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# **AIR FORCE RESCUE COORDINATION CENTER**



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## **2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

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## **COMMANDER'S COMMENTS**

On behalf of the men and women of the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, I would again like to thank the incredible organizations who have contributed to safeguarding the American people and the citizens from other shores that we helped this past year. We simply could not accomplish our mission without you.

We would particularly like to thank the United States Mission Control Center, Civil Air Patrol, US Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Homeland Security and the numerous Department of Defense units throughout the country. They serve as the foundation of all we have accomplished. This report is a compilation of the incidents and missions handled by the AFRCC during 2023, yet another record-setting year for our unit. Although this data is important, it can never accurately portray the hundreds of lives that are forever changed because of your support. It is truly an honor to serve the nation alongside each and every one of you.

- Giggles

Lt Col Ryan D. Sealy  
Commander, Air Force Rescue Coordination Center

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

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### **MISSION**

The Commander, Air Forces Northern, is the Inland Search and Rescue (SAR) Coordinator for the aeronautical Search and Rescue Region (SRR) corresponding to the continental US, also known as the Langley SRR. The Commander, Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC), is designated as the SAR Mission Coordinator (SMC). The AFRCC seeks to encourage a cooperative SAR network and help coordinate assistance for persons in distress. The AFRCC saves lives by providing expert coordination capability while fostering cooperation and providing first responder education in support of the National Search and Rescue Plan.

### **AUTHORITY**

The AFRCC mission is derived from international treaty requirements in the Chicago Convention (ninth addition, 2006) and the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual. These requirements are satisfied by the U.S. via the National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP) and the National Search and Rescue Supplement (NSS) to the IAMSAR Manual. The NSP and NSS provide the United States a national plan for coordinating SAR services to meet our domestic needs and international commitments. Further implementation guidance is provided in Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 3003.01, *Support to Civil Search and Rescue* and Air Force Policy Directive 10-45, *Air Force Support to Civil Search and Rescue*.

### **TASKING AUTHORITY**

The AFRCC has no command or control tasking authority. The AFRCC supports domestic civil authorities by fully coordinating DoD and other federal SAR services practicable on a non-interference basis with the unit's primary duties, according to applicable national directives, plans, guidelines, and agreements. No DoD or other federal resources are assigned or tasked for the aeronautical civil SAR mission.

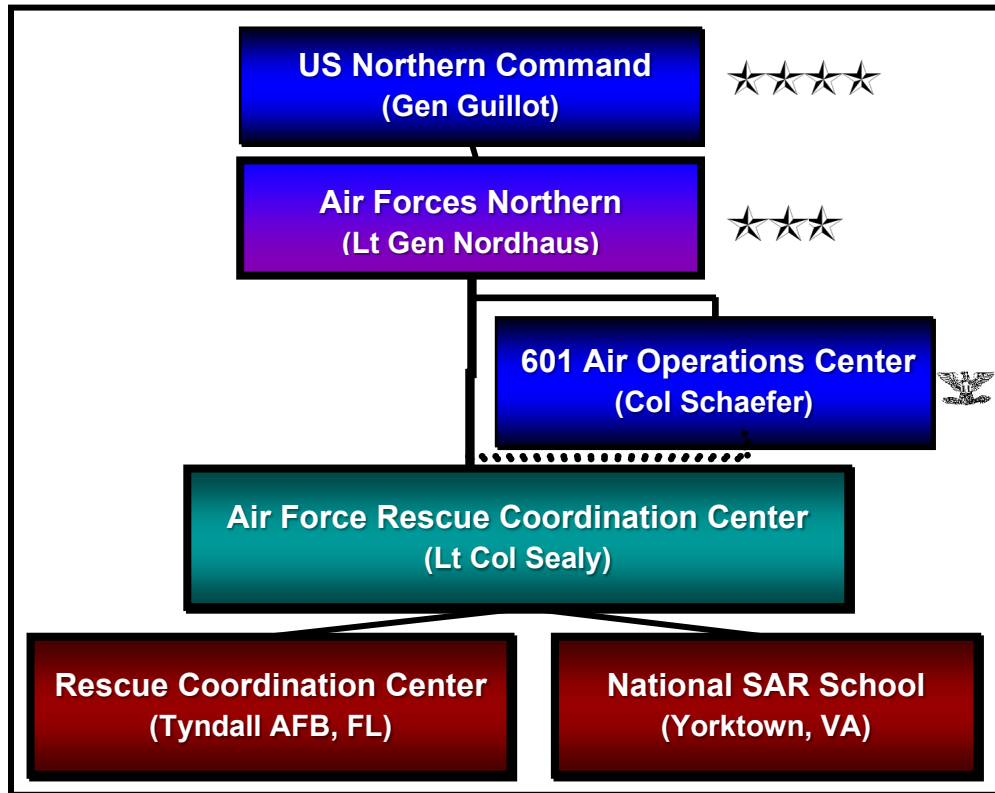
### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

When managing SAR operations, the AFRCC has the full operational authority of the Inland SAR Coordinator.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Coordinating SAR operations involving missing/overdue general aviation (GA) flights, interstate aircraft flights, DoD aircraft, and commercial aircraft.
- Coordinating SAR operations in response to Emergency Beacon Alerts. The AFRCC receives all COSPAS-SARSAT emergency beacon distress signals registered to the United States or those originating from within its SRR. The AFRCC investigates the signal in coordination with federal, state, and local officials and determines the required type and scope of response.
- Coordinating federal SAR capabilities (both Aeronautical and Inland) at the request of other designated Rescue Coordination Centers (RCCs), Federal and State SAR coordinators in support of their civil SAR operations. Through SAR Agreements with other SAR Coordinators (SCs) and their SMCs, the AFRCC may be a coordinating authority for specific SAR events outside the Langley SRR. These events include mercy, patient transport, search, rescue, and search and rescue unit (SRU) transport.

## AFRCC ORGANIZATION



## AFRCC MISSION STATEMENT

**The AFRCC saves lives by providing expert coordination capability while fostering cooperation and providing first responder education in support of the National Search and Rescue Plan.**

## TEN YEAR SYNOPSIS

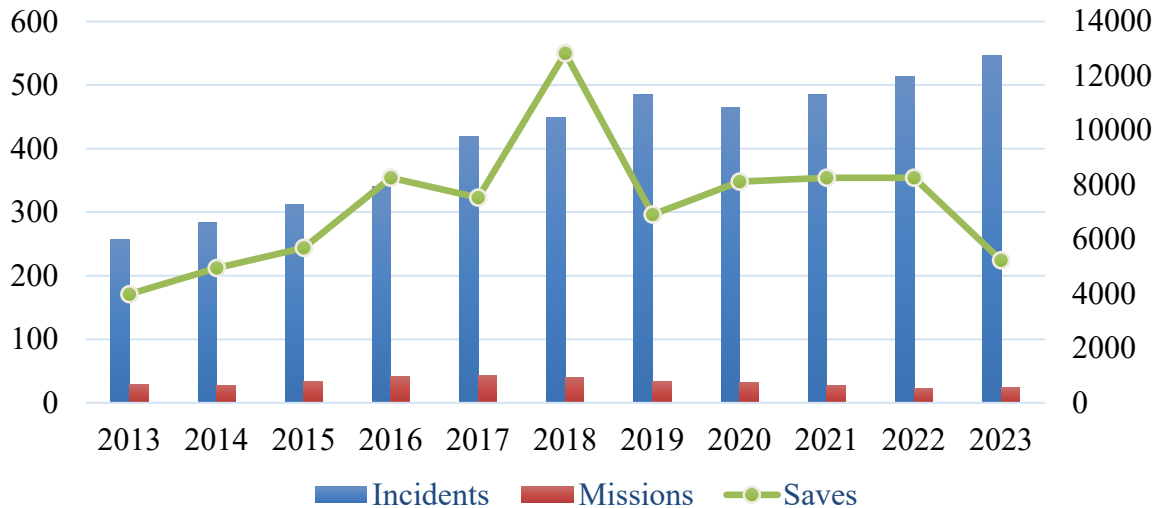
The AFRCC's yearly activity table illustrates the unit's total operational workload (missions, incidents and saves) over the past ten years.

**INCIDENT:** A SAR investigative operation by the AFRCC, conducted without deploying an SRU.

**MISSION:** A SAR operation that requires the activation of federal asset(s) to reach a resolution.

*Note: all missions are also incidents.*

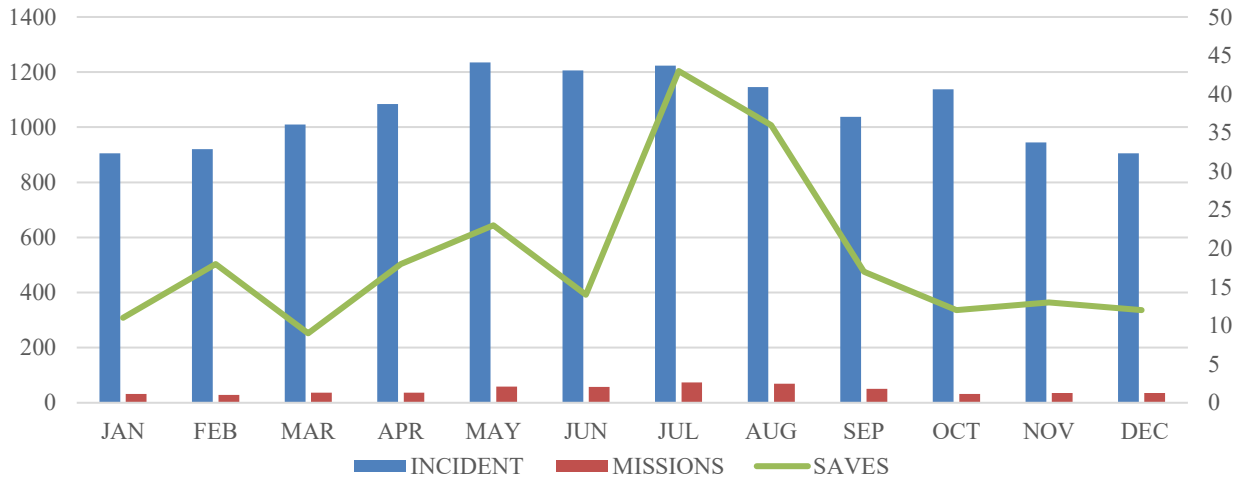
**SAVE:** An objective was in a distress situation, could not self-recover, and was rescued alive.



Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Incidents	6010	6603	7293	7936	9762	10469	11319	10849	11322	11970	12769
Missions	660	654	797	969	997	933	772	762	639	530	546
Saves	171	212	244	354	323	550	296	348	354	354	224

## MONTHLY SYNOPSIS

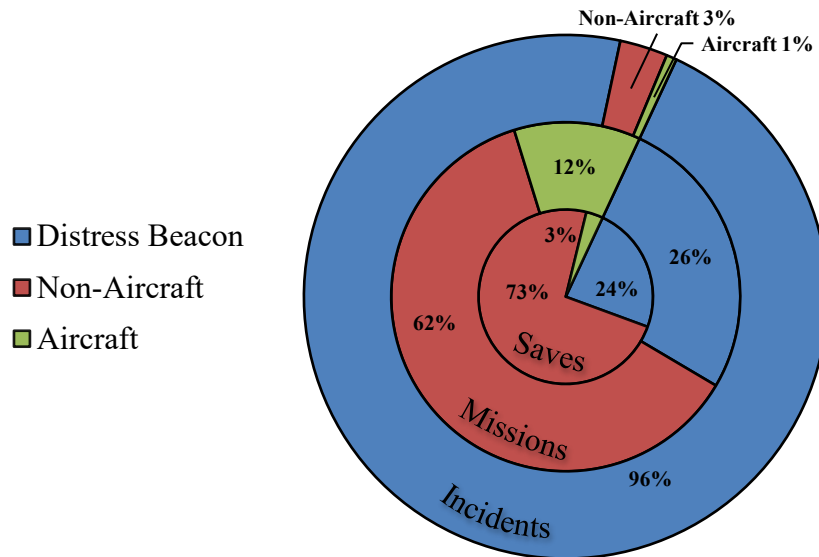
The AFRCC's monthly activity table illustrates the unit's total operational workload by month.



Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Incidents	905	920	1010	1084	1235	1206	1224	1146	1038	1137	945	905
Missions	32	29	37	37	59	58	74	69	51	32	35	35
Saves	12	17	9	17	21	13	42	39	17	12	13	12

## INCIDENT/MISSION/SAVE SUMMARY

The incident/mission/save summary identifies the number of distress beacon incidents, non-aircraft incidents, aircraft incidents, number of missions and the number of saves the AFRCC coordinated during 2023. Through telephone and internet investigations, the AFRCC resolved 12,223 (96%) of the 12,769 incidents without expending federal resources, saving approximately \$13.9 million dollars and more than 880 thousand work hours. The AFRCC coordinated 546 missions resulting in 224 lives saved.



Outside ring portrays INCIDENTS, middle ring portrays MISSIONS, inner pie portrays SAVES.

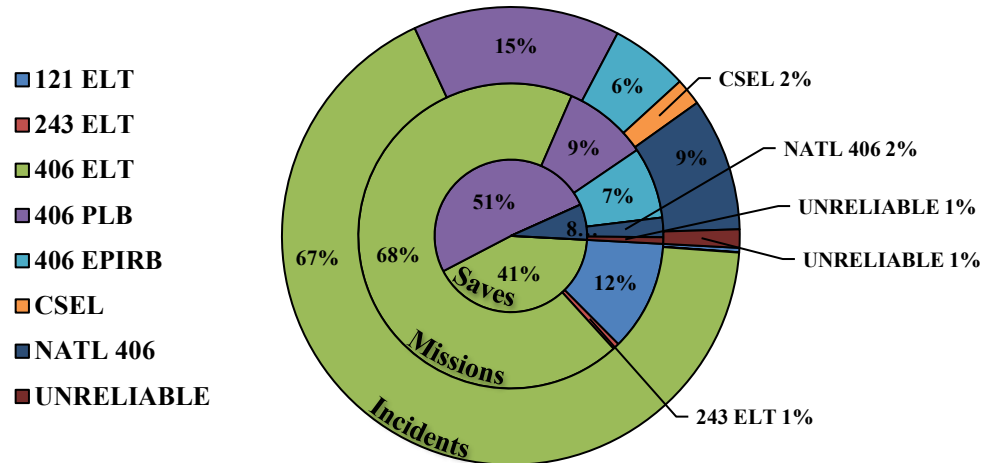
### INCIDENTS/MISSIONS/SAVES

SUMMARY	INCIDENTS	MISSIONS	SAVES
Distress Beacon Incidents	12310	145	53
Non-Aircraft Incidents	373	332	164
Aircraft Incidents	86	69	7
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>12769</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>224</b>



## BEACON SUMMARY

During 2023, the AFRCC investigated numerous beacon incidents. This chart and corresponding table indicate the type of beacons and number of incidents involving federal assets (missions) and the resulting lives saved.



Outside ring portrays INCIDENTS, middle ring portrays MISSIONS, inner pie portrays SAVES.

**BEACON INCIDENT/MISSION/SAVES**

TYPE	INCIDENTS	MISSIONS	SAVES
121 ELT	38	17	0
243 ELT	3	1	0
406 ELT	8240	99	22
406 PLB	1799	13	27
406 EPIRB	677	11	0
CSEL	235	0	0
NATL 406	1159	3	4
UNRELIABLE	159	1	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>12310</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>53</b>

Note 1: 2,678 additional beacons were coordinated with overseas agencies in more than 50 countries.

Note 2: An “Unreliable” beacon is a message that fails a validation check and does not provide a known 15 digit hexadecimal identification (HEX ID/beacon ID). These beacons are not associated with any other beacons the AFRCC prosecuted.

## BEACON INCIDENT/MISSION RESULTS

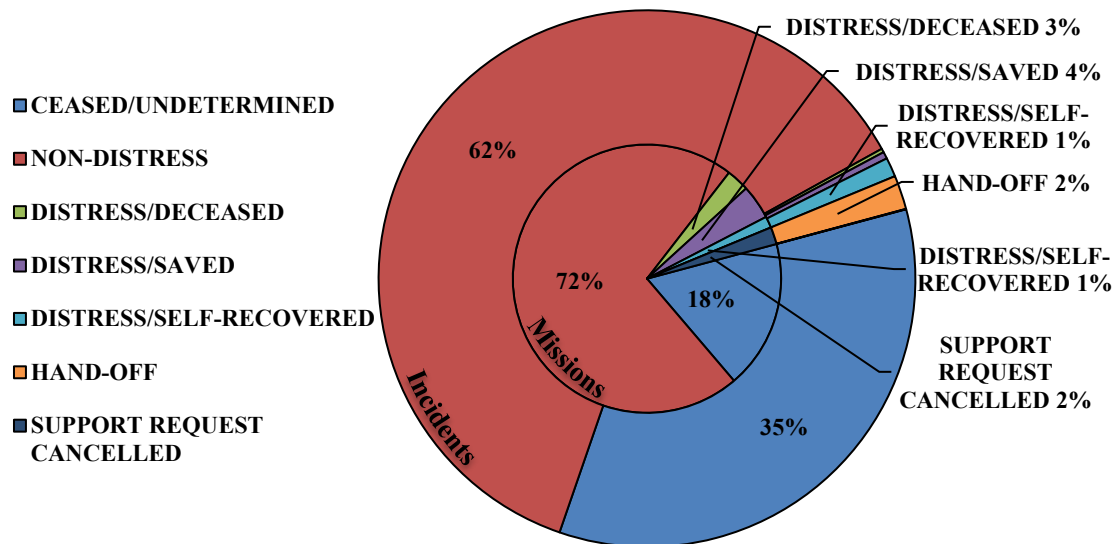
This chart and corresponding table indicate the results of all distress beacon incidents coordinated by the AFRCC during 2023.

**NON-DISTRESS:** Upon investigation it was revealed that there was not an actual distress situation, e.g. accidental activation, or improper testing.

**HAND-OFF:** The incident/mission was passed to another Search and Rescue Region/Agency.

**CEASED:** The beacon was no longer picked up by the source(s) that originally heard the signal (SARSAT, aircraft, ground station), prior to investigative resolution.

**DISTRESS:** Upon investigation it was revealed that the beacon activation was caused by an actual distress situation.



Outside ring portrays INCIDENTS, inner pie portrays MISSIONS.

### BEACON INCIDENT/MISSION RESULTS

RESULT TYPE	INCIDENT	MISSION
CEASED/UNDETERMINED	4241	26
NON-DISTRESS	7592	104
DISTRESS/DECEASED	28	4
DISTRESS/SAVED	51	6
DISTRESS/SELF-RECOVERED	143	2
HAND-OFF	252	0
SUPPORT REQUEST CANCELLED	3	3

## NON-AIRCRAFT SUMMARY

During 2023, the AFRCC investigated numerous non-aircraft incidents. This chart and corresponding table indicate the type, number of incidents involving federal assets (missions), and the resulting lives saved.

**MISSING PERSON/BOAT/VEHICLE:** The search for a person or persons/boat/vehicle, whose location is not known.

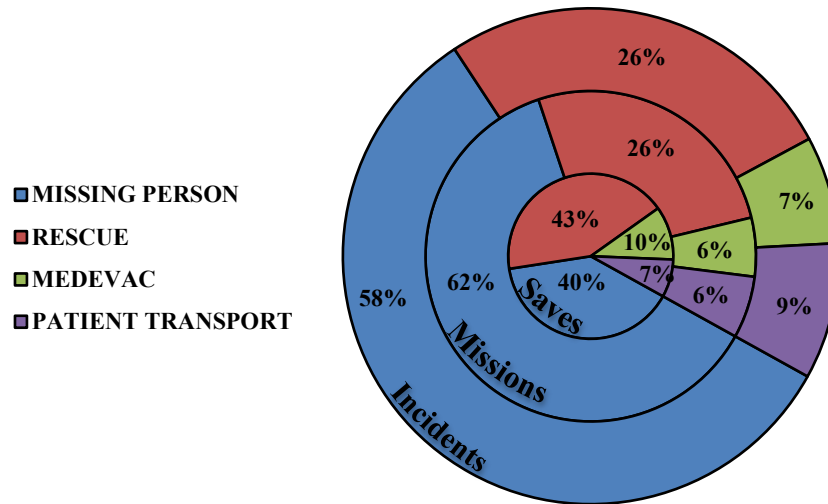
**RESCUE:** The extraction of a person or persons in distress from a known location.

**MASS RESCUE:** SAR services characterized by the need for immediate response to large numbers of persons in distress, such that the capabilities normally available to SAR authorities are inadequate.

**MEDEVAC:** Evacuation of persons for medical reasons or hospital-to-hospital patient transfers.

**MERCY:** Delivery/transportation of life saving vital materials (organs, blood, etc.).

**SRU TRANSPORT:** Transportation for the Search and Rescue Unit to and/or from a mission location.



\*Outside ring portrays INCIDENTS, middle ring portrays MISSIONS, inner pie portrays SAVES

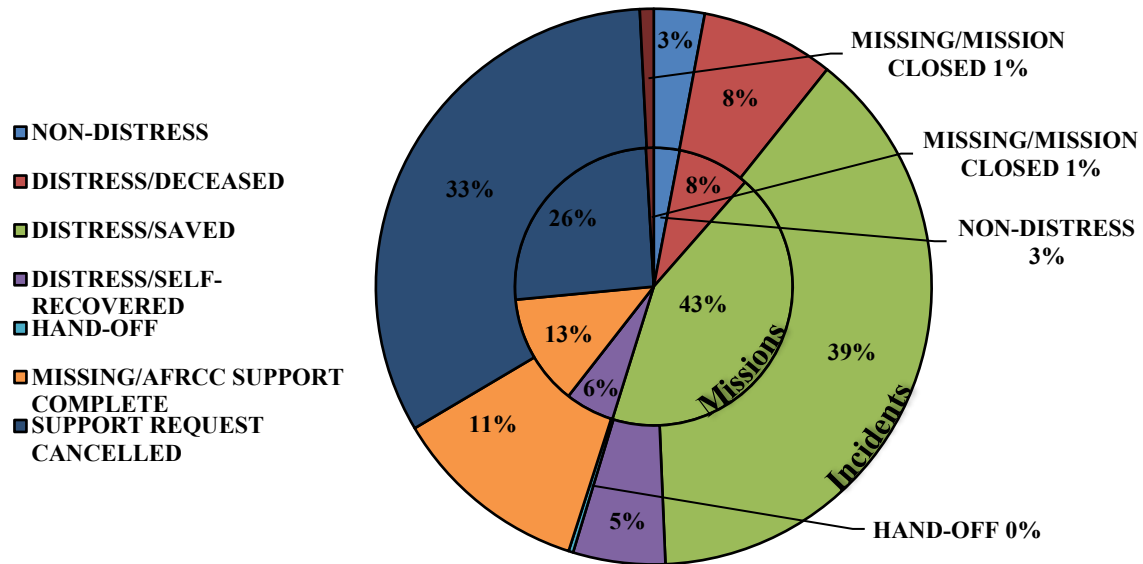
\*\*Mercy, MRO, and SRU Transport removed from chart due to inconsequential values.

### NON-AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS/MISSIONS/SAVES

TYPE	INCIDENTS	MISSIONS	SAVES
Missing Person	214	204	65
Rescue	98	87	69
MEDEVAC	26	19	17
Mercy	1	1	1
Patient Transport	33	20	12
Mass Rescue Operation (MRO)	1	1	0
SRU Transport	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>164</b>

## NON-AIRCRAFT MISSION RESULTS

This chart and corresponding table indicate mission results for non-aircraft incidents prosecuted by the AFRCC in 2023.



Outside ring portrays INCIDENTS, inner pie portrays MISSIONS.

### NON-AIRCRAFT RESULTS

RESULT TYPE	INCIDENT	MISSION
NON-DISTRESS	11	10
DISTRESS/DECEASED	29	28
DISTRESS/SAVED	144	144
DISTRESS/SELF-RECOVERED	20	19
HAND-OFF	1	0
MISSING/AFRCC SUPPORT COMPLETE	43	43
SUPPORT REQUEST CANCELLED	122	85
MISSING/MISSION CLOSED	3	3

## AIRCRAFT SUMMARY

Aircraft Incidents and Missions are opened for missing or overdue aircraft from a concerned party, an In-Flight Emergency (IFE) or as an Alert Notice (ALNOT) from the FAA.

**ALNOT:** An Alert Notice issued by the FAA for overdue aircraft.

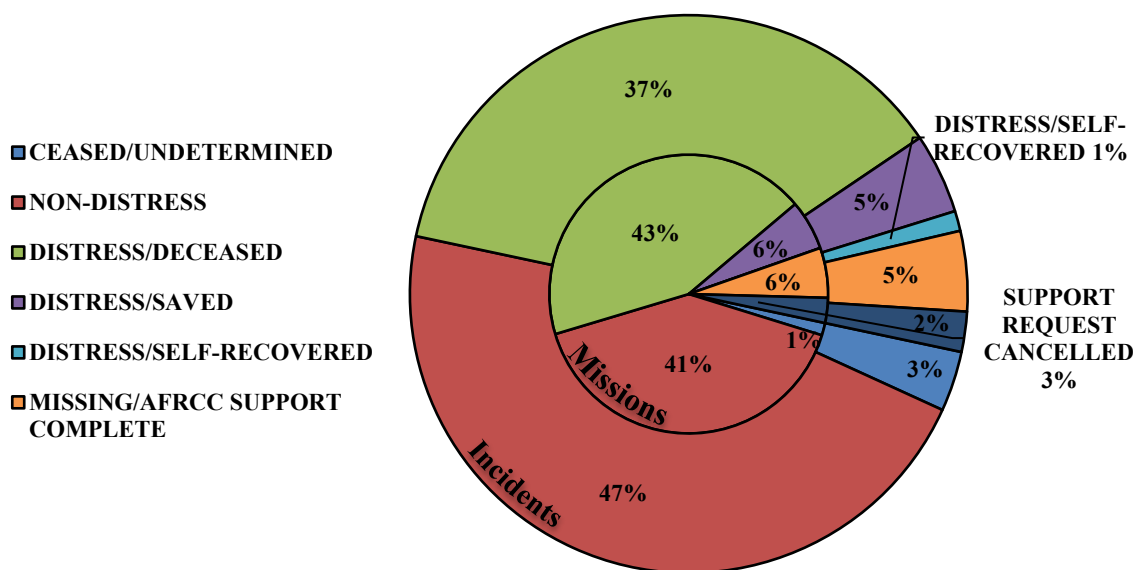
**MISSING AIRCRAFT:** The investigation of a missing or overdue aircraft.

**IFE:** In Flight Emergency – a reported emergency involving an aircraft in flight.

**PRECAUTIONARY:** Pre-positioning of SAR resources at large events where SAR events are likely to occur.

## AIRCRAFT INCIDENT/MISSION RESULTS

This chart and corresponding table display the results of the 86 Aircraft Incidents, 69 Aircraft Missions including 5 Precautionary Missions prosecuted by the AFRCC in 2023



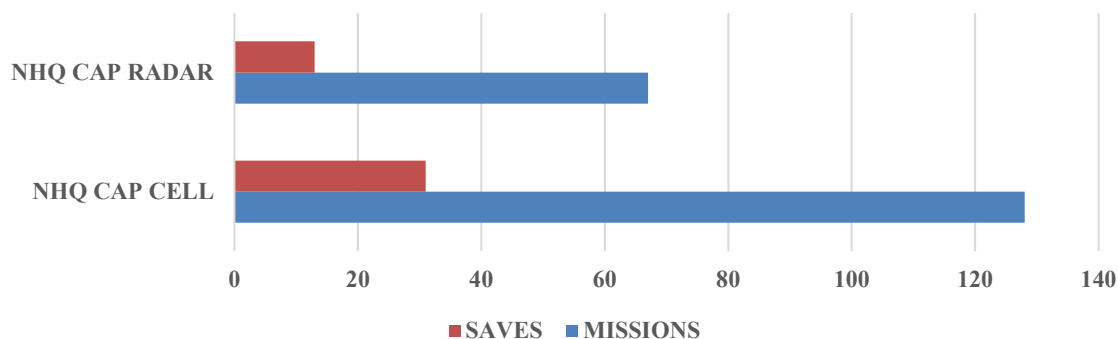
### AIRCRAFT INCIDENT/MISSION RESULTS

RESULT TYPE	INCIDENT	MISSION
CEASED/UNDETERMINED	3	1
NON-DISTRESS	40	28
DISTRESS/DECEASED	32	30
DISTRESS/SAVED	4	4
DISTRESS/SELF-RECOVERED	1	0
MISSING/AFRCC SUPPORT COMPLETE	4	4
SUPPORT REQUEST CANCELLED	2	2

## **RADAR AND CELL PHONE FORENSICS**

The below data indicates the number of missions in which radar and/or cell phone forensics were involved, and the number of corresponding lives saved.

*The AFRCC is authorized to request cell phone forensics IAW 18 U.S.C. § 2702 (b) (8)§ 2702. Voluntary disclosure of customer communications or records (b) Exceptions for disclosure of communications -- A provider described in subsection (a) may divulge the contents of a communication-- (8) To a Federal, State, or local governmental entity, if the provider, in good faith, believes that an emergency involving danger of death or serious physical injury to any person requires disclosure without delay of communications relating to the emergency.*



### **RADAR AND CELL FORENSICS**

TYPE	MISSIONS	SAVES
NHQ CAP CELL	128	31
NHQ CAP RADAR	67	13

### **INCIDENTS/MISSIONS/SAVES BY STATE**

STATE	INCIDENTS	MISSIONS	SAVES	STATE	INCIDENTS	MISSIONS	SAVES
AL	195	13	5	MT	69	12	5
AK	10	0	0	NC	380	24	12
AR	82	8	1	ND	37	2	0
AZ	442	17	8	NE	69	1	1
CA	1018	59	23	NH	56	3	3
CO	322	55	37	NJ	163	2	0
CT	58	0	0	NM	89	7	0
DE	25	0	0	NV	215	13	3
FL	1548	39	7	NY	228	5	2
GA	370	10	4	OH	153	2	0
HI	5	1	0	OK	114	5	1
IA	41	1	2	OR	170	10	3
ID	135	12	5	PA	265	6	0
IL	185	1	0	RI	16	0	0
IN	100	2	0	SC	159	2	0
KS	167	4	1	SD	45	10	8
KY	111	6	2	TN	185	6	0
LA	237	5	2	TX	852	24	5
MA	132	4	1	UT	31	8	2
MD	126	2	2	VA	435	68	44
ME	77	2	1	VT	247	5	0
MI	164	8	1	WA	35	1	1
MN	111	4	0	WI	57	21	16
MO	109	0	0	WV	114	14	0
MS	90	7	1	WY	16	0	0
DC	12	0	0	OS	169	7	5
PR	9	6	0	UL	140	15	8

Note: DC - Washington District of Columbia; PR - Puerto Rico; OS – Overseas; UL - Unlocated

## **SEARCH AND RESCUE UNIT (SRU) MISSION**

The total number of missions by SRU is determined by extensive data mining and may be different than what each SRU reports internally. The mission totals on this page may be higher than the actual annual number due to multiple SRUs being involved in the same mission. The save totals on this page may be lower than the actual annual number due to no federal resources being used.

<b>ARMY</b>					
<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>	<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>
16 CAB	1	1	AASF CHEYENNE	11	8
77 CAB	1	1	HAATS EAGLE	13	13
2-211 GSAB	1	1	AASF GRAY	2	0
147 AVN	1	0	AASF HELENA	7	4
FLATIRON	11	6	AASF PAPAGO	1	1
AASF BANGOR	4	1	AASF SALT LAKE	1	4
AASF BOISE	4	2	AASF RENO	2	0
AASF BUCKLEY	15	14	AASF RAPID CITY	1	2
AASF BURLINGTON	3	0	AASF WEST BEND	4	1
<b>ARMY TOTAL</b>				<b>83</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>COAST GUARD</b>					
<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>	<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>
CG D1 BOSTON	2	0	CG D8 NEW ORLEANS	3	4
CG D5 NORFOLK	1	1	CG D9 CLEVELAND	2	1
CG D7 MIAMI	2	0	CG D11 ALAMEDA	4	1
CG D7 SAN JUAN	1	0	CG D13 SEATTLE	9	6
<b>USCG TOTAL</b>				<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>NAVY</b>					
<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>	<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>
NAWS CHINA LAKE	3	3	NAS LEMOORE	11	9
NAWDC	0	0	NAS WHIDBEY ISLAND	40	33
<b>USN TOTAL</b>				<b>54</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>AIR FORCE</b>					
<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>	<b>SRU NAME</b>	<b>MISSIONS</b>	<b>SAVES</b>
1 SOW	1	0	492 SOW	1	1
129 RQW	4	3	512 RQS	1	0
304 RQS	1	0	513 RQS	1	0
36 RQS	1	1	54 HS	1	0
36 RQS	1	1	563 RQS	3	1
37 HS	2	2	63 RQG	1	0
40 HS	1	0	66 RQS	1	0
41 RQS	1	1	920 RQW	1	0
<b>USAF TOTAL</b>				<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>

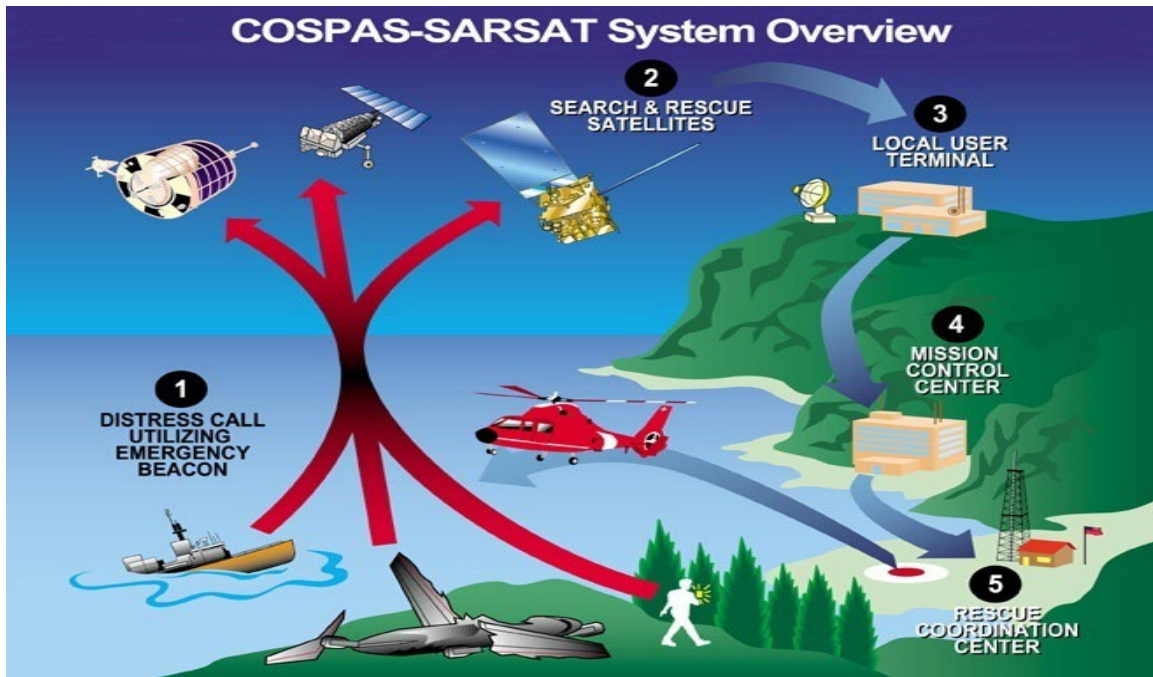


CIVIL AIR PATROL					
SRU NAME	MISSIONS	SAVES	SRU NAME	MISSIONS	SAVES
NHQ CAP CELL	128	31	MT CAP	1	0
NHQ CAP RADAR	67	13	NC CAP	16	6
AL CAP	3	0	ND CAP	2	0
AR CAP	1	0	NH CAP	0	0
AZ CAP	6	0	NJ CAP	2	0
CA CAP	16	0	NM CAP	0	0
CO CAP	8	3	NV CAP	4	0
DE CAP	0	0	NY CAP	6	0
FL CAP	25	0	OH CAP	1	0
GA CAP	4	0	OK CAP	4	0
HI CAP	0	0	OR CAP	6	0
IA CAP	1	1	PA CAP	6	0
ID CAP	1	0	PR CAP	5	0
IL CAP	1	0	RI CAP	0	0
IN CAP	1	0	SC CAP	2	0
KS CAP	3	1	SD CAP	2	1
KY CAP	0	0	TN CAP	4	0
LA CAP	2	0	TX CAP	16	0
MA CAP	0	0	UT CAP	9	0
MD CAP	2	0	VA CAP	4	0
ME CAP	1	0	VT CAP	0	0
MI CAP	4	0	WA CAP	0	0
MN CAP	3	0	WI CAP	8	0
MO CAP	0	0	WV CAP	1	0
MS CAP	0	0	WY CAP	2	0
CAP TOTAL				378	56
OTHERS					
SRU NAME	MISSIONS	SAVES	SRU NAME	MISSIONS	SAVES
LOCAL LE/SAR	14	14	OLYMPIC NAT PARK	1	0
ROCKY MTN NAT PARK	1	1			
OTHERS TOTAL				16	15

**REMEMBER TO REGISTER YOUR 406 MHz BEACON &  
UPDATE IT ANYTIME A CHANGE IS MADE!**

**HELP US SAVE LIVES!**

<https://beaconregistration.noaa.gov>



For more information about the AFRCC annual report or if you have questions or concerns addressing the information in this product, please contact the AFRCC at [afrcc.console@us.af.mil](mailto:afrcc.console@us.af.mil) or at 850-283-5129.



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*"These Things We Do ... That Others May Live"*