

953 RESERVE SUPPORT SQUADRON



MISSION

The 953 Reserve Support Squadron is the Air Force element of the Joint Reserve Unit for U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM). The JRU is responsible for integrating the reserve components of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard. The squadron is a gateway for Air Force Reservists to serve in a joint role under USJFCOM, the transformation leader of the U.S. military.

LINEAGE

953 Reserve Support Squadron constituted, 16 Jun 1997
Activated, 1 Jul 1997

STATIONS

Norfolk, VA, 1 Jul 1997

ASSIGNMENTS

Air Force Reserve Command, 1 Jul 1997
Twenty-Second Air Force, 1 Oct 2011

COMMANDERS

Col Michael Pierce

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Organizational Excellence Award

1 Jul 1997-31 Oct 1998

EMBLEM



On a disk Sable and Azure, a bendlet sinister Or between in chief three mullets arched Argent (Silver Gray) and in base a key bend sinisterwise ward outward and down surmounted by a globe Celeste gridlined of the field, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "JOINT OPERATIONAL GLOBAL" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "953D RESERVE SUPPORT SQ" in Yellow letters. (Approved, 6 May 2011).

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Norfolk Squadron Bridges to Future of Joint Operations Working as part of an "all-blue" force is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Joint operations are the future of the military, and a joint assignment is a must for people who aspire to wear stars on their shoulders. Serving a joint assignment is also a great opportunity for Airmen of any rank to learn more about their service brothers and sisters. One pathway available for Air Force Reservists to make that assignment happen is the 953rd Reserve Support Squadron in Norfolk, Va.

Upon assuming command of the 953rd RSPTS in April 2006, Air Force Reserve Col. Michael Pierce summed up the relationship between unit and squadron. "We are a part of two great teams — the Air Force Reserve Command and U.S. Joint Forces Command — within the best military in the world," Colonel Pierce said. "As a team, we will meet the challenges, mitigate uncertainties and be successful in our mission."

That mission is to fill the needs and requirements of USJFCOM, whether it's supporting exercises and contingencies or providing staff support to combatant commanders. Reservists

work throughout USJFCOM in a variety of areas, from exercise planning and training to operations, communications and much more.

Many of the Reservists prefer the flexible work schedule the command offers rather than a strict one-weekend-a month, two-weeks-a-year schedule, though there are mandatory drills in May and November “Being flexible and working on some weekdays with our active-duty counterparts allows for a successful interface between the active and reserve components here,” said Maj. Heidi Heinlein, a 953rd RSPTS member. “It’s great to be part of an ongoing day-to-day mission and to feel like you are an integral part of the mission accomplishment.”

Reservists have a lot to offer their active-duty counterparts, said Maj. Gen. William Rajczak, deputy director for the Joint Requirements and Integration Directorate at USJFCOM and the senior Air Force Reservist, currently recalled to active duty. “Reservists bring a very varied and broad civilian skill set that active-duty members don’t have available to them,” General Rajczak said. “Reservists are doing civilian jobs that enhance their military skills and can provide wisdom, direction and training to their active duty counterparts.”

On the flip side, Reservists can derive a great amount of benefit from broad exposure to joint operations, General Rajczak said. Reserve duty in the joint world is almost entirely operational and involves very little training compared to a unit job. That means a Reservist’s participation will be greater and more background work will have to be done individually to be ready to go and to benefit from an operational experience, he said. 2007

Early in 2011, in what became known as the Arab Spring, the people of Libya rose in protest in an attempt to replicate the political change achieved in the neighboring countries of Tunisia and Egypt. But Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi did not go quietly and vowed to fight to the end, promising revenge on those who sought to remove him from power. Fearing a humanitarian disaster, President Obama ordered the commander of U.S. Africa Command to explore and develop security options for the situation in Libya.

That’s when the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command received a request for support from Africa Command. That, in turn, caused Col. Richard Hughey’s phone to ring. The commander of the 953rd Reserve Support Squadron at Norfolk Naval Air Station, Va., Hughey leads an organization that provides Air Force capabilities at the operational level of war. That translates into 953rd members supporting the JECC, which provides a total force of active and reserve multi-service, joint deployable teams that can rapidly stand up a joint task force to meet emerging requirements for geographic combatant commanders.

“Africa Command is manned for the many operations and engagements in its expansive theater, but the situation in Libya demanded additional resources to fulfill the president’s mandate,” Hughey said. “After working through the joint operational planning process, the Africa Command staff provided the commander with options and intentions that required specific capabilities to execute the selected course of action.” One option was to form a joint task force specifically for the Libyan situation. At the operational level, a joint task force would need to be formed to provide command and control of the operation. The JECC’s joint deployable team that deployed within 48 hours to U.S. Africa Command to help set up the joint task force comprised 25 members, both active and reserve. They provided command and control for the contingency, called Operation Odyssey Dawn. Five of these joint deployable team members were from the

953rd RSPTS. The joint deployable team, one of three subordinate commands under the JECC, is a flexible employment package consisting of experts in plans, operations, knowledge management, intelligence and logistics. The joint deployable team is a global response force that enables critical command and control capabilities and delivers tailored, mission-specific support to the joint force commander.

“The five 953rd members selected for this mission began travel from different locations within 72 hours and arrived in Stuttgart, Germany (home of U.S. Africa Command),” Hughey said. “JECC integrated joint deployable team members as the enabling capability supporting U.S. Africa Command’s staff to assist with current, future and logistics planning efforts to develop the sought-after options for the geographic combatant commander.” One of the Reservists from the 953rd served as the operational plans team lead for humanitarian assistance, and another was operations plan team lead for current operations.

As Operation Odyssey Dawn continued, the 953rd members filled a host of key joint task force positions, including air battle watch captain, deputy director of information operations and deputy director of operations on board the USS Blue Ridge. Col. John Williams was the senior 953rd member of the joint deployable team. “The 953rd and other service joint deployable team members from the JECC assisted with planning efforts both at Headquarters Africa Command and within the joint task force headquarters as the situation further deteriorated for rebel forces in Libya,” Williams said.

“The JECC joint deployable team acts as a nucleus for the joint task force staff — a catalyst that enables rapid stand-up of the joint task force staff,” the colonel said. “For example, members from plans, operations and knowledge management came together to perform critical path analysis of the battle rhythm battle and suggest changes to better provide joint task force leadership with decisional information and products.” “Joint Task Force Odyssey Dawn has been described as a ‘pick-up team,’” Hughey said. “Members of all the services and the interagency were quickly thrown together to halt an impending humanitarian disaster. That team had to quickly come together to direct an integrated kinetic operation. Our Reservists from the 953rd were proud to be part of the team that developed options for the commander of Africa Command and later protected Libyan civilians

Air Force Unit Histories

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.