



**COMBAT SYSTEMS OFFICER TRAINING
GRADUATION CEREMONY**



Friday, July 17th, 2026
National Naval Aviation Museum
Naval Air Station Pensacola, FL

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

ENTRANCE OF OFFICIAL PARTY

PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS

NATIONAL ANTHEM
AIC Aja Copeland
451st Flying Training Squadron

INVOCATION
Chaplain CDR Darrel Rewis, USN

NARRATOR
Capt Scott Wortman
451st Flying Training Squadron

OPENING REMARKS
Colonel Scott M. Thompson
Commander, 479th Flying Training Group

GUEST SPEAKER
Colonel W. Bruce Goss
Deputy Commander, 95th Wing

PRESENTATION OF
AERONAUTICAL ORDERS AND WINGS

AWARDS

AIR FORCE SONG

DEPARTURE OF OFFICIAL PARTY

OFFICIAL PARTY

COL SCOTT M. THOMPSON

COMMANDER,

479TH FLYING TRAINING GROUP

COL W. BRUCE GOSS

DEPUTY COMMANDER,

95TH WING, OFFUTT AFB



Colonel Scott M. Thompson

Colonel Scott M. Thompson is the Commander of the 479th Flying Training Group at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla. The Group includes four squadrons, over 700 personnel and 24 T-6A Texan II aircraft, and trains over 200 Combat Systems Officers each year for the U.S. Air Force, Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard. Additionally, the Group supports over 1,500 Air Force personnel in the Pensacola, Fla. area.



Prior to this assignment, Col Thompson was the Deputy Commander, Joint-Global Strike Operations Center (J-GSOC). The J-GSOC is the central command and control node for all operations within Air Force Global Strike Command, orchestrating air component warfighting and readiness activities for the Commander, Air Forces Strategic and U.S. Strategic Command.

Since commissioning from the Air Force Officer Training School in 2005, Col Thompson has served at the tactical, operational, and strategic level in five major commands and the joint staff. He deployed in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM as an F-15E Flight Lead and to INDOPACOM as a B-1 Flight Lead. Col Thompson commanded the 28th Bomb Squadron, the B-1 Formal Training Unit, at Dyess AFB. His staff experience includes assignments as Dynamic Targeting Chief in the 607th Air Operations Center and various roles within the nuclear enterprise culminating as a Presidential Strike Advisor in the National Military Command Center.

Colonel W. Bruce Goss

Col. W. Bruce Goss is the Deputy Commander of the 95th Wing at Offutt AFB, Nebraska. He is responsible for organizing, training, and equipping a Total Force team that includes the 1 ACCS, 595 AMXS, 595 SCS, 625 STOS, 610 CACS, 253 CACG and their respective units. Additionally, he provides the Wing Commander with O-6 level advice for implementing directives from the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff of the Air Force to effectively integrating the capabilities and functions of these units into a cohesive operational force.



Col. Goss enlisted in the Air Force as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal technician in June 1993. He served as a Military Training Instructor (MTI) and earned a Master MTI "Blue Rope". Following Officer Training School in 2003, Col. Goss was commissioned as a Personnel Officer, then became rated as an E-3 Navigator in the 963d Airborne Air Control Squadron in 2006. Col. Goss commanded at the squadron level at the United States Air Force Academy and 965th Airborne Air Control Squadron. Additionally, he has deployed to the Balkans, South America, the United Arab Emirates, and Afghanistan.

He and his wife Debbie have four children Victoria, Preston, Sophie and Forrest



1st Lt Spencer J. Auth

Hometown	Spokane, WA
Aircraft	MPRIS
Assignment	Beale AFB, CA



1st Lt Joseph W. Bishop

Hometown	Wimberley, TX
Aircraft	MPRIS
Assignment	Beale AFB, CA



1st Lt Jordan T. Hervey

Hometown	Fort Scott, KS
Aircraft	F-15E, WSO
Assignment	Seymour-Johnson AFB, NC



1st Lt Victor M. Interiano Jr.

Hometown	New Orleans, LA
Aircraft	MC-130J, CSO
Assignment	Kirkland AFB, NM



Capt Marcus M. Jones

Hometown	Pensacola, FL
Aircraft	RQ-170, EWO
Assignment	Creech AFB, NV



1st Lt Regina Y. Kim

Hometown	Hoffman Estates, IL
Aircraft	MPRIS
Assignment	Beale AFB, CA



1st Lt Sergio I. Rodriguez-Alcaraz

Hometown	Mesa, AZ
Aircraft	EA-37B, EWO
Assignment	Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ



1st Lt Jon-Michael Sampson

Hometown	Montgomery, AL
Aircraft	F-15E, WSO
Assignment	Seymour-Johnson AFB, NC



1st Lt Hans L. Skovlin

Hometown	Missoula, MT
Aircraft	B-52H, WSO
Assignment	Barksdale AFB, LA



2nd Lt Deon D. Turner

Hometown	Hawthorne, CA
Aircraft	F-15E, WSO
Assignment	Seymour-Johnson AFB, NC



2nd Lt Brandon Weese

Hometown	Cleveland, OH
Aircraft	C-130H, Navigator
Assignment	Dobbins ARB, GA



Capt Denzell J. Wilson

Hometown	Jacksonville, FL
Aircraft	RQ-170, EWO
Assignment	Creech AFB, NV



UCT 26-11



Outstanding Instructors

CSO Fundamentals Simulator Instructor	Maj Clinton Brandt
Electronic Warfare Simulator Instructor	Capt Raechelle Lord
Tactical Fundamentals Simulator Instructor	Maj Jessica Earls
Radar Scope Interpretation Simulator Instructor	Maj Mallory Wade
T-6 Simulator Instructor Pilot (CSI)	Mr. Micheal Yager
T-96 Simulator Instructor Pilot (CSI)	Mr. Mark Messerly
T-96 Transition Instructor	Capt Daniel Franco
T-96 Military Training Routes Instructor	Lt Col Peter Gardner
Multi-Crew Synthetic Training System Instructor	Maj Robert Reynaud
T-6 Instrument Instructor Pilot	Capt Katie Schlueter
T-6 Navigation Instructor Pilot	Capt Alexander Clymer
Active Duty Academic Instructor	Maj Jonathan Mims
Civilian Academic Instructor (CAI)	Mr. Matthew Schelling
Active Duty Intel Instructor	SrA Victoria Rubio
Integration Instructor	Maj James Harris

Squadron Commanders

479 STUS

Lt Col Austin Lohman

479 OSS

Lt Col Michael Matchett

455 FTS

Lt Col Ryan Whitehead

451 FTS

Lt Col Jonathan Hamilton

Graduate

Flight Commander

Capt Eric Carter Jr.

History of the 479th Flying Training Group

The 479th Flying Training Group (FTG) traces in lineage to World War II. In September 1943, Lt Col Leo Dusard was tasked with standing up a new fighter group. He began by selecting key personnel from the 329th Fighter Group (FG), and on October 15th the 479 FG was activated at Grand Central Air Terminal in California.

Following the reassignment of Lt Col Dusard, Lt Col Kyle Riddle took the reins of the 479 FG and quickly deployed the group to Europe. On April 16th 1944, 145 officers and 910 enlisted members deployed to Wattisham Royal Air Station near the village of Ipswich, England.

Only 11 days after arriving in Wattisham, the 479 FG participated in its first combat mission. Maj John H. Lowell led 34 P-38F *Lightnings* on a sweep over Holland and Belgium. On May 31st 1944, Capt Frank Keller of the 435th Fighter Squadron (FS) recorded the group's first kill by destroying a Junkers Ju-88 *Zerstorer* on the ground near Humfeld, France. Then, on July 29th, Capt Arthur Jeffrey made history as the first pilot to shoot down a rocket-propelled aircraft, a Messerschmitt Me-163 *Komet*, over Germany. On Thanksgiving Day 1945, the 479 FG boarded the *USS Enterprise* to return home to the United States. Upon return, the 479 FG was deactivated on December 1st 1945 at Camp Kilmer.

After World War II, the 479 FG was activated and deactivated several times:

- December 1952, 479th Fighter-Bomber Group, George AFB, California, North American P-51 *Mustang*.
- June 1953, 479th Fighter-Bomber Group, North American F-86F *Sabre*
- June 1954, 479th Fighter-Bomber Group, F-100A *Super Sabre*
- October 1957, group deactivated
- 26 July 1991, 479th Fighter Group, Holloman AFB, New Mexico, AT-38 *Talon*
- November 1991, group deactivated
- November 1998, 479th Flying Training Group, Moody AFB, Georgia, AT-38C & T-6A *Texan II*
- 21 June 2007, group deactivated

Finally, on October 2nd, 2009, the 479 FTG was activated at NAS Pensacola, Florida, under the Command of Col Travis A. Willis. The unit's mission is to train the Air Force's next generation aviator, the Combat Systems Officer (CSO). The 479th uses the T-6A *Texan II* and multiple aircrew training devices to this end.

* The group's three fighter squadrons (434th, 435th, and 436th) aircraft didn't have cowling colored markings like other Eight Air Force fighter groups. Rather, the 479th *Lightnings* were distinguished only by their colored tail rudders.

The Evolution of the Combat Systems Officer

Combat Systems Officers (CSO) can follow their roots back to the advent of multi-crew bi-planes in WWI. During this time, CSOs fulfilled multiple roles to include navigators, observers, ordnance delivery, and intelligence gatherers on enemy positions across Europe. For many years, their duties on aircraft were not well defined. It wasn't until the historic "Southern Cross" flight across the Pacific Ocean in May of 1928 that the navigator's mission really began to take form.

Fourteen years after the historic "Southern Cross" flight, the United States entered World War II. In many World War II aircraft, to include the mighty B-26 flown by our 451st Bomber Squadron (BS) and 455th BS, the cockpit was designed for two crew members. As was typical with these aircraft, one seat was assigned to the navigator. In addition to navigation duties, the navigator also had bombardier responsibilities. This led to the affectionate term "bombigator", referring to this multi-purpose crew position.

After WWII, CSO aircrew duties were expanded to maximize U.S. Air Force aircraft combat capabilities. Vietnam-era aircraft and tactics paved the way for the three distinct aircrew roles CSOs perform today. These specialties include Weapon Systems Officer (specializing in weapons employment), Electronic Warfare Officer (expert in electromagnetic spectrum exploitation), and Panel Navigator (expert in aircraft positioning, time control, and orchestrating airdrop). Since their inception, these three separate aircrew specialties have sustained the U.S. Air Force's air superiority around the world. From OPERATION DESERT STORM, to OPERATION ALLIED FORCE, to OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, to OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, CSOs have been the backbone of the US Military's operational successes.

Today, the Combat Systems Officer title designates an aviator that is trained to perform duties either as an Electronic Warfare Officer, Weapon Systems Officer, or a Panel Navigator. And while the crew position's duties and name may have transformed over the years, its fundamental role to the lasting success of the United States Air Force has not. The demand for CSOs will only continue to grow in the 21st century as our nation upholds its global commitments and remains postured to defend our interests around the world.

As trained experts, Combat Systems Officers graduates project airpower in the interests of the United States in the following aircraft: AC-130J, B-1B, B-52, C-130H, EA-18G, EC-130, F-15E, HC-130J, MC-130J, RC-135, RQ-170, and U-28 aircraft.

The Air Force Song

by Robert Crawford

*Off we go into the wild blue yonder,
Climbing high into the sun;
Here they come zooming to meet our thunder,
At 'em now, Give 'em the gun! (Give 'em the
gun!)*
*Down we dive, spouting our flame from under,
Off with one helluva roar!
We live in fame or go down in flame. Hey!
Nothing'll stop the U.S. Air Force!*



For photos of today's events... Find us on Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/479FTG>