

## **U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet**

### **549 CTS - GREEN FLAG**

#### **Mission**

Green Flag is an advanced, realistic, and relevant Air to Surface training exercise, preparing joint and coalition warfighters to meet combatant commander requirements across Air, Space, and Cyberspace. It is primarily conducted in conjunction with US Army National Training Center exercises at Ft Irwin, CA. It is a Joint exercise administered by the US Air Force Air Warfare Center and Nellis AFB through the 549th Combat Training Squadron.

#### **Background**

Green Flag was previously designated Air Warrior and stood up in 1981 in conjunction with the US Army's establishment of the National Training Center. Tasked to plan, control, and execute the air component's involvement in the exercise.

The Green Flag mission begins long before tactical operations occur on the battlefield. 549th CTS planners begin designing the exercise six months before forces arrive to begin maneuvers. US Army and Navy planners along with the 549th's sister squadron, the 12th CTS, work with the 549th CTS to ensure an advanced training environment. Air Combat Command determines which, and how many flying units will participate.

A typical Green Flag exercise involves two multi-role fighter and/or bomber squadrons (F-15Es, F-16s, F/A-18s, A-10s, B-1s, B-52s, etc.), unmanned aircraft (MQ-1, MQ-9, Shadow, Raven), electronic warfare aircraft (EC-130s, EP-3s), and aerial refueling aircraft (KC-130s, KC-135s, and KC-10s). Additionally, USAF command and control assets consisting of E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and the E-8C Joint Stars (JSTARS) play a significant role in the exercise by using their unique capabilities to monitor and support many aspects of air, ground, and naval force maneuvers. US Army Combat Brigade teams and US Navy air and sea forces comprise the remainder of the Joint Force,

During exercise execution, Green Flag staff personnel direct, monitor, and instruct visiting units in the conduct of air, space, and cyber operations in support of surface forces. To aid in this endeavor, the 549th CTS maintains a cadre of current and qualified subject matter experts who fly with visiting squadrons during most exercises. When not actively flying in the exercises, the same cadre provides exercise oversight and ensures the highest level of integration between air and surface forces.

Key to the Green Flag staff's oversight of the exercise is the Individual Combat Aircrew Display Systems. ICADS is the world's most sophisticated tracking system for combat training exercises and allows commanders, safety observers, and exercise directors to monitor the mission in real-time.

On average, all four military services, including the guard and reserve components, participate in two Green Flag exercises each year. Air forces of other countries participate in one or more designated coalition exercises annually. Green Flag exercises provide critical joint training for approximately 75,000 joint and coalition personnel per year, including 3,000 sorties, 6,000 flight hours, and the expenditure of over 700,000 pounds of live and training ordnance.

Green Flag, provides invaluable combat training to Joint and Coalition warfighters in the art of air-surface integration and the joint employment of airpower.

(Current as of June 2015)



U.S. Air Force Green Flag