

# **NEWS RELEASE**

#### U.S. Air Forces Central Command Public Affairs

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#### **Combined Forces Air Component Command Airpower Statistics**

### Highlighted Defend the Region article: Deployed father controls airspace over son in Afghanistan

by Senior Airman Bryan Swink 379th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

12/3/2012 - SOUTHWEST ASIA -- Air Force Maj. Christopher Gering worries like any other parent whose child deploys downrange. It can be gut wrenching knowing his child operates outside the wire, working to clear and dispose of improvised explosive devices.

Since August, this proud parent has had an advantage most parents are not afforded when their child is deployed and in harm's way. He provides a birds-eye view while maintaining a watchful eye over the surroundings of his son's unit and assists them with accomplishing their mission safely.

As a mission crew commander for the 71st Expeditionary Air Control Squadron, Gering provides battle management and command and control over the skies in Afghanistan and air defense of the Arabian Gulf.



(Left) Air Force Maj. Christopher Gering swears in his son, Marshal, at a Military Entrance Processing Station before Marshal enlists with the U.S. Army. Currently, Maj. Gering provides battle management and command and control over the skies of Afghanistan while Marshal conducts route clearance in and around the Kandahar Province and Panjwey District. Both are currently deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Courtesy photo)

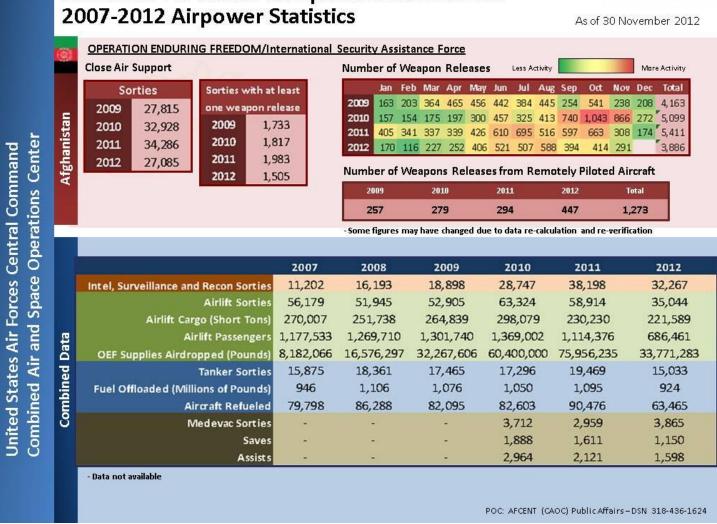
The squadron provides the Combined Air and Space Operations Center with a real-time view of the air picture, handing commanders valuable information on the ground while also supporting the fighters in the field by coordinating close air support for troops in contact, and aircraft deconfliction for forces in Afghanistan.

"My crew provides constant air support and surveillance to the region of Afghanistan where my son is currently deployed," Gering said, deployed from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. "We also make sure the right aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles are in the right airspace at the right time based on mission needs. Sometimes our priority is to provide intelligence for what's going on, and other times the priority is to make sure close air support attack aircraft can reach ground targets to protect our troops under attack."

Gering's son, Army Private 1st Class Marshal Gering, is assigned to the 584th Mobility Augmentation Company, 223rd Engineering Battalion assigned to Forward Operating Base Walton in Eastern Afghanistan.

For the full article or to download high resolution photographs, visit: http://www.afcent.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123327450

## Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2007-2012 Airpower Statistics



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