

1917 COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

1917 Airways and Air Communications Service Squadron
Redesignated 1917 Communications Squadron
Inactivated

STATIONS

Westover AFB, MA

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Michael F. Killian

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Westover's 1917th Communications Squadron played a key role in readiness exercises, making

hundreds of takeoffs and landings, thousands of telephone calls and countless radio messages possible. "The 1917th provides and maintains all communications equipment for the base," 1st Lt. William Shedd, chief of air traffic control, said. This includes intra-base and air-to-ground radios, the telephone switchboard, all navigational aids, the control tower, and the communications center.

"Some of the communications equipment is designed to function routinely; providing altitude, direction, distance, visibility, course guidance and weather information for the safe and efficient operation of the airfield. For the exercise, however, some extra efforts were necessary. Additional manpower was needed in the control tower and on the telephone switchboard, and the maintenance people had to put in additional hours."

"We in maintenance have done nothing different, except for providing redundancy (backup) in our equipment," A.R. Penn, chief of maintenance added.

"The control tower, normally operated to support the Westover- based Reserve flying mission and the local civilian air traffic, is operating longer hours during the exercise," Lieutenant Shedd said. "Since Reservists are not used as air traffic controllers and could not help us in the tower, we borrowed two experienced men from the regular Air Force." SSgt. Lucious Evans and SrA. Mark Bennett of the 1817th Comm. Squadron at Richards- Gebaur AFB, Mo., were loaned to the 1917th for the duration of the exercise, the lieutenant said.

In addition to the other functions of the communications squadron, the communications center itself is vital to the success of Condor Redoubt. "The tele- communications center provides secure, narrative messages and card data to any Department of Defense installation worldwide," Capt. Stephen Gross, 1917th commander, said. "The message volume has greatly increased during the exercise."

Other Reservists are assisting in telephone switchboard operations. Assigned to Westover's 905th Communications Flight, they are helping the regular operators in handling the increased volume of phone calls. According to the switchboard supervisor, "The volume of calls has almost tripled during this period. We operate three shifts daily, and we have one Reservist on each shift," she explained.

"Our communications people are receiving valuable training and performing superbly in air traffic control, switchboard, operations, maintenance and the support area," Captain Gross said.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
Unit yearbook. *Westover AFB, MA. @1954*