

NATO War Training in Wisconsin

Wisconsin Guard to host NATO air war training at Volk Field

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The Guard also will employ KC-135 tanker aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) and helicopters during the exercise.

The skies over a patch of western Wisconsin will be filled with foreign combat planes starting on Saturday, but don't panic: it's only a drill.

The first-ever NATO exercise in the United States specifically designed to train forward air controllers begins Saturday at the Wisconsin Air National Guard's Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center and continues through Sept. 3.

“Ramstein Rover 2010” includes units from 40 NATO members, including Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and the U.S.

The principal goals of the exercise, according to a news release from the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard, are to build and standardize close air support, forward air controller and joint terminal attack controller capabilities.

Volk Field was selected for this inaugural exercise because of its ability to provide realistic training scenarios.

According to the news release, “The training is meant to ensure effective use of airpower in support of forces, while mitigating risks to civilians and their property.”

Fifteen forward air controller instructors are expected to take part in the exercise, training troops who will be deployed as forward air controllers and joint terminal attack controllers to NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

“With NATO's ‘train as you operate’ approach, we ensure the best training and exercise opportunities during Ramstein Rover 2010, in theater-realistic scenarios,” U.S. Air Force Colonel Rob Redanz, exercise director, said in a news release.

Redanz leads the Headquarters Air Controller Ramstein ISAF branch, overseeing the forward

air controller capability branch.

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Training during the exercise will include controlling fighter aircraft in close air support missions, developing and maintaining forward air controller skills, introducing and practicing convoy procedures using spot maps and aerial photographs, and observing the effects of live ordnance.

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