

ALPENA COMBAT READINESS TRAINING CENTER



MISSION

LINEAGE

Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center

STATIONS

Alpena, MI

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Col Paul A. Pochmara

Col Thomas G. Cutler, 1987

Col Terry R. McKenna, 1995

Col James E. Makowske, 1999

Col Ewin R. Sansom, 2004

Col Bryan J. Teff, Jan 2011

Col James Rossi

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) was established in 1986 to provide military units with year-round realistic training for their wartime missions in a simulated combat environment. Although it was originally conceived as a military training facility, the CRTC ultimately expanded its training to include a variety of civilian emergency response and law enforcement agencies.

Units from all over the country deploy to the CRTC for training that they might otherwise not be able to receive at their home bases, thus enhancing their readiness and capability. In 2008 alone, 210 units deployed to CRTC for training. The moderate spring and summer climate provides ideal conditions for training and the harsh winters of Northern Michigan creates realistic conditions for winter warfare training. In addition to training deployments, U.S. military units often conduct their Operational Readiness Exercises and Operational Readiness Inspections at the base.

The base has a 9,000 foot runway and an assault field landing strip for C-130s, located near the drop zone.⁵ Capable of conducting sustained flight operations, the airfield has a large ramp that can accommodate up to 100 fighter-size aircraft and numerous support facilities. The base boasts over 150 buildings and can house approximately 1,200 personnel at any given time. Morale Recreation and Welfare (MWR) services are also available at the base

Among the more unique facilities at the CRTC is a Rapid Runway Repair training center. This facility provides civil engineers valuable experience repairing battle-damaged runways and it includes an 800 foot runway covered with mock bomb craters. A Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force (Prime BEEF) support facility is also present at the base. The Prime BEEF program organizes civil engineering combat support teams for deployments. The base also houses the Airman Leadership School and the Medical Readiness Training School.

The CRTC also provides training and facilities for security and law enforcement groups, both military and civilian. Military security forces typically undergo sustainment training at the base, which enables personnel to maintain proficiency in their duties. Such training often involves tactical movements in urban warfare scenarios. The CRTC also provides realistic firefighting training for military and civilian units and participates in state and county disaster response exercises, in conjunction with civilian emergency response and law enforcement agencies.

The mission of the CRTC was increased with the additional tasking of running an ANG Medical Readiness Training School. The schoolhouse was designed to train ANG medical units for field operations. Both of these programs added personnel to the workforce and the number of employees, military and civilian, was over 100 persons.

In the early 90's construction was ongoing, with a major emphasis on upgrading the 1950's barracks and latrines to current standards. Thus a \$3.8 million dollar dormitory upgrade project begun and office buildings and officer quarters were all remodeled.

During the period under the command of Col Thomas G. Cuter, the base created a long range plan including a new dining facility, fire station, operations facility, squadron operations (office) buildings, a convention center, a new facility at the Grayling Range and new dormitories thus keeping the Alpena CRTC one of the premier training sites in the world.

In 1991, another tasking was added to the mission when the Air Combat Maneuver Instrumentation (ACMI) was instated. This state of the art system involves computerized communication between the aircraft and a computer satellite, providing full mission replay.

In December of 1998, the CRTC received the Alpena-Kadena Interim Training System (AKITS) for use by fighter pilots to assist them in air combat training. As a part of the new system, an Air Combat Maneuvering Instrumentation (ACMI) pod is carried by fighter aircraft to track and film every combat maneuver. In addition, AKITS eliminates the need to use live ammunition and bombs during combat training flights. The AKITS system replaced the old chalkboard and hand-gesturing system pilots traditionally utilized to debrief their training missions.

With the addition of the Fire Training Site and MOUT City in early 2000, the CRTC hosts several Fireman Schools and numerous law enforcement training courses annually.

Although the CRTC's core mission is to train ANG units, other military train here regularly. Air Force, Army, Navy Seals Marines and Latvian and Italian military have trained at the site. In

recent years the CRTC has opened its gate to numerous non-profit organizations. It is not uncommon to see canine training, emergency response training along with other training maneuvers running all at the same time. Youth programs have expanded from the traditional Civil Air Patrol Cadets to include ROTC, JRROTC, Boy/Girl Scouts of America, Freedom Academy Students, Michigan Youth Camp Cadets.

With the addition of 26 Traditional Guardsman positions in 2000, the number of total base personnel now is over 200 employees. AGR's, Traditional Guardsman, Michigan State Civil Service and contracted employees make up the group. Military members come from all over the United States as well as local residents. Prior to their assignment at the base, many personnel have served the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines.

In 2008, the Joint Threat Emitter (JTE) system was installed at CRTC. The JTEs simulate threat signals, such as those emitted by enemy surface to air missiles and anti aircraft artillery radar systems. These threat signals are utilized to train combat pilots to defeat or otherwise avoid Integrated Air Defense Systems. The new JTE system also allows for accurate debrief and analysis following a training scenario.

USAF UNIT HISTORIES
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.