

Dept. of Military Affairs: 128th Air Refueling Wing Security Forces Squadron gear up for its annual augmentee training program

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MILWAUKEE — The Wisconsin Air National Guard's 128th Air Refueling Wing Security Forces Squadron, based in Milwaukee, geared up for its annual augmentee training program, reinforcing the unit's commitment to readiness and preparedness. As part of their ongoing efforts to ensure the highest level of security, the squadron is putting its personnel through rigorous training exercises.

After years of program dormancy, 128th Air Refueling Wing Commander Col. Adria Zuccaro authorized the 128th Security Forces Squadron to reactivate its augmentee and unit marshal programs to bolster installation defense (ID) posture if a situation requires.

"We are excited to have several enthusiastic members from work sections around the 128th Air Refueling Wing participate in the robust training and adding capability for these important ID programs," said Lt. Col. David Hellekson, Security Forces Squadron Defense Force commander.

The augmentee training program, an essential component of the squadron's operations, prepares selected members to step into specialized roles during periods of heightened security or crisis. This initiative underscores the 128th's dedication to maintaining the security and safety of the Milwaukee air base and its assets.

Augmentees support security forces during emergency or unusual conditions. The short-term augmentee needs include installation-level exercises, events,

contingencies, wartime, and emergencies.

Over the course of several days, participants in the program receive comprehensive training in threat assessment, perimeter defense and emergency response protocols. This hands-on experience equips these security forces with the skills necessary to efficiently augment the squadron's personnel during emergencies, ensuring seamless operations in challenging circumstances.

"It was very rewarding to help develop multi-capable Airmen who are ready and willing to support the 128th Security Forces mission," said Staff Sgt. Brian Buster, a Security Forces Squadron member conducting the training. "I was impressed by the energy, professionalism and dedication that each trainee carried throughout the training cycle."

The 128th's commitment to security and its augmentee training program reflects the unwavering dedication of its personnel to safeguarding not only the air refueling wing but also the broader community. The unit's emphasis on preparedness and professionalism ensures they are ready to respond to any threat or crisis, serving as a vital component of the nation's defense.

"I'm thoroughly impressed with the ability of these guys to come out and jump in the ring right away," said Master Sgt. Matthew Wierzba, unit training manager for the Security Forces Squadron. "They fought hard in combatives, volunteered to get Tased, and exposed themselves to a shoot house in combat arms. They really just dove in headfirst on some of the most difficult tasks we train."

The augmentee training program demonstrates the 128th Air Refueling Wing's readiness and willingness to adapt to evolving security challenges, ensuring that they remain a force to be reckoned with in safeguarding their mission and the Milwaukee community they serve.