



**“MISSION LEADERS; INTEGRATORS, SYNCHRONIZING  
OUR UNITED STATES AIR FORCE”**

Office of History and Heritage  
United States Air Force Reserve  
By Warren F. Neary, 2022



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Born out of the breadth of aviation from the Aerial Observers of World War I, the Bombardiers and Navigators of World War II, the Electronic Warfare Officers, Weapon Systems Officers, and Special Operators of Vietnam onward, to the Combat Systems Officers of the modern era; the Combat Systems Officer owns the rich heritage and diversity of those which came before them.

Combat Systems Officers or commonly referred to as CSOs, are the United States Air Force’s integrators of electromagnetic spectrum, sensor, and weapon operations. Humans-on-the-Loop synchronizing diverse technologies; ingrained with the inherent skills to find, target, and attack from the air above. CSOs are the eyes and ears in the sky of their fellow Airmen and joint service military members. Leaders with extraordinary abilities to abstract environmental information and apply high-tech systems on the increasingly complex battlefields of today and the future.

Charged with the mission of developing the “World’s best Combat Systems Officers”, the 479th Flying Training Group graduates over 300 Combat Systems Officers annually, providing the United States Air Force with the next generation of combat aviators and leaders. Air Force Reserve Command supports this important mission with instructors and Reserve Citizen Airmen as students receive outstanding training along with active duty members in this critical mission.

**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 firefighting, 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 Sprayv and Personnel Recovery.

**WHERE AIR FORCE RESERVISTS HAVE RECENTLY SERVED 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.

