



CONR - 1 AF/AFNORTH

Continental United States NORAD Region – First Air Force (Air Forces Northern)
Office of Public Affairs

1210 Beacon Beach Road * Tyndall AFB FL 32403-5549
(850) 283-8080 * FAX (850) 283-3376 * DSN 523-8080

afnorthpa@tyndall.af.mil * www.1af.acc.af.mil * [twitter@1staf](https://twitter.com/1staf) * [Facebook@America's AOC](https://www.facebook.com/AmericasAOC)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release 10-04-21/001
April 21, 2010

AFRCC dispatches helos to stranded hikers

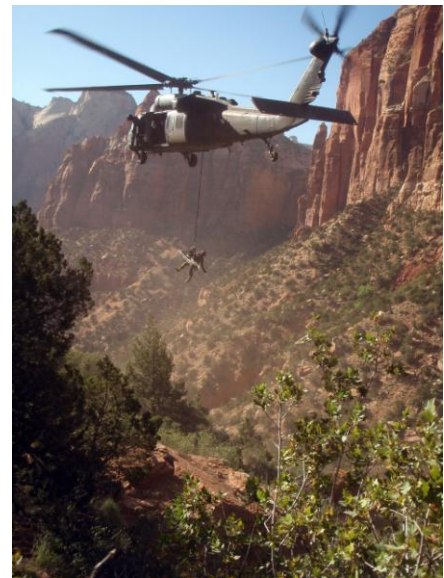
By Capt. Jared Scott, 601st AOC Public Affairs

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The Air Force Rescue Coordination Center here worked with National Park Service personnel at Death Valley National Park rangers to rescue five stranded hikers in Mosaic Canyon, Calif., early Sunday morning.

The hikers had become trapped between two cliffs and were spotted by another hiker who phoned for help. Once Park Service personnel established that the hikers were alive, they dropped blankets and supplies down to them to shelter in for the night.

“After receiving the call Saturday night, we planned for an early sortie,” said Capt. Chuck Redmond, 66th Rescue Squadron flight lead at Nellis AFB, Nev. “We coordinated with the Park Service to get the most current coordinates on the hikers’ location and launched our helicopters.”

After being contacted by the AFRCC, the 66th RQS launched two HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters and deployed to the canyon along with U.S. Air Force pararescuemen – also known as PJs – from the 58th RQS at approximately 8:15 a.m. Pacific time Sunday. Shortly after the helicopters arrived at the scene, the hikers were hoisted out of the canyon and transported to a local airport where medical and park personnel were standing by.



“They seemed pretty eager to see us when we got there,” said Capt. Redmond. “The hikers were stuck on a high ridge line that was too narrow for us to land the choppers, so we had to tactically insert the PJs onto the cliff and hoist the hikers out one at a time.”

The pararescuemen conducted a quick medical check of all five hikers and determined they were good condition and able to be transported aboard the HH-60s.

“Anytime lives are on the line it serves as a reminder of how important our mission is,” said Maj. Ryan Mattson, AFRCC flight commander. “The men and women of AFRCC are always on duty and ready to answer the call.”

– more –

2-2-2 HIKERS

As the United States' inland search and rescue mission coordinator, the AFRCC serves as the single agency responsible for coordinating federal search and rescue activities in the 48 contiguous United States.

The rescue coordination center directly ties into the FAA's alerting system and the U.S. Mission Control Center. In addition to Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking information, the AFRCC computer system contains resource files that list federal and state organizations which can conduct or assist in search and rescue efforts throughout North America.

The primary mission of the 66th Rescue Squadron is to provide rapidly deployable, expeditionary combat search and rescue forces to theater commanders in response to contingency operations worldwide. The 66th Rescue Squadron is one of only six Air Force active-duty combat rescue units flying the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter. Depending on the mission, a typical rescue crew includes a pilot, co-pilot, flight engineer, gunner and two pararescuemen.

The 58th Rescue Squadron is one of only four active-duty Guardian Angel squadrons in the world. Guardian Angel is the Air Force's human/equipment based weapon system that executes all five tasks of personnel recovery - report, locate, support, recover and reintegrate, and consists of pararescuemen, survival specialists, and combat rescue officers. Pararescuemen and combat rescue officers in Guardian Angel recovery teams deploy into uncertain or hostile environments independently or in conjunction with rotary- and fixed-wing aircraft, watercraft, and overland vehicles in order to locate, authenticate, and recover isolated personnel for return to friendly lines. With its dedicated support personnel, the 58th Rescue Squadron is poised to support worldwide combat and contingency operations throughout the spectrum of hostilities.