

RED FLAGGED

RAAF aircraft and personnel deployed in late February to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, to participate in the United States Air Force's most advanced international air combat training activity.

Eight F/A-18 Hornet fighter jet aircraft and approximately 160 Air Force personnel from No 77 Squadron at RAAF Base Williamstown, NSW, deployed to Exercise Red Flag to conduct complex air combat missions at one of the world's best training facilities – which featured heavily in the movie *Top Gun*.

Red Flag involved a series of air combat scenarios that tested operational air and ground crews to the highest level.

The large-scale exercise involved experienced aircrews from different air forces flying strike, electronic warfare, tactical transport, fighter escort, airborne warning and control and air-to-air refuelling aircraft against dedicated defensive fighter aircraft and an extensive range of simulated surface-to-air threats.

Australian forces joined their counterparts from the US, UK and Canada for the two-week multinational exercise that ended on 5 March.

Nellis Air Force Base is one of the largest fighter bases in the world.

Aircraft from Nellis operate on the Nevada Test and Training Range, which offers more than 15,000 square miles of airspace and 4700 square miles of restricted land.

More than 75 per cent of all live munitions used by the US Air Force for training are dropped on the Nevada Test and Training Range.

Many communities in southern Nevada can see and hear Nellis' aircraft 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

From 100 feet above the ground to twice the speed of sound, Nellis conducts advanced combat training, performs operational test and evaluation, and develops tactics.

Exercise Red Flag is one of a series of advanced training programs administered by the US Air Force Warfare Centre and Nellis, through the 414th Combat Training Squadron.



RED FLAG INVOLVED A SERIES OF AIR COMBAT SCENARIOS THAT TEST OPERATIONAL AIR AND GROUND CREWS TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL



PICS SERGEANT PETE GAMMIE

Corporal Dan McCoy checks a missile before a flight.



Flying Officer Daniel Truitt heads out for a mission.