

Maj. Gen. Robert E. Harris
USAF, Ret.
Inducted 2008

Major General Robert E. Harris served as the Commander of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard from 1984 until 1992. As the Commander he led 51 units in their Federal and State missions and was the primary Air Force Advisor to the Adjutant General.

Harris was commissioned in 1954. After a tour on active duty and more training in the Air Force Reserve, and a couple of promotions, he came to the Pennsylvania Air National Guard in 1962. As part of the 140th Military Airlift Group, Olmstead Air Force Base, PA he flew as a line pilot and aircraft commander on many world-wide missions. In 1967 Harris became full-time in the Guard. Soon Harris was in Thailand. There he was decorated while piloting the first EC-121 "Cornet Solo" During Operation Commando Buzz.

As the Air Force modernized the fleet, Harris upgraded aircraft and served as an Instructor Pilot. The unit now re-designated as the 193rd, now the 193rd Special Operations Wing (SOW). The 193rd took on the increasingly important tactical electronic warfare mission in the United States and overseas. As the Deputy Commander for Operations he developed the most extensive flying schedule of any flying group in the National Guard. In 1979 Harris became the 193rd's commander. In 1983 Harris personally led the unit's mission to Grenada, racking up more combat flying hours, now over 112. Harris was promoted to Brigadier General in 1985 after serving as the Commander of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard for the previous year. Harris continued to fly, participating in Operation Joint Cause (the invasion of Panama in 1989).

Upon his retirement, Harris was decorated with the Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, the highest peacetime award.