 feet of water and released 200 million gallons of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico in the largest oil spill in US history.

Seeing the magnitude of the cleanup effort, the US Coast Guard, the lead agency for the cleanup effort, requested two C-130 Modular Aerial Spray System aircraft along with support personnel from the Department of Defense to assist commercial assets in restricting the spread of oil on the surface of the ocean.

The Air Force Reserve provided assistance with one of its unique mission sets, aerial spray equipped aircraft and approximately 60 Air Force Citizen Airmen from the 757th Airlift Squadron, 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, on April 30. The 757th Airlift Squadron used their aircraft to neutralize the oil spill with dispersing agents starting on May 1 and averaged 12 hours of spraying each day until June 3. Although the 910th Airlift Wing is known for aerial spray to control vegetation and the overpopulation of insects, the wing has participated in exercises with the US Coast Guard in oil spill cleanup exercises for almost two decades. During the five-week mission, the Reserve aircrews flew 92 sorties and sprayed approximately 30,000 acres with 149,000 gallons of oil dispersant in the response effort.

AIR FORCE RESERVE

The Air Force Reserve is a combat-ready force, composed of more than 70,000 Reserve Citizen Airmen, stationed locally at over 60 locations throughout the United States and serving globally for every Combatant Command in air, space and cyberspace.

We are a cost efficient and mission-effective force, providing the nation with operational capability, strategic depth and surge capacity, both overseas and here at home. The Air Force Reserve's wide-ranging operational capability serves the diverse needs of every Combatant Commander, whose requirements are as varied as the geographic and functional areas they support.

Air Force Reserve Command directly supports the homeland with capabilities, including aerial fire fighting, aerial spray, and weather reconnaissance, better known as the “Hurricane Hunters.” Our relationship with other federal agencies, including the National Weather Service and US Forest Service, demonstrates how federal, military and civilian organizations can work together to support the entire nation.

The majority of our Reservists serve alongside our active duty counterparts in association constructs. Approximately two-thirds of the Air Force's associations are with the Air Force Reserve. Integrating through associations delivers significant taxpayer value, both in cost savings and improved mission effectiveness, by sharing aircraft, equipment and facilities with the active duty.

Value is also gained from “Airmen for Life” as the Air Force Reserve retains the experience and training cost of a member's active duty service. As over 75 percent of our Reserve Citizen Airmen serve part-time, this combat-tested experience stays in a highly cost-efficient force, available whenever the nation calls. Further, the nation benefits from the intrinsic value gained by a member's civilian experience in a variety of career fields, from pilots and nurses to space and cyberspace professionals.

AIR FORCE RESERVE MISSION

Provide Combat-Ready Forces to Fly, Fight and Win.

MISSION SETS

The Air Force Reserve currently performs about 20 percent of the work of the Air Force, including traditional flying missions and other more specialized missions, such as Weather Reconnaissance, Aerial Fire Fighting, Aerial Spray and Personnel Recovery.

WHERE AIR FORCE RESERVISTS ARE CURRENTLY SERVING OR DEPLOYED

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti (Horn of Africa), El Salvador, Ethiopia, Germany, Guam, Guantanamo Bay, Honduras, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, South Sudan, Spain, Thailand, Turkey and Uganda.



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