

1866 FACILITY CHECKING SQUADRON



MISSION

The 1866 FCS was responsible for flight and ground checking all Air Traffic Control facilities operated by the U.S. Air Force throughout the world on a regularly scheduled basis. Using four C-140As, and Radar, Nav aids, and Communications personnel on the ground each facility was evaluated and the capabilities and limitations of that facility published by the FAA.

LINEAGE

1866 Facility Checking Flight (Service Evaluation) designated and organized, 1 Jul 1962
Redesignated 1866 Facility Checking Squadron, 1 Jan 1966
Inactivated, 1 Oct 1987

STATIONS

Scott AFB, IL, 1 Jul 1962
Richards-Gebaur AFB, MO, 1 Dec 1971
Scott AFB, IL, 30 Sep 1977

ASSIGNMENTS

Air Force Communications Service (later Air Force Communications Command)

WEAPON SYSTEMS

T-39
C-140

COMMANDERS

Col Robert B. Nicholson

Lt Col Carey L. Freeman, 24 Aug 1984

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1974-31 Dec 1975

1 Jan-31 Dec 1976

1 Jan 1977-31 Dec 1978

1 Jan 1979-31 Dec 1980

EMBLEM



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The flight checking function of the command improved with the delivery of the first T-39 for use by the 1866th Facility Checking Squadron at Scott AFB, IL, in 1969. Management of flight checking responsibilities between the Federal Aviation Agency and AFCS also changed during the year, as the FAA agreed to reestablish the Air Force role in both contingency and fixed inspection in combat areas. The FAA maintained its responsibility for flight checking in the continental United States, its possessions and territories, and Central America.

The squadron also supported NASA and the Space Shuttle. During reentry, the shuttle's friction with the outer atmosphere blocked all radio and radar transmissions. After this blackout, part of AFCC's responsibility was to assist the crew in locating Edwards AFB quickly and correcting any inertial guidance system errors. This would assure a successful landing by providing the space shuttle a reliable navigational aid to update the onboard computer guidance system during the critical reentry phase. The control system would then guide the spacecraft through the critical last 15 minutes prior to touchdown. Personnel from AFCC's 2179th Communications Group, 1925th Communications Squadron, 1877th Communications Squadron, and the 3d Combat Communications Group furnished this key support at Patrick AFB, Florida; Edwards AFB, California; and Northrup Strip, an alternate landing site on the White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. Aircrews and ground technicians from the 1866th Facility Checking Squadron at Scott AFB, Illinois, verified critical mobile tactical air navigation (TACAN) equipment parameters at all three locations.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
Major Command history. *A Salute to Air Force Communications Command Leaders and Lineage*. Office of Air Force Communications Command History. Scott AFB, IL. 1 Oct 1990.