

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Legacy of Excellence



FROM THE COMMANDER

Leaders, Colleagues, Friends and Fellow 148th Bulldogs,

This 2019 annual report documents accomplishments and highlights for the 148th Fighter Wing. The Airmen or “Bulldogs” of the 148th provide ready Airmen to defeat America’s enemies and rapidly respond to state and community needs. Each one of our members takes an oath stating they “will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the State of Minnesota,” and we take that oath seriously. This oath to both country and state is what makes us unique.

The Bulldogs spent much of 2019 expanding our F-16 Suppression and Destruction of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD/DEAD) mission expertise. In April, we trained with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners - Germany, Poland, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands in a 12-day NATO partnership exercise called Frisian Flag at Leeuwarden Air Base, Netherlands. While deployed to Europe, the 148th advanced the Minnesota State Partnership Program relationship with Croatia by working with the Croatian Air Force in Zagreb, Croatia. We promoted the Air Force’s concept of Agile Basing and Dynamic Force Employment by forward deploying and flying local F-16 sorties with the Croatian Air Force’s MiG-21s.

In May and August, we continued to fly and train with diverse aircraft and branches of service during two separate Northern Lightning exercises. These exercises allowed us to plan, practice and fly with C-130s, A-10s, F-16s, F-22s, Marine F-35s and Navy EA-18s in a joint, tactically focused exercise that concentrated on air interdiction and close air support. Northern Lightning 19-01 held in May, with primary operations executed from Duluth, allowed us to showcase our airspace and facilities to fifth generation fighter aircraft. The 148th took a key role as the lead planners and tactical facilitators during Northern Lightning 19-02 held at Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center. These large force exercises bolster our joint readiness and effectively prepare us for today’s threats.

We trained hard, but also looked to the future. We are working with the Federal Aviation Authority and our military leadership to improve our already effective and superior military airspace to meet our needs for the next 50-years. We’re nearly finished with a newly constructed Mission Training Center which will feature high fidelity F-16 simulators that will effectively enhance readiness with highly realistic virtual training. We also broke ground on a new STARBASE facility that will allow STARBASE Minnesota Duluth to serve 1,000 additional students annually.

We continued to work with our local partners to include the Duluth Police Department, St. Louis County, Kern and Kompany, Minnesota Department of Health, Northeast Healthcare Preparedness Coalition and Lakehead Association mutual aid partners. We planned, practiced and tested emergency management scenarios including responses to an intentional anthrax release, active shooter exercises and Duluth Air Show emergency.

The Bulldogs of the 148th and their families continued their legacy of excellence in 2019. The 148th was named the overall best flying Air National Guard Wing by both the Air Force Association and the National Guard Association of the United States.

We are proud to live in the community we serve. Thank you for your support to the 148th Fighter Wing and the Minnesota National Guard!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Blomquist". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Colonel Chris Blomquist
Wing Commander, 148th Fighter Wing



148 FIGHTER WING

Legacy of Excellence

STATE MISSION

When MN Air National Guard units are not mobilized or under federal control, they report to the governor of Minnesota, supervised by the Adjutant General. Under state law, the MN Air National Guard provides protection of life and property and preserves peace, order and public safety.

FEDERAL MISSION

Maintain well-trained, well-equipped units available for prompt mobilization during war and provide assistance during national emergencies (such as natural disasters or civil disturbances).

WING PRIORITIES

- People First
- Organizational Safety & Security
- Fiscal & Property Responsibility
- Communicate & Partner
- Leader Development

Our VISION

Be the premier Wing ready to lead, employ and support *superior* air power with advancing weapons systems

Our MISSION

Protect America's global interests and defend the homeland with exceptional people, aircraft, equipment and capabilities

Our VALUES

Bulldog pride, development, professionalism, balance and commitment

READINESS



**OUR BOTTOM LINE RESPONSIBILITY IS TO BE
READY TO FIGHT OUR NATION'S WARS AND WIN.
EVERYTHING WE DO IS CONNECTED TO OUR
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY.**

The 148th Fighter Wing flies the Block 50 F-16CM, the newest and most capable F-16 in the U.S. Air Force fleet. The 148th is one of only two Air National Guard wings trained to provide Suppression of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD) support for our nation. The 148th is also a NORAD Aerospace Control Alert-trained flying wing capable of defending the air sovereignty of North America when called upon.

We provide personnel and equipment to support aerospace expeditionary and combat support (Air Expeditionary Force/Reserve Component Period) taskings and state active duty to meet the needs of our State and Nation.

1,044
AIRMEN ASSIGNED
427 Full-Time

4,225
FLYING HOURS

2,858
SORTIES (FLIGHTS)

93.72%
PILOT MISSION-READY RATE

75.69%
AIRCRAFT MISSION CAPABILITY RATE



In 2019, the 148th transitioned into a focused training program which expanded in Suppression and Destruction of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD/DEAD) mission expertise. The Wing trained with diverse aircraft and ground forces from other branches of service and NATO partners. The Bulldogs performed home station training and participated in the following large scale readiness exercises:

Frisian Flag

APRIL

192 | **456**
SORTIES | HOURS

Leeuwarden Air Base - Netherlands

A 12-day NATO partnership that allowed the Bulldogs to train alongside European allies and fly with several types of aircraft.

Additionally, the 148th participated in a State Partnership Program (SPP) with Croatia. Two F-16s and two MIG-21s conducted a historic flight around Zagreb International Airport.

Northern Lightning

MAY

153 | **254**
SORTIES | HOURS

148th Fighter Wing - Duluth, Minnesota

The 148th hosted EA-18 Growlers from the Navy Reserve and participated in the Northern Lightning exercise at Volk Field, Wis. This exercise provided tactical level, joint training focused on air interdiction and close air support in a contested operational environment. 1,000 personnel from 20 units participated.

Northern Strike

JULY

139 | **247**
SORTIES | HOURS

Combat Readiness Training Center - Alpena, Michigan

The 148th flew out of Alpena, Mich. during a military readiness event with aircraft from the U.S., United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Jordan. 5,700 Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines participated in synchronized and integrated training with NATO allies.

Northern Lightning

AUGUST

114 | **162**
SORTIES | HOURS

Volk Field - Camp Douglas, Wisconsin

The 148th flew out of Volk Field with varying aircraft to include F-35, F-22, F-16 and EA-18 in a total force joint exercise showcasing 1,000 personnel from 20 units.

Bayou Weasel

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

206 | **228**
SORTIES | HOURS

Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base - New Orleans, Louisiana

A joint exercise at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in New Orleans featuring Air National Guard F-16s, F-15s and Navy F-18s.

TRAINING DEPLOYMENTS



PREPAREDNESS



THE AIR FORCE INSPECTION SYSTEM IS A COHERENT, INTEGRATED AND SYNCHRONIZED ALIGNMENT OF INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED ON BEHALF OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE, THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE AIR FORCE AND COMMANDERS AT ALL LEVELS. THE WING COMMANDER'S INSPECTION PROGRAM IS LED BY THE WING INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE AND PROVIDES THE ABILITY FOR AIRMEN AND COMMANDERS TO FOCUS ON THE MISSION, NOT THE INSPECTION.

Inspections & Exercises:

- Mid-point, Air Combat Command Unit Effectiveness Inspection
- Two Readiness Exercises
- Six Horizontal Inspections
Major Wing programs inspected by Wing IG
- Three Unit Inspections
Civil Engineering Squadron, Logistics Readiness Squadron & Security Forces Squadron
- Wing wide Self-Assessment Program Management & Management Internal Control Toolset Inspection
- Congressionally Mandated Inspections
Personnel Accountability, Suicide Prevention, Transition Assistance, Equal Opportunity & Sexual Assault Prevention/Response

NOVEMBER

Active Shooter Exercise

A full-scale exercise to assess anti-terrorism, integrated defense and active shooter response capabilities. This was a 148FW specific exercise and first responders consisted of Security Forces and Fire Department personnel.

MARCH

Sunrise Surprise

A no-notice exercise that validated the Wing's readiness reporting procedures and the ability to generate personnel, aircraft, equipment and supplies to a training deployment within prescribed time requirements.

JUNE

Crimson Sandstorm

An exercise which tested all members to sustain wartime, contingency and force sustainment missions in adverse environments, while maximizing their combat effectiveness and their ability to survive and operate under stressful conditions.

Active Shooter Exercise

A tabletop exercise with participation from Wing Security Managers, multiple St. Louis County professional organizations and a federal law enforcement agent.

JULY

Operation Swift Reach

An exercise-based public health emergency response to an intentional aerosolized anthrax release at an off base military event. Participants included Minnesota Department of Health, Saint Louis County and the Northeast Healthcare Preparedness Coalition.

Duluth Airshow Regional Tabletop Exercise

A Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, led by St. Louis County Emergency Management, tested and improved on-scene security, protection and law enforcement, operational coordination and situational assessment capabilities by involving the Duluth Airport Authority, 148th Fighter Wing, Duluth Fire Department, Duluth Police Department, Kern and Kompany, St. Louis County Emergency Management and Sheriff's Department.

AUGUST

ACC Midpoint Inspection

41 Inspectors assessed the effectiveness of the Wing's leadership, resource management, process improvement efforts and ability to execute the mission.

ENGAGEMENTS





FISCAL YEAR 2019

21 FLY OVERS

MARCH Funeral of Maj. Gen. Gatlin, WWII Aviator & former Chief of Staff of the Minn. Air National Guard

MAY Repatriation of Dante Tini, WWII Sailor killed at Pearl Harbor

JUNE Grandma's Marathon

JULY 12 Regional Independence Day Events
Funeral of Capt. Billy Humes, WWII Aviator
Duluth Air Show
Gandy Dancer, Burnett County, Wisconsin Air Show
Warbird Rendezvous at Central Wisconsin Airport

AUGUST Minn. State Fair Military Appreciation Day

ENGAGEMENTS

APRIL Croatia State Partnership Program Event in Zagreb, Croatia

MAY Military Affairs Committee trip to Washington D.C.

JULY 148th Fighter Wing & Air National Guard recruiting at the Duluth Air Show

SEPTEMBER Employer Support for the Guard & Reserve Boss Lift
Minnesota Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Conference sponsored by ALLETE Inc.

PEOPLE CONTINUE TO BE OUR GREATEST RESOURCE. OUR AIRMEN LED US TO EARN TOP-TIER, NATIONAL LEVEL RECOGNITION IN 2019 FROM THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION AND THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES (NGAUS).

SAPR Stand Down

The Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Jon Jensen, hosted a SAPR Stand Down in August. The purpose of this event was to review Minnesota's sexual assault victim support program and to raise awareness. This transparent event featured a victim's testimony, comments from local subject matter experts, and a town hall-style question and answer segment.

Bystander Training

In 2019, 75% of 148th Airmen participated in an interactive training designed to equip them with the necessary connection, knowledge and skill to increase their proactive and reactive bystander behaviors for issues including sexual assault and suicide.

Resiliency Tactical Pause (RTP)

In October, the 148th Fighter Wing hosted an RTP as directed by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General David L. Goldfein. It is a continuing effort to strengthen meaningful connections, reinforce squadrons as the heartbeat of the Air Force, break down barriers in order to optimize performance and drive feedback from Airmen. The foundation of RTP is treating Airmen, civilians and families with dignity, respect and compassion.

Airmen & Family Readiness

Ms. Rebecca Chapin was selected as the 148th Fighter Wing's new Family and Readiness Consultant.

Bulldog Day

In September, the 148th hosted "Bulldog Day" for Wing members and their families. The event boasted a technology and innovation theme. Staff from STARBASE Minnesota Duluth provided virtual reality demonstrations related to scientific studies; while robotics teams from Denfeld and Duluth East high schools presented their robots and performed. Families were also treated to various tours of 148th facilities and equipment while younger children enjoyed a bounce house and games.

90.44%
RETENTION RATE

103.06%
PERSONNEL END STRENGTH
19th consecutive year over 100%

148
AIRMEN USED STATE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT
\$938,711 paid towards Airmen tuition costs

62
AIRMEN RECEIVED STATE ENLISTMENT BONUSES
\$152,291 paid to 148th Airmen

99
AIRMEN RECEIVED FEDERAL ENLISTMENT BONUSES
\$1.3 million paid to 148th Airmen

PEOPLE FIRST



96-0082

LT COL JOSEPH WHITE



1. PUSH BUTTON TO OPEN DOOR
2. PULL RING OUT 6 FEET TO
JETTISON CANOPY

RESCUE

DANGER
EJECTION
SEAT
DANGER



LEADER DEVELOPMENT



Bulldog Leadership Talks

“TED Talk” inspired speeches given by Wing or community subject matter experts to provide perspective on leadership, teamwork and problem solving. Lectures are recorded and shared via the Wing App and YouTube.

Junior Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Development Course

Sponsored by the First Sergeant's Council, the course offers personal and professional growth opportunities to Junior NCO's who desire advancement in their military career.

Senior NCO Course

Held at Camp Ripley, this course is sponsored by the First Sergeant's and Chief's Councils. It's designed to push senior enlisted leaders to the next level of engagement and communication with their Airmen.

148th Flight Commander's Course

Modeled after the Air University Flight Commander's Edge, this course is designed to provide quality leadership development through management topics and base-specific content to meet local needs.

Women's Leadership Forum

An annual professional development event hosted by the MN National Guard Diversity Initiative intended to broaden skills and enhance professional relationships. “Breaking the Mold” was the 2019 event theme featuring keynote speaker Corie Barry, Chief Executive Officer of the MN-based Best Buy Inc. Breakout sessions throughout the day focused on career development, communication, retention and critical thinking.

ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY & SECURITY

148th Fighter Wing Fire Department

The 148th FW Fire Department provides fire and rescue services to the 148th Fighter Wing, Duluth International Airport and civilian airfield tenants including Cirrus Design, AAR and Monaco Air. Through the Lakehead Association Mutual Aid agreement, the 148th Fire Department responded to 217 emergencies at the Duluth International Airport and surrounding townships. Responses included military and civilian flight emergencies, aircraft ground emergencies, medical and HAZMAT calls, structure fires and motor vehicle accidents.

Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD)

The 148th Fighter Wing EOD supported 15 responses including four Defense Support to Civil Authority calls and three Very Important Persons Protection Activity (VIPPSA) events requiring 800 man-hours. EOD supports range clearances and unexploded ordinance (UXO) calls.

OSHA Voluntary Protection Program

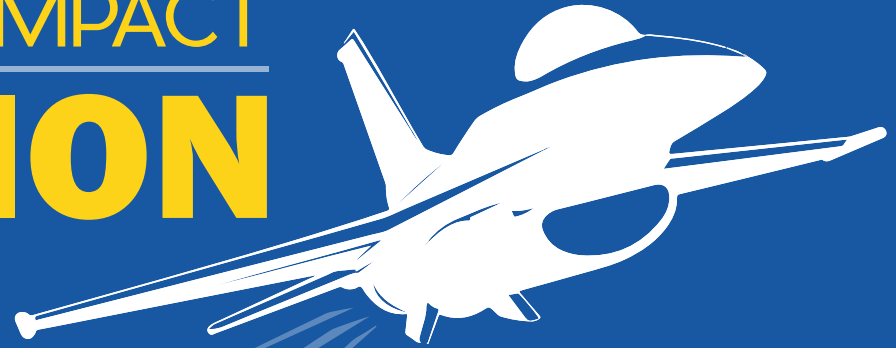
OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) recognizes exemplary safety and health management systems. The 148th became the first U.S. Air Force unit to be VPP certified in 2008. The 148th was recertified twice, in 2011 and 2016. As the Wing prepares for another recertification in 2021, we'll continue to strengthen and improve our excellent safety culture through the four VPP tenets: Leadership and Employee Involvement, Worksites Analysis, Hazard Prevention and Control and Safety and Health Training.



FISCAL & PROPERTY RESPONSIBILITY

148FW ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$90 MILLION



CIVILIAN PAY

\$30 MILLION

MILITARY PAY

\$30 MILLION

OPERATING EXPENDITURE

\$12 MILLION

VALUE

OF INDIRECT JOBS

\$18 MILLION

**THE 148TH FIGHTER WING
CONTINUES TO OPTIMIZE
INFRASTRUCTURE TO
MEET CURRENT AND
FUTURE OPERATIONAL
REQUIREMENTS WHILE
ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSIDERATIONS, IMPROVING
SECURITY AND HELPING THE
STATE OF MINNESOTA MEET ITS
ENERGY, WATER, WASTE AND
SUSTAINABILITY GOALS.**

Campus Improvements

In 2019, the 148th continued to update infrastructure and facilities. A \$7.3 million weapons load crew facility was completed as was a \$3.2 million building expansion that will host the Wing's Mission Training Center. We broke ground for a STARBASE Minnesota Duluth classroom expansion which will allow STARBASE Minnesota Duluth to serve 1,000 additional students annually. The 148th also invested resources into the design work for future projects and updating the Wing's master plan.

In 2020, the 148th will begin revamping 1950s-era infrastructure with \$14 million in construction projects including upgraded water lines and water line feeds for the base. Additionally, the munitions storage area will receive in-ground power, plus compliant water and sewer systems. Construction will begin for a new Domestic Operations storage facility, firing range and logistics readiness facility.

Future initiatives include continuing efforts to progress the Wing's master plan and securing military construction funds to reconstruct our non-compliant aircraft shelters.



COMMUNICATE & PARTNER



Minnesota State Partnership Program - Croatia

In April, Airmen from the 148th Fighter Wing and the Croatian military joined together to fly two Minnesota National Guard F-16s and two Croatian MIG-21s in Zagreb, Croatia in support of the National Guard State Partnership Program which formed in 1996. (Bottom right photo illustrates these efforts)

Military Affairs Committee (MAC)

In May, the MAC traveled to Washington D.C. to build and sustain a strong relationship with Air National Guard and Air Force leadership. The MAC traveled to Volk Field, Wisconsin in August to learn about the capabilities on next generation aircraft during the Northern Lightning 19-02 flying training exercise. The MAC supports 148th initiatives through legislative and government channels. (See photo page 18)

Yellow Ribbon Company Conference

In September, the 148th Fighter Wing collaborated with ALLETE Inc. and the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs Yellow Ribbon to host the 2019 Minnesota Yellow Ribbon Company Conference.

Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve

In September, employers of 148th Fighter Wing members experienced a snap shot of the Wing's mission during a KC-135 refueling flight. A KC-135 Stratotanker from the 128th Air Refueling Wing and F-16s from the 148th Fighter Wing partnered to show area employers how they work together to refuel the F-16s during a training flight. Boss Lifts are a tool the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) can utilize for employer outreach and to bridge the gap between civilian companies employing part time military personnel.

Community Support

Airmen from the 148th Fighter Wing volunteered their time to community service, providing 5,776 hours through tours, flyovers, youth sports coaching and other activities.

STARBASE Minnesota Duluth

Located directly on base, STARBASE teaches an immersive, hands-on and technology-rich Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program for northland fifth graders.

- **1,474** students served
- **315** hours of programming
- **120** hours of summer camps



ADVANCED READINESS



Advanced Mission Readiness

2020 will bring the 148th advanced mission readiness when the newly constructed Mission Training Center (MTC) is operational. The MTC features a high fidelity, four-ship F-16 simulator which supports pilot training from initial qualification, to advanced skills training and upgrade training. The MTC will facilitate training at all levels, ranging from individual events in a single aircraft mode of operation to large-scale, composite force combat mission training and rehearsal.

Future initiatives to increase advanced mission readiness include acquiring Joint Threat Emitters (JTE). JTEs have the ability to mimic threatening emissions associated with a wide array of potential enemy air defense systems. These emitters enable pilots to train in an environment which closely matches actual combat zones.

OPERATIONAL TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE

WE CONTINUE TO WORK WITH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY PARTNERS TO IMPROVE OUR AIRSPACE TO MEET TRAINING NEEDS FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS.

The 148th Fighter Wing has access to unobstructed airspace spreading 300 miles long and 100 miles wide including areas over Northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Lake Superior. The 26,000 square miles of airspace is readily available providing pilots top notch training opportunities with areas of varied terrain, coastal areas and vast water space ideal for integrated, multi-domain operations.

While we are fortunate to have such robust airspace; it was designed in the 1950s and has not changed since the 1970s.



2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- » Planned, designed and executed five joint-flying training deployments
- » Historic flight of two 148th F-16's to Zagreb, Croatia in support of the Minnesota National Guard State Partnership Program - this is the first known instance of Minnesota F-16's flying with two Croatian MiG-21's (photo top right)
- » Community engagements
 - 21 fly overs in support of air shows or patriotic events
 - ESGR Boss Lift, Yellow Ribbon conference and Spouse Lift
- » Broke ground for a new STARBASE facility which doubles classroom capacity
- » Conducted 21 Inspector General (IG) inspections and six exercises/drills

NATIONAL-LEVEL AWARDS

- » Air Force Association Outstanding Air National Guard Flying Unit Award
- » National Guard Association of the U.S. (NGAUS) Spaatz Trophy
- » Gen. Mark A. Welsh III "One Air Force" Award
- » Air National Guard Female Athlete of the Year - Technical Sgt. Amy McMillan
- » Maj. Gen. Eugene Lupia Award - Master Sgt. Mark Hilleren

2020 OBJECTIVES

- » Prepare for 5th Generation or newer manned Fighter Aircraft:
 - Advocate for airspace improvements to increase 3D limits, instrumentation and communication
 - Secure military construction funds to replace existing, non-compliant aircraft shelters
- » Support all Aerospace Expeditionary and Combat Support taskings
- » Maintain full NORAD Aerospace Control Alert (ACA) mission readiness and support all ACA taskings
- » Continue to improve our campus

ACHIEVEMENTS & GOALS





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