

Three Hundred Saved and Counting



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PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. - Air Force reservists with the 920th Rescue Wing here have saved more than 300 U.S. troops since deploying to Afghanistan in February 2008.

The Air Force Reserve Command unit is flying HH-60 helicopter missions in support the U.S. Army medical evacuation operation.

Airmen from the wing and its sister units in Arizona and Oregon have flown 1,181 sorties and saved 313 people, according to a wing intelligence report.

A "save" refers to a situation where, without immediate medical evacuation, a person would die, lose a limb or go blind. In addition, wing Airmen have also recorded nearly 342 assists -- evacuations where life, limb or eyesight were not in immediate danger.

The wing's primary wartime job is combat search and rescue. CSAR missions involve locating and rescuing servicemembers isolated in combat, such as pilots shot down behind enemy lines. The wing's medical evacuation deployment, called an joint expeditionary tasking, or JET, mission, marks the first time the 920th RQW has undertaken the role for the Army.

In addition to combat search and rescue, the wing also performs civil search and rescues, provides humanitarian relief and supports all NASA Space Shuttle and rocket launches.