



# FACT SHEET

USAF Fact Sheet  
Air Warfare Center Public Affairs Division  
Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada 89191-7078  
Phone (702) 652-2750 DSN 682-2750 FAX (702) 652-9838

## 414<sup>th</sup> Combat Training Squadron “Red Flag”

### Mission

Red Flag, a realistic combat training exercise involving the air forces of the United States and its allies, is conducted on the vast bombing and gunnery ranges at Nellis AFB, NV. It is one of a series of advanced training programs administered by the Air Warfare Center and Nellis, through the 414th Combat Training Squadron.

Red Flag was established in 1975 as one of the initiatives directed by General Robert J. Dixon, then commander of Tactical Air Command, to better prepare our forces for combat. Tasked to plan and control this training, the 414th Combat Training Squadron's mission is to maximize the combat readiness, capability and survivability of participating units by providing realistic training in a combined air, ground and electronic threat environment while providing for a free exchange of ideas between forces.



Most of the aircraft and personnel deployed to Nellis for Red Flag make up the exercise's "Blue" forces. These forces use various tactics to attack Nellis range targets such as mock airfields, vehicle convoys, tanks, parked aircraft, bunkered defensive positions and missile sites. These targets are defended by a variety of simulated ground and air threats to give participant aircrews the most realistic combat training possible.

The "Red" force threats include electronically simulated surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft artillery, communications jamming forces and an opposing enemy air force composed of Red Flag Adversary Tactics Division pilots. These pilots fly the F-16C and

are specially trained to replicate the tactics and techniques of potential adversaries. Their mission is to attack the "Blue" forces and prevent penetration in the target area.

A typical Red Flag exercise involves a variety of attack, fighter and bomber aircraft (F-15Es, F-16s, A-10s, B-1s, etc.), reconnaissance aircraft (RQ-1 Predator), electronic warfare aircraft (EC-130s, EA-6Bs and F-16CJs), air superiority aircraft (F15s, F-16s, F-14s, etc), airlift support (C-130s, C-141s, C-17s), search and rescue aircraft (HH-60s, HC-130s), and aerial refueling aircraft (KC-130s, KC-135s, and KC-10s). The E-3AB/C Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and E-8C Joint Stars aircraft plays a significant role in the training by using their unique radar capabilities to monitor and support many aspects of the "Blue" force effort.

A "White" force in Red Flag uses the Nellis Air Combat Training System (NACTS) and monitors this mock combat between "Red" and "Blue." NACTS is the world's most sophisticated tracking system for combat training exercises and allows commanders, safety observers, and exercise directors to monitor the mission and both keep score of simulated 'kills' and view the simulated air battle as it occurs.

This mock war in the skies over southern Nevada on the Nellis Air Force Range Complex yields results that will increase the combat capability of our armed forces in any future combat situation.

**(Current as of January 2001)**