

**South Dakota National Guard
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Firefighters train to battle aircraft flames

By Spc. Britney Bodner, 103rd Public Affairs Detachment

ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, S.D. – Army National Guard firefighters participated in Aircraft Rescue Firefighting training on Monday, June 9, at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

Soldiers from the 200th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting) of the Colorado Army National Guard and the 451st Firefighting Team of the South Dakota Army National Guard took part in the event to sharpen their skills in responding to aircraft fires.

“We must be able to perform an aircraft rescue and recovery, as well as other lifesaving fire fighting techniques,” said 1st Lt. Carol Jordan, commander of the 216th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting), South Dakota Army National Guard. “This realistic training is incredible and allows us to focus on aircraft rescue and recovery options.”

The training prepares firefighters to respond to an aircraft emergency, simulating a downed aircraft with fuel fires. It also focuses on saving passengers and identifying hazardous materials near inflamed areas.

According to Spc. Michael Villegas, an instructor with the 200th, jet fuel is intensely hot once ignited, so firefighters are outfitted with special suits designed to protect them from the high temperatures.

“The firefighters wear new clothing known as proximity suits, which are predominantly used for aircraft firefighting,” said Villegas. “They reflect the heat better than other suits and are critical to the firefighter’s survival.”

Considering the volatile nature of fire, superior coordination and preparation are necessary to avoid casualties while effectively extinguishing flames, Villegas added.

“The most important part of the training is safety and teamwork,” said Villegas. “We preach safety and ensure we are all looking out for each other.”

High resolution photos will be available at the following Web site:

LINK: <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/GC2008/default.aspx>

Photo Cut Lines:

080609-A-6602B-084.JPG: Firefighters from the 200th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting) of the Colorado Army National Guard and the 451st Firefighting Team of the South Dakota Army National Guard participate in Aircraft Rescue Firefighting training on Monday, June 9, at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. Service members received instruction on how to extinguish an aircraft fuel fire at this year's Golden Coyote exercise. (Army National Guard photo by Spc. Britney Bodner)

080609-F-3567M-083.JPG: Army National Guard firefighters face a wall of flame during Aircraft Rescue Firefighting training on Monday, June 9, at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. Guardsmen from the 200th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting) of Colorado and the 451st Firefighting Team of South Dakota received instruction on how to extinguish an aircraft fuel fire at this year's Golden Coyote exercise. (Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Don McLeer)

080609-F-3567M-084.JPG: Army National Guard firefighters work together to keep control of the fire hose during Aircraft Rescue Firefighting training on Monday, June 9, at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. Members of the 200th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting) of Colorado and the 451st Firefighting Team of South Dakota received instruction on how to extinguish an aircraft fuel fire at this year's Golden Coyote exercise. (Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Don McLeer)

080609-A-3900A-069.JPG: Firefighters from the 200th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting) of the Colorado Army National Guard and the 451st Firefighting Team of the South Dakota Army National Guard participate in Aircraft Rescue Firefighting training on Monday, June 9, at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. Service members received instruction on how to extinguish an aircraft fuel fire at this year's Golden Coyote exercise. (Army National Guard Photo by Pvt. Alex Abraham)

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MEDIA WISHING TO EMBED are asked to RSVP with Maj. Orson Ward at (605) 737-6721, cell (605) 431-8753 or via E-mail at orson.ward@us.army.mil.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about the South Dakota National Guard, please visit our Web site at <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/default.aspx>

NOTE: The South Dakota National Guard will host the annual Golden Coyote exercise from June 7 – 21 in the southern Black Hills. More than 4,000 service members from 92 units representing 27 states and four foreign nations are participating in the exercise. The Golden Coyote exercise has been conducted for the past 24 years. The exercise provides relevant training opportunities in support of the war on terror and homeland defense.

Residents should be aware of an increase in military traffic throughout the Black Hills and an increase in the level of noise due to military operations. Aviation activity will be operating out of Camp Rapid and the Army Aviation Support Facility next to the Rapid City Regional Airport.

Aircraft will be primarily training on equipment and personnel transport missions as well as medical evacuation. Aircraft will respond to real-world emergencies during the exercise and remain in an all-hours-ready status during the exercise.

Spectators to military training are welcome, however caution is warranted and spectators are asked to remain at a safe distance from all moving military vehicles and aircraft to prevent injury to personnel or damage to property.