

## 381 INTELLIGENCE SQUADRON



### MISSION

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The 381 Intelligence Squadron: Conducts information operations and communications-computer systems security to tactical warfighters, theater battle staff, and national-level decision makers.

Exploits information environment and gains wartime information superiority to support the Commander, 11th Air Force, and national decision makers.

Provides time-critical combat information to the Commander, 11<sup>th</sup> Air Force and supports National Command Authorities.

Conducts communication vulnerability assessments for Alaskan-based units and C2 PROTECT communications jamming/deception to theater air crews.

### LINEAGE

951 Signal Radio Intelligence Company, Aviation constituted, 23 Jul 1942

Activated, 24 Aug 1942

Redesignated 3 Radio Squadron, Mobile (G), 29 Feb 1944

Inactivated, 3 Oct 1945

Redesignated 3 Radio Squadron, Mobile, 14 Nov 1946

Redesignated 300 Radio Squadron, Mobile, 19 Mar 1948

Activated in the Reserve, 8 Apr 1948

Inactivated, 22 Aug 1949

Redesignated 3 Radio Squadron, Mobile, 2 Nov 1949

Activated, 23 Nov 1949

Inactivated, 8 May 1955  
Disbanded, 15 Jun 1983

6981 Radio Squadron, Mobile designated and organized, 8 May 1955  
Redesignated 6981 Radio Group, Mobile, 1 Jan 1956  
Redesignated 6981 Security Group, 1 Jul 1963  
Redesignated 6981 Security Squadron, 1 Jul 1974  
Redesignated 6981 Electronic Security Squadron, 1 Aug 1979  
Redesignated 6981 Electronic Security Group, 1 Apr 1989  
Redesignated 381 Intelligence Squadron, 1 Oct 1993

3 Radio Squadron, Mobile reconstituted and consolidated with 381 Intelligence Squadron, 16 Feb 1994. Consolidated unit designated 381 Intelligence Squadron.

### **STATIONS**

Harding Field, LA, 24 Aug 1942  
Drew Field, FL, 19 Sep 1942  
Camp Pinedale, CA, 23 Jan-1 Aug 1943  
Teddington, England, 25 Aug 1943  
Tidworth, England, 4 Sep 1943  
Blythe Bridge, England, 4 Dec 1943  
Chantilly, France, 13 Sep 1944  
Bad Kissingen, Germany, by 4 Jun-Sep 1945  
Camp Patrick Henry, 3 Oct 1945  
Chicago, IL, 8 Apr 1948-22 Aug 1949  
Brooks AFB, TX, 23 Nov 1949-16 May 1950  
Elmendorf AFB, AK, 1 Jun 1950

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Third Air Force, 24 Aug 1942  
Fourth Air Force, 23 Jan 1943  
Eighth Air Force, 25 Aug 1943  
Ninth Air Force, 14 Mar 1944  
Unknown, 6 Sep-3 Oct 1945  
Fifth Army, 8 Apr 1948-22 Aug 1949  
United States Air Forces Security Service, 23 Nov 1949-8 May 1955  
United States Air Forces Security Service (later, Electronic Security Command), 8 May 1955  
Electronic Security, Pacific, 15 May 1980  
Electronic Security, Alaska, 1 Oct 1983  
Pacific Electronic Security Division (later, 692 Intelligence Wing; 692 Intelligence Group; 692 Information Operations Group; 692 Intelligence Group), 1 Jun 1989  
373 Intelligence (later, 373 Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) Group, 13 Jun 2008

## **COMMANDERS**

Lt Col John E. Morrison, 16 Jan 1954

Lt Col Lewis B. Sedberry

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II European-African-Middle Eastern Theater:

Normandy 1944

Northern France 1944

Rhineland 1944-1945

Central Europe 1945

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

27-30 Mar 1964

1 Jul 1964-30 Jun 1966

1 Jul 1972-30 Jun 1974

1 Jul 1974-31 Dec 1975

1 Jan 1976-31 Dec 1977

1 Jul 1991-30 Jun 1993

1 Oct 1993-30 Sep 1994

1 Oct 1994-30 Sep 1995

1 Oct 1994-30 Sep 1995

1 Oct 1995-30 Sep 1996

1 Oct 1996-30 Sep 1997

1 Oct 1997-30 Sep 1998

1 Oct 1999-30 Sep 2000

1 Jun 2001-31 May 2002

1 Jun 2003-30 Sep 2004

1 Oct 2004-31 May 2005

1 Jun 2006-31 Dec 2007

1 Jun 2008-31 May 2009

## **EMBLEM**



6981 Security Group emblem



6981 Electronic Security Squadron emblem



6981 Electronic Security Group emblem

381 Intelligence Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, issuing from a base Sable a mountain range fesswise throughout Argent (Silver Gray) snow-capped Argent, overall an eagle volant Proper grasping in its dexter claw three lightning flashes, one fesswise over two in saltire Or, all below a mullet of eight points in dexter chief and all within a diminished bordure of the like. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "381 INTELLIGENCE SQUADRON" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "NORTHERN LIGHT OF FREEDOM" in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The eagle in flight represents the Squadron's active role in the nation's defense. The lightning bolt it grasps indicate the communications aspect of the unit's mission. The star above the mountain range suggests the North Star and the significant geographical features of the Squadron's home location. The black base of the shield implies countermeasures as in chess, a significant function of the Squadron (Approved, 25 Aug 1989; new disk rendition, 11 May 1999)

#### **MOTTO**

Northern Light of Freedom

#### **OPERATIONS**

Third Air Force Headquarters, Tampa, Florida, activated the predecessor unit of the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile—the 951 Signal Radio Intelligence Company—at Drew Field, Florida, in 1942. The Air Force shipped the 951 SRIC to England in the spring of 1943 for theater-oriented training under the Royal Air Force. It consisted of eight officers and 192 enlisted men. The company was assigned to Headquarters Eighth Air Force.

The 951 Signal Radio Intelligence Company—designated an aviation company in November 1943—began training at Tidworth, Wiltshire, under American and RAF supervision. Lt. Col. Harry

Raymond Turkel commanded the organization during its tour of duty in the European Theater. The unit moved to Blythe Bridge, Cheshire, in early December 1943 for training at the nearby RAF intercept site. The training of intelligence officers and intercept operators of the 951 SRIC, Aviation continued at Cheadle into 1944.

Along with the redesignation of all Army Air Forces signal radio intelligence companies (aviation), the 951 SRIC became the 3 Army Air Forces Radio Squadron Mobile (G) in March 1944. Detachments A and B of the 3 AAF RSM (G) were activated at Cheadle and Middle Wallop, England, respectively on 7 April 1944 before the squadron relocated to 9th Air Force Headquarters.

On 13 May 1944, this squadron left Cheadle and moved to the Ninth Air Force Headquarters at Uxbridge.

The 3 RSM (G) later deployed three additional units-Detachments C, D and E. The squadron's voice interceptors were assigned to Dets B and C while the cryptographic technicians were assigned to Detachment A. The German linguists had very little time to train on the job with the RAF since the squadron had been tasked to support the imminent Normandy Invasion.

The 3 RSM's Detachment B with its large complement of German interceptors prepared to accompany Headquarters Ninth Air Force to the Normandy beachhead immediately after the start of the Normandy Invasion. For the deployment to Normandy the squadron divided Detachment B into three echelons. They crossed the English Channel in separate ships, followed by echelons of Detachments A and C. The first echelon of Det B arrived at Omaha Beach on 7 June 1944 and disembarked two days later.

Advancing with Ninth Air Force as the Allies chased the retreating German army, the 3 RSM officially entered Paris on 2 September and installed an intercept antenna on the Eiffel Tower. Continuing the march toward the German frontier, Det B, 3d RSM convoyed from Paris to Marbaix, Belgium, on 14 September. During December 1944 and early January 1945, 3 RSM elements provided invaluable SIGINT that assisted in beating back the German offensive at Bastogne.

The dawning of the new year found the 3 RSM on the move again. In April 1945, Detachment A, 3 RSM (G) said goodbye to France and moved to Bad Vilbel, Frankfurt, Germany. V-E Day was just around the corner—8 May 1945. The 3 RSM (G) and its subordinate Detachment E arrived in Bad Kissingen. With the 2nd Radio Squadron Mobile (G) assuming what remained of the 3 RSM's mission, the 3 RSM left Europe for America and deactivation on 4 September 1945.

On 23 November 1949, the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile was activated and attached to the 8th Radio Squadron Mobile for rations, quarters, and administration.

Activation of the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile in late 1949 was accompanied by a search on Brooks AFB for space to house the new organization. The adjutant and first sergeant arranged through

the USAFSS Air Installation Office to occupy Buildings 145 and 149, just west of USAFSS HQ. They also arranged with the USAFSS HQ & HQ Squadron to share a supply room.

The actual move to the new area was accomplished early in January 1950 with no difficulty, primarily because there was very little in the way of materiel or personnel to move. Building 149 is an orderly room building and as such, not only provided ample room for the administrative functions of the squadron, but also allowed space for the 10 RSM to establish a small orderly room in the end of the building. Building 145 is the barracks and provided more than enough room until towards the end of April when it became necessary to double deck the lower bay and place extra beds in the upper bay.

A good bit of construction work was necessary after the move to the new area. A partition was built in the supply room to separate the parts used by the two squadrons, and it was necessary to build a mail room in one end of the orderly room building. Acquisition of materials for these projects was a problem, but under the able direction of First Sergeant DeWayne L. Spickler, was accomplished by resorting to the salvage pile and to the cannibalization of a 12th Air Force building interior.

Two conferences held at USAFSS HQ in September 1949 stressed the "conceived urgency for locating a radio squadron mobile in the Alaskan Theater." A meeting with Alaskan Air Command officials followed in October. On 27 November, Major Emil W. Polivka (3 RSM commander) flew to Alaska, where he briefed the Commanding General, AAC. Major Polivka also visited each planned deployment site and reached agreement with AAC on deployment of the squadron. In January 1950, he submitted in a deployment plan the results of detailed studies dealing with the movement of the unit to Alaska. The planning document dated 16 January 1950 laid out the organization of the 3 RSM that would consist of 19 officers and 295 airmen.

HQ Detachment, Fort Richardson, Alaska—9 officers and 58 airmen  
Det A, Davis AFB, Adak Island, Alaska—4 officers and 100 airmen  
Det B, Marks AFB, Nome, Alaska—3 officers and 80 airmen  
Det C, Naknek, Alaska—3 officers and 57 airmen.

The deployment plan included four enclosures, each documenting findings for one of four planned deployment sites in Alaska—Adak, Nome, Naknek and Fort Richardson. Housing, mess (feeding troops), power and heating, an operational facility and communications were critical to activating and operating a USAFSS site.

In 1950, Adak was considered the most promising intercept site in the Alaskan Theater as well as having the best operational facilities. Activities on this island are presently in a transitional stage prior to completion of transfer to Navy control. Consequently, all planning for Detachment "A" on Adak is contingent upon full coordination with and approval by the Navy commanding officer of Adak and the joint staff of the Commanding General, Alaskan Theater, as well as that of Alaskan Air Command.

Housing facilities for the planned initial strength of Det A (two officers and 63 airmen) existed adjacent to other Air Force units in the central troop housing area, and Det A could assign its own mess personnel with the consolidated mess operation without difficulty. For an operations site there were two possibilities: building by an Airways and Air Communications System (AACS) site or moving into an Alaskan Communications System (ACS) site that was being vacated. Direct communications between Anchorage and Adak were inadequate, but Detachment A traffic could be passed on a Navy channel through a Navy relay station on Kodiak Island.

After Adak was fully transferred to Navy control, Det A operations would continue, with detachment quarters and messing done per a future joint Air Force-Navy agreement. USAFSS was requisitioning two tracked vehicles to transport personnel to/from their operations compound at each site. The findings for each site also specified minimum space requirements broken down by function within operations, including garage and storage space at each site. Detachment A Operations required 3,870 square feet, of which 1,350 square feet was for garage and storage. Initial findings indicated that present facilities could provide all necessary operating space except for the garage and storage.

Whereas Adak appeared to be capable of supporting Detachment A operations using existing facilities, a shortage of housing and other problems at Marks Air Force Base, Nome, posed some severe challenges impacting the activation of Detachment B.

It was considered desirable for technical reasons that an intercept site be established in the Nome area. Present planning calls for two officers and 42 airmen of Detachment "B" to proceed to Nome soon after their arrival at Ft. Richardson in August 1950. Consummation of this plan is contingent upon its approval and implementation by Alaskan Air Command. Existing housing would not accommodate Detachment B when the finding was written in early 1950, but after departure of the Arctic Indoctrination School and possibly other Air Force units from Marks AFB, adequate housing for Det B would be available. Departure of the units under discussion would resolve Det B's housing problem. Adequate power and heating capacity existed, but arrangements had to be made with Alaskan Air Command for the maintenance of the base power and heating plants when the current Air Force units left the base.

The detachment could set up interim operations in a building evacuated by an AACS unit, but a new larger operations facility had to be built to accommodate full-scale operations. Minimum space needs for a new operations building was 3,620 square feet. Existing base facilities would satisfy the garage and storage requirements.

As was the situation at Marks AFB, USAFSS coveted Naknek AFB in the Bristol Bay area by King Salmon as a COMINT intercept site, but Naknek housing was already taxed to its limits. It is believed that Naknek Air Force Base affords an excellent intercept site, in conjunction with other sites under consideration. Facilities at Naknek are not adequate for the accommodation of additional troops, and new construction will be essential before this site can be put into operation.



The finding envisioned activation of Detachment C, 3 RSM at Naknek during the squadron's second deployment phase after 1 August 1950. As planned, Detachment C would be activated and have a strength of one officer and 20 enlisted airmen at Naknek at the end of calendar year 1950. With additional housing made available, that total would increase to three officers and 57 airmen by the end of 1951. Issues had to be worked out with Alaskan Air Command to obtain additional funds to build barracks, family quarters and an operations building, and to construct the Det C antenna farm before the unit could move in and commence operations.

Detachment C's operations site was to be developed near the Det A, 136th CSS site, and adequate power and heating was to be addressed in the planned construction program. The finding stated minimum operations space requirements as 3,600 square feet. As we'll see later, this plan/schedule was overly optimistic.

Plans called for the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile to operate a small number of intercept positions at its headquarters, but the primary headquarters mission was to "receive, process and disseminate all the traffic intercepted by the detachments."

For his HQ facility, Major Polivka requested an area known as "Battery H" located just east of the south end of the North-South runway. In early 1950, this area was unoccupied and perceived to have "adequate housing, messing and latrine facilities in good condition to provide the HQ unit with a permanent barracks area capable of also handling those transient personnel to and from the detachments." The 3 RSM contemplated setting up a transmitter at least temporarily with one of the existing transmitter sites and included a transmitter building in future planning.

It is further contemplated that the 3 RSM select and establish a receiver site north of Elmendorf AFB between Knik Arm and Otter Lake, in the general area of the ACS receiver site. An existing building will be converted into a temporary operations building if a suitable one can be found, with the expectation that new construction money will become available during 1951, thereby providing a new permanent operations building.

The 3d RSM space requirement for its permanent operations buildings was 7,500 square feet, of which only 50 square feet was planned for intercept positions. The comm center (2,375 feet), traffic analysis (1,500 feet), traffic and control (800 feet), and garage and storage (2,000 feet) were the functions allocated major segments of operations space. Initially, 3 RSM HQ would not have a DF capability. The cost of new headquarters construction, primarily an operations building, was estimated at \$375,000.

In the deployment plan submitted on 16 January 1950 to the Commanding General, Alaskan Air Command, the 3 RSM specifically specified the logistic support that had to be provided by AAC. The 3 Radio Squadron Mobile will, of necessity, be entirely dependent upon the Alaskan Air Command for logistics. All supplies necessary to the existence of the detachments: food, fuel, etc., must be provided by the Air Command. No supporting personnel, with the exception of mess, transportation and medical, can be provided by the squadron. The present table of organization for the 3 RSM makes no provision for additional supporting personnel such as those

required at Marks Field, Nome, to maintain and operate heating, power, water pumping, and sewage disposal plants. Assignment of squadron personnel to such duties in addition to regular duties would seriously impair the operating efficiency of the detachments. It must be considered therefore incumbent upon Air Command to supply personnel for base housekeeping functions. Mess and transportation functions were to be consolidated with other units at each site.

The schedule called for moving the squadron in two phases. In phase one, an advance echelon (seven officers and 94 airmen) would arrive at Ft. Richardson about 15 May 1950. In turn, advance echelons of Det A and Det B would be formed from this group. A second contingent (three officers and 62 airmen) was to proceed from Brooks AFB to Ft. Richardson not later than August 1950. During the second phase to be completed in 1951, the squadron and its detachments were to be brought up to strength.

Working under the personnel phasing, the squadron's strength began to grow, but it soon became apparent that many of the assigned men could not be gainfully employed during the period of making ready for overseas shipment. To eliminate this misuse of personnel, many of the airmen were transferred to the 1 and 2nd RSM's, once again reducing the strength of the 3 RSM to not much more than orderly room personnel and a few officers.

Overseas shipment was impeded by delayed receipt of movement orders from USAF Headquarters. The activation and deployment of new radio squadrons mobile was a new process, fraught with unanticipated delays.

Capt. Henry Steele and Sgt. Mikita deployed on 45 days temporary duty to Alaska on 16 February 1950 to coordinate deployment site activities. Maj. Polivka, accompanied by Col. Wade (USAFSS vice commander), followed four days later for a brief stay at Fort Richardson and the outlying sites at which 3ld RSM detachments were planned.

While in Alaska, Major Polivka secured a site at Fort Richardson, Anchorage, Alaska, for the use of the squadron upon its arrival. The area was comprised of Quonset huts, 15 which could house approximately 15 men each, a central latrine building, supply room, mess hall and orderly room building.

The movement directive finally arrived on 18 April 1950, together with the official "warning order" from USAF HQ. With a readiness date of 1 May 1950 at the Aerial Port of Embarkation, Great Falls, Montana, the warning order authorized USAFSS to send an advance air echelon (one officer and ten airmen) by airlift to Alaska. Remaining squadron members and equipment for the phase one movement were to travel by train to California and by ship from the San Francisco POE to Alaska. In turn, USAFSS HQ issued the movement orders for the two groups on 25 and 27 April.

Due to the fact, undoubtedly, that this headquarters had not previously moved an organization overseas, some difficulty was experienced in writing the movement orders to cover all the necessary points, but amendments were made to the basic Letter Order # 3 until everything had been adequately provided for.

HQ USAFSS cut movement orders for the advance echelon at 0900 hours on 25 April 1950 and directed Lt. Smith to have his ten airman team at the San Antonio railroad station at 1210 hours the same date for travel by rail to the aerial POE, Great Falls, Montana. The advance echelon arrived at the depot at 1205, got tickets hurriedly, and boarded the train. The first difficulty occurred at this time in arrangement over the airmen's baggage. Because of late arrival at the depot the baggage was to come on the next train, but due to the possibility of a mix-up and possibility of a delay due to nonarrival of the baggage at Great Falls, Lt. Smith insisted that the baggage be put on the same train.

After several minutes of argument with the conductor, the train was held while the baggage was loaded. Baggage was then checked at every transfer point to assure its arrival at destination. The team arrived at Great Falls Air Force Base at 0645 on 29 April and continued by air to Alaska on 1 May—arriving at Elmendorf at 2200 hours on 1 May 1950. Meeting with the Chief of Staff, Alaskan Air Command, and a Major Fisher, project officer for the 3 RSM deployment, Lt. Smith learned that Alaskan Air Command had not completed actions agreed to by AAC and Major Polivka. Sending a priority message to HQ USAFSS citing the dilemma raised the ire of Maj. Fisher and other AAC officials. The worst was yet to come when Maj. Fisher accompanied Lt. Smith to the area that was to be the new home for the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile. Upon arrival at the area the morale of Lt. Smith hit "rock bottom."

The area was abandoned and in an extremely run down condition. Trash cluttered the area, doors were hanging from buildings, a large dump was adjacent to the area, and fire extinguishers had frozen—their contents were all over the floors. It appeared to be utterly impossible to make the area livable. Returning to the casual detachment where the advance echelon was housed, TSgt. Lloyd Wing, NCOIC of the advance echelon, informed Lt. Smith that Alaskan Air Command had scheduled two of their members for K.P. the next day. Lt. Smith said, "No Way!" This was to start one of the bitterest arguments encountered during this period. Lt. Manning, commanding officer of the casual detachment, was contacted and asked to take the men off K.P., which he refused to do. Lt. Smith then contacted Captain Levy, Alaskan Air Command communications officer, who refused to help in the matter. Lt. Smith, then faced with ridding the area of its contents, was so desperate that he was going to take the matter to General Armstrong. Luckily, General Armstrong was not in, and the matter was discussed with Colonel Walters, Executive Officer of Alaskan Air Command, who informed Lt. Smith that his men would have to pull K.P. the same as anyone else.

Lt. Smith then informed Colonel Walters that if this were the case, that he would have to send a TWX to Headquarters USAF Security Service requesting more men due to the lack of cooperation in the accomplishment of the mission. He showed Colonel Walters a letter of instructions and authority, which had been furnished through the foresight of Major Polivka. The letter authorized Lt. Smith to take action he deemed necessary and instructed him not to let personnel be deviated from the accomplishment of the mission under any circumstances. This caused much dissention, but the "top flowing" served its purpose for never once after this occasion were personnel of this unit bothered by any activities on the base. With TSgt. Wing directing the cleanup and Lt. Smith

making requisitions and work orders, their efforts paid off. The squadron area "began to take on the appearance of a military installation." But other problems abounded. The supply of mess hall, orderly room and motor pool equipment and the procurement of vehicles proved to be the biggest problems. Base Supply Stock Record Account did not reflect the status of supplies, and only after pleading, threatening and begging could a requisition be sent through on anything. Finally after worrying the supply officer each day for a period of time, permission was granted to go through the warehouse and supply dumps, and if equipment could be found, it would be picked up as "found on base" and issued to the unit.

As a result, the mess hall was equipped with such items as an electric steam table and toaster, electric juice extractor, butter cutters and other items, which were believed not to exist. All office equipment, such as desks, file cabinets, etc., were obtained through salvage. Lt. Smith likewise applied his supply officer knowledge and experience in obtaining vehicles for the 3 RSM motor pool. Refusing to accept trucks in poor mechanical condition, he accompanied the air command supply officer to the Alaskan general depot and selected vehicles for assignment to the unit. Working with the Air Installations Officer, Captain Anderson, Smith also maximized improvements to squadron facilities.

Air Installations was tied up with a priority project on the Fort Richardson Officers Club, readying it for some VIP's who were to arrive this station, and could not work in the unit area. After much haggling and because Captain Anderson became disgusted with individuals who could not make up their mind about the way the club should be—resulting in the tearing out of what they had already accomplished—work was dropped on the club, and work proceeded in the area. A new floor was laid in the mess hall, the steam table and other electrical fixtures were installed in the mess hall, lights were put in all huts, water fixtures were repaired, a chlorinator was installed on the pumps, and all stoves were overhauled.

By 29 May 1950, all beds were set up, the mess hall ready to operate, and the area was ready for the troops. Lt. Smith purchased the necessities and hosted a party of hamburgers cooked in the mess hall and beer for the advance echelon to celebrate completion of the mission. In turn, the advance echelon welcomed Major Polivka and the main echelon with a hot meal in the mess hall upon their arrival at Elmendorf. Much additional hard work lay ahead.

On 9 May 1950, the remainder of the squadron personnel and equipment that included two huge trailer trucks and equally large flatbed trailer trucks rolled out of Brooks for Oakland Army Base, California. On the morning of 10 May, another of these trailers was sealed, and the entire shipment moved in the five vehicles at a total of close to forty tons and in four hundred forty-nine separate pieces.

On 16 May, all personal baggage and the "orderly room" in two field desks were moved to the train, on which we had a complete baggage car and Pullman space for the 84 men and 3 officers. Immediately after lunch all men boarded the train, and a two-day trip to Pittsburg, California, was made without incident.

The group stayed at Camp Stoneman for seven days. There was absolutely nothing for the men to do, and little or no processing was accomplished. The Operational Readiness Document was set up for handling casual replacements only, and our movement seemed to be a perplexing problem to everyone concerned. The only thing accomplished was the placement of personnel on a passenger list for the USNS Hase, which was to sail on 26 May 1950. All necessary personnel processing and preparation for overseas movement had been accomplished at Brooks prior to our departure.

Major Polivka granted passes to all personnel during the weekend spent at Camp Stoneman, and the USNS HASE sailed for Seattle, Washington, and Whittier, Alaska, as planned. The ship docked at Whittier at 11:30 on 2 June 1950. The 3 Radio Squadron Mobile debarked after lunch and loaded onto a train— destination Fort Richardson. Three trains of the Alaska Railroad were waiting at the Whittier terminus to transport 1,350 troopship passengers to their Alaska destinations. Major Polivka and his 3 Radio Squadron airmen boarded Train # 1 for Fort Richardson—some 75 miles northwest of Whittier. Lt. Smith's advance 3 RSM team had vehicles standing by at Fort Richardson Station to transport the men to their new squadron area.

The group finally arrived at our new home at about 22:30 and found a very welcome hot meal and clean beds awaiting us. This was indeed a warm welcome, and it was immediately apparent to Major Polivka, who had seen this area in February, that a great deal of work and improvement had been done by the advance echelon.

With summer solstice approaching, the sun barely moved below the horizon before a new day began. Many found it difficult to fall asleep at night without darkness, and clear summer nights in Anchorage provided adequate light for reading without artificial light in clear weather. Staging Softball games and other outdoor sports at midnight on summer solstice became an annual tradition for squadron personnel.

Major Polivka reported to Alaskan Air Command that the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile was in the area. An arrival message was also sent to Headquarters USAF Security Service at Brooks Air Force Base, Texas. The next few days were spent in settling the personnel, obtaining and publishing information of concern to all personnel, and assigning officers and airmen to the tasks at hand.

On 6 June 1950, Major Polivka and Captain Dean attended the first of many meetings with Alaskan Air Command staff to discuss the plans and support needed for the 3 RSM. With heavy emphasis on opening an intercept site (Detachment A) at Adak, all agreed that the 3 RSM should send representatives to Adak for a conference with naval officials. With AAC shutting down Davis AFB, the squadron needed to coordinate its requirements with the commander of the U.S. Navy Operating Base on Adak.

On Saturday, 10 June 1950, Major Polivka decided that the time had come for a bit of relaxing and refreshment. So on that evening, a "beer party" was thrown in the squadron mess hall in conjunction with the evening mess. A very gay time was had by all, though no one had too much, and no unpleasantness resulted. This interlude of relaxation and good fellowship was fine, and

everyone was ready to settle back to the tasks at hand by the following Monday.

Over the next few weeks, Major Polivka and staff spent endless hours in conferences with officials from AAC and the U.S. Navy. During these days, many trying experiences were had by the 3 Radio Squadron. Due to the peculiar attachment of the unit to Alaskan Air Command, many problems in coordination of reports, and distribution of publications and information arose. It was finally resolved that all matters pertaining to housekeeping or base functions would be handled through Headquarters, 57th Fighter-Interceptor Wing. All matters concerning future requirements or plans would be handled through Headquarters, Alaskan Air Command.

The 3 RSM's chain of command—subordinate to Security Service but attached to Alaskan Air Command for logistics support—had some impact on level of support provided the unit. Contributing to the dilemma, unit personnel could not discuss their mission with AAC or the Navy; not that the squadron really understood its mission since the 3 RSM had yet to intercept its first message. Simply stated, setting up operations in the Alaskan frontier in the early 1950's was problematic.

3 RSM inherited no supply, operational or recreational facilities in Alaska. In addition, Fort Richardson had the feel of a wilderness frontier. Adding to the complications, the anticipated local Air Force logistics support did not materialize.

During the month, all of the men had been broken down into details and concerned themselves with beautifying the squadron area and making it more livable. All of the men worked long, hard hours and certainly took personal interest in the project. After moving and spreading 750 yards of top soil, seeding with 50-pound bags of seed, spreading 150-pound bags of fertilizer on the yard, and putting 150 yards of gravel with 3,000 gallons of waste oil, 800 gallons of asphalt and 24 yards of black top on the roads, the place had taken shape as a "squadron area."

As the close of June came upon us, we all began to feel that we were no longer dealing with strangers and new people, but that we were now fighting on "home ground." And fighting we were, since almost every gain in facilities came difficultly, and after the loss of a lot of time in arranging and explaining details. Having never experienced a winter in Alaska, self-preservation was on everyone's mind. The size of the job of just assuring ourselves of adequate living conditions during the long winter ahead began to come home to all of us. The mass confusion and lack of organization, which seemed to engulf all supply channels in this theater, became more apparent each time an attempt was made to get materiel, or for that matter, get work done.

It became obvious that a unit must rely on its own wits and resourcefulness in order to fare well here. This was not what we had expected to be confronted with, but by this time we were learning to play the game too, and found that among outfits required to beg, borrow and otherwise acquire materials, ours was by far not among the least able.

We were still a new outfit, but we had many necessary attributes never acquired by older ones.

We had many resourceful, competent men, and we had most of all an organization capable of close teamwork—willing to give and take within itself for the betterment of all and the accomplishment of the mission. In short, we had high morale and a good strong self-confidence. We felt that our success was the only possible outcome—but we had also now found that this success would not come easily here, and that it would have to be paid for in much effort, anguish and moments of near-despair.

Like a gray squirrel sensing the onslaught of winter, the 3 RSM airmen looked for ways and means of winterizing their humble surroundings. We could now see that the actual initiation of operations would be delayed while our concentrated efforts were expended on assuring ourselves health, security, and acceptable living conditions before the harshness of the Alaskan winter beset us. There was much yet to do, but a beginning had been made, and most important, we were learning. And there had risen the feeling among all that this outfit could go places. This was the place to be, this was the job to do, and we were proud. The end of the first month in Alaska found high morale in the unit, but little had been accomplished with regard to squadron essentials and amenities.

The barracks were in desperate need of rehabilitation before winter set in. There was no building available in the squadron area for use of communications, the motor pool was entirely without a building, and supply did not have either adequate storage facilities or working area. There was no hobby shop or day room for any type of recreation, and the latrine was in such a shape that its use was a constant menace to the health and morale of the personnel.

Located just outside the squadron area and perhaps the most efficient and cooperative facility on Fort Richardson, the local asphalt plant provided the 3 RSM with asphalt almost every day. During the months of July and August, approximately sixty truckloads of asphalt were laid in the area. As July and August wore on, new sidewalks and roads were laid. This, together with the grass that had been seeded when the squadron first arrived, greatly reduced the dust within the area.

For the first few months, squadron area infrastructure development was a top priority within the unit. Operator proficiency was also a concern, especially considering that none of the assigned Morse operators had prior experience in an operational radio squadron mobile.

During the interim period while waiting to go operational, the 3 RSM organized a proficiency school in one of the barracks for high speed Morse radio operators and Morse intercept operators. They spend four hours per day training in their specialty in the improvised classroom, but none had actual operational experience.

Major Dwight McAnally and Mr. J. Frank Ward arrived from USAFSS HQ in early August on temporary duty to work out details for facilities for the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile with Air Installations and District Engineers, Alaskan Air Command HQ. They placed emphasis on plans and details for rehabilitating buildings in the 3 RSM area and creating permanent sites for the squadron at Elmendorf and for detachments at outlying stations.

A request for assignment of an area of land on Elmendorf Air Force Base was requested through Commanding General, 57th Fighter Interceptor Wing, for use by the United States Air Force Security Service. This is not the site where the organization is presently located, but on the other side of the base—away from many interferences and a very desirable location. This area is to be used in the new construction program to begin in 1951.

This new site ultimately became the permanent home of the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile and its successor USAFSS organizations at Elmendorf AFB. With more troops arriving from Brooks AFB in the second half of 1950, overcrowding was already becoming an acute problem.

In desperation after Alaskan Air Command failed to make available a suitable structure to house its operations, the 3 RSM met its needs through additional self-help. The squadron had its own communications facility, but no operations building. Lack of funds precluded the base from moving a large building to the squadron area and rehabilitate it for use.

After having spent many days in an attempt to secure funds and no solution found, it was decided that a lean-to would be build on each side of the communications center—with one side used for operations and the other side for radio school and radio maintenance. Squadron personnel began work immediately with material that had been scrounged from various lumber piles and salvage areas on the base. As the communication center was a skid shack, no new material could be requisitioned for the building, and consequently, any new material had to be requisitioned for a different purpose from Base Supply and Air Installations activities. Again, "G.I. ingenuity" produced tangible results. The squadron commenced its operational mission in the new ops lean-to facility in late August. The 3d RSM journeyman carpenters next tackled the task of building a garage in the squadron area.

Noting that it would be impossible to obtain a garage for the motor pool before winter closed in, a program was started to erect a two-stall garage with dispatcher and spare parts rooms—in the same manner that all other buildings in the area had been completed. Though not elaborate, this building at least would give protection from the elements during maintenance and provide some parking for vehicles at night. Each stall would hold one 6 x 6 truck or four jeeps for parking purposes.

By this time, several squadron personnel were becoming pretty capable with hammers and saws, and with the completion of the garage, unit morale had never been higher.

In parallel activities, Major Polivka dispatched 1 Lt. John C. Conlin Jr. on detached duty to Davis Air Force Base, Adak, to prepare a selected site on the island for the squadron's first intercept detachment. An installation team from HQ USAFSS followed and erected the antenna field on Adak.

USAFSS activated Detachment A, 3 Radio Squadron Mobile in an abandoned Air Force hospital complex at Davis Field on 21 August 1950. Major Polivka assigned Lt. Conlin to command Detachment A, with TSgt. Lloyd P. Wing designated as first sergeant. Growing from one officer



and one airman on 21 August, two officers and 47 enlisted men served in Detachment A on 30 September 1950.

Major problems at Adak included lack of heat in the former hospital where Detachment A set up operations, a shortage of spare parts for radio receivers and communication center equipment, and the lack of trained and experienced personnel. A steam plant that provided heat to the hospital was out of service for maintenance, and with the Alaskan Air Command closing down Davis AFB, qualified personnel to operate the heating plant were required when it was repaired.

When heat is available, the hospital area will be used for housing and operations. Until that time the majority of personnel are being housed at the Naval Barracks.

The Detachment A men also messed at the Navy facility that was about eight miles from the 3 RSM operations compound. Traveling from Det A Operations to the barracks for meals—approximately one and a half hours for each meal—was an inconvenience that wasted man-hours and caused an "odd shift arrangement." Another start-up problem involved the unavailability of an assigned crypto equipment repairman. (At that time, the squadron's only assigned crypto repairman spent much of his time commuting between Elmendorf and Adak, servicing both units' equipment.)

It is necessary to spend considerable time and close supervision in training these airmen. The detachment has only sixteen semiskilled radio intercept operators and one cryptographic operator. It has been necessary for the two assigned officers to do the actual work themselves and closely supervise the operations of the communications center. This tends to divert attention and effort that should be utilized elsewhere.

All personnel are working very long hours and have very little time for recreation. All Naval recreation facilities are available to the personnel of the detachment, but due to the long hours of duty required by the detachment and the few hours the Navy facilities are open, it is impossible for most personnel of the detachment to take advantage of them.

Detachment A passed the first intercepted traffic to 3 RSM HQ on 25 August 1950, with traffic increasing steadily thereafter. The initial unit history for Det A ended with recommendations that "at least experienced key personnel be assigned when activating future detachments" and that spare parts accompany all equipment shipped to field units. The unit had experienced equipment failures with no replacement parts.

Undoubtedly, development of Detachment A operations would have proceeded along a smoother path had the Alaskan Air Command not been phasing down tactical operations at Adak. The Navy captain in charge on Adak was cooperative and supportive of continuing Air Force operations on the island. He gave assistance whenever possible, but his unit was itself very short of personnel and at the end of the Navy supply chain in Alaska. The 3 Radio Squadron Mobile experienced similar challenges in deploying detachments at other Alaskan locations.

Shortly after Thanksgiving, Alaskan Air Command agreed to furnish four airmen for duty as boilermen at Adak. With the four airmen operating the boiler facility that provided heat to the hospital area, Detachment A, 3 RSM personnel moved from the Naval barracks to billeting within the hospital complex.

A boiler room, which supplies heat for all buildings occupied by detachment personnel, has been repaired and is now operating. Further, the dining hall opened 2 December 1950 and saves numerous man-hours, which would be lost if personnel were to continue to eat in the Naval dining hall.

Detachment personnel were now very pleased with housing and their mess hall. And with the opening of an Airmen's Club on 20 December 1950, Detachment A of the 3 RSM ended 1950 with high morale. Newly promoted Captain John C. Conlin Jr. remained in command of the detachment at year's end. Detachment A more than doubled its headcount during October-December 1950, ending the year with three officers and 121 airmen. Some of the assigned airmen ended up in Detachment A when the 3 RSM experienced delays in deploying its next detachment.

On 31 July 1950, 1 Lt. John C. Tracey Jr. flew from Elmendorf to Ladd Air Force Base, Fairbanks, Alaska, to inspect that base as a possible deployment site for a 3 Radio Squadron Mobile detachment. The following day, Lt. Tracey and Ladd's Assistant Air Installations Officer visited an on-base site that was potentially available for 3 RSM use. Partially occupied at the time, the site included nine 24-man barracks laid out in three clusters. Each cluster consisted of three Quonset huts forming a "T" with a 24' x 24' center building made of wood. The barracks were in good condition, oil heated and well lighted. The nearby latrine

Quonset hut was similar to the type at 3 RSM HQ. The only messing equipment in a former mess Quonset was a coal stove badly in need of repair. This ex-mess hall now served as an orderly room and storage area for its present occupants. The on-base site also did not contain any supply buildings or a building set apart from the billeting area that could serve as a 3 RSM operations facility.

Base commander Col. Eane suggested that prefabricated buildings be erected for Operations. Conversations with the colonel were going well until Col. Eane learned that the 3 RSM desired to locate a large detachment at Ladd. Earlier, USAFSS vice-commander Col. David Wade had discussed a 30-man detachment with Eane.

Col. Eane had earmarked only two barracks type buildings to our detachment and promised the remaining to Strategic Air Command. He was reluctant to accept any more than had been mentioned on the previous trip by Col. Wade, and they would have to be housed in the two barracks that were earmarked for us.

While at Ladd, Lt. Tracey had a side meeting with Army Capt. Vincent, officer in charge of an Army Security Agency detachment at the base. According to Vincent, signal reception was good

at the ASA site on Ladd AFB.

Due in large part to the 30-person limitation, the 3 eliminated Ladd AFB from consideration as a deployment site for a 3 RSM detachment. Air Force Security Service relocated a COMSEC unit (Det 1, 136th Comms Security Squadron) from Naknek AFB to Ladd AFB in 1951, freeing up facilities at Naknek to house a 3 RSM intercept detachment. The U.S. Army eventually assumed control of Ladd AFB, renaming it Fort Wainwright.

Lt. John Tracey's investigation of potential deployment sites for a 3 RSM detachment continued on 7 August 1950 when he flew to Marks Air Force Base, Nome, Alaska. Since the Air Force was in the process of closing Marks Field, USAFSS directed the squadron to "test that location for suitability to the mission of the Security Service" before making a final commitment to Nome. Assessing areas to carry out the test, Lt. Tracey was offered and agreed to use a warehouse that was heated and already had power and lights to house the USAFSS test equipment. Checking with the commander of an air control and warning detachment that would be remaining at Nome after the base officially closed, "it appeared probable that the base's facilities will be left on." Tracey next checked in with Col. Jameson, commander of the base. He knew quite a bit about our plans for the area. He was familiar with stopping for the time being plans for putting our detachment into the area until testing would reveal the value of the site. He agreed to house and feed all those connected with the test. Tracey also obtained a motor pool commitment for full-time use of an Air Force vehicle during the test period. All skids appeared to be greased to support USAFSS operational testing.

On 23 August, Lt. Tracey returned to Marks Field with a test crew from Brooks AFB to conduct hear ability evaluations. There was no problem obtaining billeting for the test team, but the motor pool officer would not commit a vehicle on a 24-hour basis—a reversal of plans. Next, plans to use the warehouse to house the hear ability test had fallen through the cracks. The warehouse that had been promised was still in use. It was decided that two skid shacks could be placed on Submarine Beach on Norton Sound, and we could use power brought in from the adjoining warehouse. These shacks were approximately 8' x 10', and one was metal lined for film storage. The shacks were to be in place before noon and the wiring completed sometime in the afternoon.

Mess facilities were likewise overcrowded at Naknek and in need of expansion to support additional troops. USAFSS and the AC&W unit at Naknek planned to create and operate an expanded joint messing facility.

USAFSS teamed up with the AC&W squadron to keep the facility active as a joint air defense radar station and Security Service monitoring station. The USAFSS plan called for construction of both housing and operations buildings and the installation of intercept antennas and a DF system.

Fixed operations for USAFSS improved significantly when the first AN/ FLR-9 "Elephant Cage" antennas reached operational status in 1964 with the 6950 SS at RAF Chicksands, England, and

the 6917 SS, San Vito Air Station (AS), Italy. Other "Elephant Cages" entered service throughout the 1960s, including the operational antennas with the 6922 SS at Clark AB, the Philippines, the 6981 SS at Elmendorf AMC Alaska, the 6920 SS, Misawa AB, Japan, the 6933 SS, Karamursel AS, Turkey, and the 6913 SS at Augsburg, Germany. Other important USAFSS (and later ESC) field sites included Iraklion AS, Crete, Wakkanai AS, Japan and Shu Lin Kou AS, Taiwan. The introduction of several high technology systems like CATS, STRAWHAT and TEBO at USAFSS ground sites during this time further automated many time and labor intensive unit field operations.

The Air Staff tasked ESC on 30 September 1980 to take the lead in getting a Red Force Team (Constant Spur) underway to employ adversary C3CM actions against friendly operators (combat crews, weapons controllers, communications) and C3 facilities in order to train them in a degraded C3 environment, and stress friendly C3 systems. On 3 November 1980, Headquarters USAF directed ESC to combine the Red Force (Constant Spur) and Blue Force (Electronic Support Team) programs. The combined program was designated Comfy Challenge and the interim program was designated Comfy Sword II.

On 17 December 1982, the Electronic Security Command delivered the first Comfy Sword IA system to the 6981 Electronic Security Squadron. Eleven remaining Comfy Sword IA systems were to be completed in 1983.186 Comfy Sword was a mobile jamming system. The Comfy Sword systems became a mainstay of joint forces electronic combat exercises in the United States, Alaska, Far East, Europe and the Middle East.

As the senior Air Force Security Service authority in Alaska, the 6981 Security Group served in a dual role from 1963 to 1974— conducting the primary HF intercept mission in Alaska and managing subordinate USAFSS units in the state. The command Installed an AN/FLR-9 "elephant cage" antenna system at Elmendorf in the mid-1960's to support the 6981 intercept mission. In 2007, Elmendorf s "Wullenweber-class" antenna was one of two remaining FLR-9 systems in use in the world—the other is located at Misawa Air Base, Japan.

With the phaseout of USAFSS operations at Shemya in 1974-1975, Elmendorf AFB became the only active Air Force Security Service ground site in Alaska. Concurrently, with the inactivation of its last subordinate squadron (6984th SS), the 6981 Security Group became the 6981 Security Squadron in 1974.

The 6981 Security Squadron continued SIGINT operations at Elmendorf through 31 July 1979 when the squadron was deactivated—replaced by the 6981 Electronic Security Squadron.

The 6981 Electronic Security Squadron conducted intelligence-gathering operations at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, from 1979 to 1993—initially subordinate to the Electronic Security Command (1979-1991) and later reporting to the Air Force Intelligence Command (1991-1993). The 6981 ESS was inactivated on 1 October 1993, replaced by the 381 Intelligence Squadron in a major reorganization of Air Force Intelligence.

Located at the head of the Cook Inlet, the 6981's Flare Nine antenna is a prominent landmark on Elmendorf AFB. Its large circular array measures more than 100 feet in height, three-quarters of a mile in circumference, and covers more than 40 acres.

Established in 1950 at Elmendorf as the 3 Radio Squadron Mobile, the 6981's mission has more than doubled during the 80s. Now, along with fighters from AAC's 21 Tactical Fighter Wing, the 6981 forms an integral part of the defense system providing the "Top Cover for North America."

Elmendorf, home of the 21 Combat Support Group, serves as host to the 6981. Besides numerous tennis courts, ball fields, a magnificent 18-hole golf course and a 42-lane bowling alley, the base has five lakes, each stocked yearly with approximately 10,000 trout. The base recreation center rents equipment for overnight camping trips, fishing trips or even 100-mile treks along the many trails which have been cut through the Chugach National Forest.

USAFSS HQ directed its 6981 Radio Group Mobile/Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, and 6950 Radio Group Mobile/RAF Chicksands, England, to activate subordinate units at Eielson and Brize Norton to accommodate the USAFSS airmen supporting Bonus Baby.

In 1960, the 6981 RGM created Operating Location 1, 6981 RGM at Eielson AFB to support SAC RB-47H Bonus Baby ferret operations in the Arctic area. As had been the case on Cool Stool missions, the USAFSS operators manned one of the three intercept positions during Bonus Baby missions. OL-1 became Detachment 1, 6981 RGM in 1961. In turn, Det 1, 6981 RGM became the 6985th Radio Squadron Mobile in 1962.

Some Bonus Baby missions flew round-robin from Eielson over the Arctic north of Siberia, while others departed Eielson, flew northeast over the Arctic Ocean north of Siberia, and recovered at RAF Brize Norton. Sgt.'s Hamaker and Dailey operated from the Air Force Special Security Office at Eielson and reported administratively to 6981 headquarters at Elmendorf. Larry Dailey commented on his support for Project Bonus Baby in 1999.

USAFSS Bonus Baby Support—RAF Brize Norton In 1959, the 6950 RGM activated Operating Location 1, 6950 RGM at Brize Norton. OL-1 became Det 1, 6950 RGM in 1961, and two years later (1963), Det 1, 6950 Security Wing. Sgt.'s Roberts, Hamaker, Dailey and Duke were the only personnel assigned to OL-1, 6950 initially, and Hamaker and Dailey moved permanently to Eielson in early 1960. According to Roberts, all four airmen completed survival training enroute to Brize Norton. Prior to going to our assignments, we four completed Combat Survival Training at Stead AFB, Reno, Nevada, and Arctic Survival at Eielson AFB, Alaska. In an interview with the CINC USAFSS, Gen. Blake asked if we thought other people headed to the airborne units should attend these survival courses. Obviously, we told him that it should be mandatory!

6981 Elmendorf, Alaska  
Det 1, St. Lawrence Island  
Det 2, King Salmon, Alaska

Det 3, Shemya, Alaska

Det 4, Barrow, Alaska

Det 1, 3 RSM became Ft A, 3 RSM about October 1953 Adak, Alaska Oct 1953-1954

Det 2, 3 RSM became Ft B, 3 RSM about October 1953 Northeast Cape AFS, Nome, Alaska  
Oct 1953-May 1955

Det 3, 3 RSM became Ft C, 3 RSM about October 1953 Naknek AFB, Alaska Oct 1953-May  
1955

Det 1, 6981 RGM Northeast Cape AFS, AK 1956-1960

Det 2, 6981 RGM Naknek AFB, AK 1956-1957

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