

**These five Security Policemen are  
AFA's Team of the Year for 1989.**

# Supercops

BY COLLEEN A. NASH, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

PHOTOS BY PAUL KENNEDY

**E**VERYBODY calls them "the cops." They even refer to themselves that way. But as a redesignation of the career field—from "air police" to "security police"—recognized years ago, the job goes far beyond directing traffic and keeping the peace on base.

Air Force Security Policemen (SPs) are the base's first line of defense against terrorists and saboteurs, its guardians of nuclear weapons, and much more. In a salute to security police professionals everywhere, AFA this year is honoring five of their finest as the 1989 Team of the Year.

The career field incorporates two main specialties, security and law enforcement. Security specialists provide defense for such resources as aircraft, missiles, nuclear weapons, and elements of the command and control system. They are trained and equipped to defend an air base against commando raids and attack by enemy ground forces.

Law-enforcement functions include maintaining law and order, patrolling the base, working with guard dogs, regulating entry to the base, enforcing traffic laws, ad-

*The 1989 Team of the Year, five of the Air Force Security Police's finest, assembles at the Security Police training grounds at Andrews AFB, Md. From left: A1C Linda K. Dean, TSgt. Russell S. Rickert, TSgt. James R. Bingham, SSgt. Randall E. McCormick, and TSgt. Ronald G. Kessinger.*



ministering confinement and corrections, improving crime prevention, and performing various other police services. Law-enforcement specialists are also trained in air base ground defense tactics.

Approximately 38,000 enlisted personnel serve in Security Police assignments. Here are five of them:

● **TSgt. James R. Bingham** of Hq. Air Force Space Command (AFSPACECOM), Peterson AFB, Colo., is a security supervisor. By putting the right resources in the right places at the right time, he ensured that manpower cuts had a minimum effect on AFSPACECOM security. He created a database that helps manage officer and senior NCO assignments for the command's SPs and developed a computer spreadsheet program to track unit strengths and manpower trends early.

Sergeant Bingham also takes the initiative to work on additional projects. As the project officer for a short-notice System Acquisition Management Inspection of security sensor systems, he quickly gathered and organized the necessary

*Sergeant Bingham is a security supervisor at Hq. Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colo. Thanks to his information management skills, AFSPACECOM can manage and track assignments and resources more effectively, absorbing manpower cuts with a minimal effect on security.*



information. The inspectors were impressed.

Sergeant Bingham was the 1987 USAF Security Police NCO of the Year in the security specialty. He earned his bachelor's degree from Southwest Texas State University and two associate degrees from the

Community College of the Air Force.

● **AIC Linda K. Dean** of the 142d Security Police Flight (ANG), Portland International Airport, Ore., is a law-enforcement specialist and base-entry controller. She is a Top Gun award recipient and a fully qualified ambulance paramedic. During a simulated terrorist threat scenario for the 1987 TAC Operational Readiness Inspection, her vigilance at the main gate stopped several intruders.

When forest fires blazed through southern Oregon last fall, firefighters relied on Airman Dean's level-headedness. She expertly controlled the flood of vehicle and firefighter traffic and helped maintain security for personnel and equipment.

Airman Dean was also on a ten-person security team that supplied round-the-clock protection for more than 4,000 delegates and visitors at the 1988 National Guard Association conference.

In civilian life, Airman Dean is a police officer with the Washington County Sheriff's Department. She is pursuing an associate degree in criminal justice from Portland Community College.

● **TSgt. Ronald G. Kessinger** of the 142d Security Police Flight (ANG), Portland International Airport, Ore., is a security controller. As the assistant Air Base Ground Defense (ABGD) coordinator, Sergeant Kessinger aided in training a



*Airman Dean is a law-enforcement specialist and a base-entry controller for the 142d Security Police Flight (ANG), Portland International Airport, Ore. She is also a fully qualified ambulance paramedic and a police officer with the Washington County Sheriff's Department.*



*Sergeant McCormick (left), a security specialist with the 842d Security Police Group (SAC), Grand Forks AFB, N. D., and Sergeant Kessinger, a security controller with the 142d Security Police Flight (ANG), Portland International Airport, Ore., go over security procedures at Andrews AFB.*

thirteen-person deployment team for ABGD at McChord AFB, Wash. He helped to develop a top-notch compass course, commanded the aggressor force during a three-day practice exercise, and shared in the responsibility for deploying the group.

Sergeant Kessinger volunteered to serve as the weight-control and physical-fitness monitor for the unit. He was selected as the 1987 Reserve Component Outstanding Security Police Airman in the security specialty. He maintains a 3.4 grade-point average at Oregon State University, and he will graduate with a bachelor's degree in business administration this December.

● **SSgt. Randall E. McCormick** of the 842d Security Police Group (SAC), Grand Forks AFB, N. D., is a security specialist who serves as a missile security systems trainer and ABGD instructor. During his first days at Grand Forks, he earned a position on the 1988 Missile Combat Competition Team. He later became fire-team leader for the 1988 SAC Peacekeeper Challenge Team. In this annual competition, Sergeant McCormick performed exceptionally well in the obstacle course and combat rifle events. He was the trainer of the 842d Security Police Group contingent for the 1989 Missile Combat Competition.

A certified emergency medical technician, Sergeant McCormick serves as the leader for the Base Emergency Services Team. This

Tae Kwon Do blue belt and certified parachutist is the recipient of the 1987 Air Force Outstanding Security Police First Term Airman Security Specialist Award. He is working toward an associate degree in criminal justice from the Community College of the Air Force.

*Sergeant Rickert, a law-enforcement flight chief for the 4th Security Police Squadron (TAC), Seymour Johnson AFB, N. C., is credited with forty-three percent of the IDs in crime cases resolved at Seymour Johnson in 1988. During that year, the base cut its crime rate by ten percent.*

● **TSgt. Russell S. Rickert** of the 4th Security Police Squadron (TAC), Seymour Johnson AFB, N. C., is a law-enforcement flight chief with a long list of academic and professional honors. He is a three-time recipient of the TAC Certificate of Distinguished Scholastic Achievement. He was a 1985 Distinguished Honor Graduate from the Army's Military Police Investigative Course and the 1986 John Levitow Honor Graduate from NCO Leadership School. He was selected as the 1987 USAF Outstanding NCO of the Year. He participated in several Peacekeeper Challenge competitions and received awards for his tactics, combat rifle work, and crime-scene investigation.

In 1988, Seymour Johnson AFB slashed its crime rate by ten percent. Sergeant Rickert was credited with forty-three percent of the identifications in the cases resolved.

A certified student pilot, Sergeant Rickert is active with the Civil Air Patrol. He received an associate degree in criminal justice from the Community College of the Air Force. ■

