

3320 CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

The source of the Retraining Group's uniqueness lay in the fact that it took selected court-martialed airmen from air bases all over the world and attempted to retrain them and restore them to productive active duty. In what was considered a radical departure from generally accepted methods of dealing with wrongdoers, the 3320th did not imprison them. There were no fences, cells, guards, guns, or weapons to face the incoming retrainees.

The initial move brought 109 retrainees to Lowry, below the authorized 185, but the operating procedures of the Retraining Group were not directly affected. On their arrival, the "new" men were quartered in reconditioned World War II barracks. The move was accomplished smoothly and without a day of retraining activity being lost.

The idea behind the 3320th Retraining Group's approach to the restoring of convicted prisoners to active duty lay in several factors. Most, in reality, had committed no offenses for which they would be tried in a civil court of law. Purely military offenses, such as being absent without leave, desertion, and insubordination would not constitute a punishable offense in the civilian community. It was felt that a program which could help modify such military offenders' attitudes and motivations for the better might will rehabilitate these men for a productive military life. Even if not, it might prepare them for returning to the civilian world better equipped to face that life.

So, the retraining program was not a punitive one. It had to be a broad, active, and well-balanced one. It consisted of specialized and military training, education, individual and group therapy, athletics and supervised recreation. High standards of appearance and military bearing were the rule. Discipline was strict, but each retrainee was regarded as an airman, and entitled to the individual dignity of an airman.

STATIONS

Amarillo, TX

Lowry AFB, CO, 1 Jul 1967

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Stephen E. Tackney, 27 Oct 1951

Col David B. Borden, Jr., 23 Oct 1953

Col Norman R. Burnett, 8 Nov 1957

Col James A. Johnson, 1 Aug 1960

Col Leonard Shapiro, 1 Jul 1962

Capt James R. Ford, 1 Jul 1965

Col Henry S. Saylor, 31 Aug 1965

Col Earnest L. Reid, 1 Aug 1967

Col Richard P. Haney, 22 Aug 1968

Col Herbert F. Egender, 1 Jan 1970

Col Branson L. Wood, Jr., 3 Jan 1972

Col Harold T. Reitan, 1 Jun 1974

Lt Col Cres C. Baca, 15 Jul 1976

Col Hugh R. Shannon, 26 Aug 1976

Lt Col Daniel B. Kilburn, Jr., 17 Jan 1978

Lt Col James D. Herget, 5 Sep 1978

Maj Roger W. Lewis, 14 Jan 1980

Maj Jimmy J. Caton, 14 Jul 1980

Lt Col Shelby N. Cordon, 29 Apr 1981

Lt Col Warren E. Miller, 1 Jun 1983

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

EMBLEM



The 3320th Retraining Group staff designed an insignia to compliment the motto. For a central figure on a shield, they selected an eagle to represent democracy which provided an opportunity for individuals to have a second chance. The eagle carried a key in one claw, representing the instrument required to open the door for a second chance, and a trowel in the other, symbolizing the building of proper attitudes and character through retraining. Behind the eagle was a pyramid superimposed over a wall and surrounded by stars symbolizing the relaxed custody and the enlightened supervision employed by the unit. (Approved, 13 Sep 1954)

The 3320th retained the above motto and insignia throughout its subsequent move, redesignations, and downgrades. In 1981, Lt Col Shelby N. Cordon, the 3320th's commander, determined that the motto had little meaning or relevance for 3320th personnel of the 1980s. As a result, the unit's staff held a contest to select a new motto. The winner was "Gateway to Your Future." Subsequently, in 1982, Colonel Cordon determined to adopt an insignia designed to better reflect the new motto. As finally approved, the insignia was a disk that featured an open gate signifying the transition to an active Air Force or to a free American society. The center piece was a bald eagle on top of a globe which showed that the airmen received by the unit came from Air Force bases around the world. The three vertical red and white stripes represented American society which allowed certain freedoms while maintaining standards to protect them. Finally, the combination of all elements represented the opportunity for rehabilitation and a new way of life. The insignia received formal approval on 23 March 1983.

MOTTO

Fieri Potest

The Air Force established the 3320th as a test project in 1951, thus the Retraining Group did not obtain an official motto and insignia until after it was reasonably certain that the unit would continue to exist. The motto came first, according to Captain Fleet's early history of the group. Convinced despite much opposition that their unit would be a success, the permanent party personnel consistently and openly stated that "they would succeed" and "it can be done." These became special phrases for the early group members. An airman in the permanent party personnel of the group thought that the latter phrase would be a good motto, but that it needed more formality. He called a local high school teacher and asked what the phrase would be in

Latin. Her reply, "Fieri Potest," became the 3320th's motto.

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

With the creation of the Air Force in 1947, the Air Force correctional system was placed under the Air Provost Marshal Activities Department. During this time, the first instruction on Corrections was established with the publication of Air Force Manual 125-2, Administration and Operation of Confinement Facilities and the Treatment and Retraining of Prisoners (currently, known as AFI 31-205, Air Force Corrections System).

In February 1948, the Air Provost Marshal proposed to the Air Adjutant General the establishment of four retraining centers (later reduced to one centralized facility) because the average base guardhouse (jail) could not provide the type of social and military therapy to the most junior of the offenders.

On October 24, 1951, Headquarters General Order No. 17, activated the 3320th Retraining Group on Amarillo Air Force Base, Texas. The primary mission of the Group was to rehabilitate and restore to duty those with minor offenses who showed potential.

27 Oct 51 The 3320th Retraining Group was established at Amarillo AFB, TX. The group conducted a program that provided selected Air Force prisoners with an opportunity for restoration to duty. The first retrainees arrived in Feb 52.

In 1952, the Air Force organized the 3320th Retraining Group to offer special training to certain airmen convicted of military crimes. The Air Force wanted to restore to active duty those airmen successfully completing the program. Because the training stressed changes in attitude, it could also serve them well in civilian life if they had to leave the service.

The first trainee arrived in February 1952 and the Group returned 500 trainees to duty in the first two years saving induction and technical training costs.

This forward leaning proposal was obviously well under way when later in the same year Congress passed several laws specifically relating to military confinement and rehabilitation. The most sweeping changes were Title 10, United States Code, Sections 951 and 953, which required corrective rather than punitive treatment of military inmates and to offer the opportunity for restoration to duty. In 1953, the Air Force incarcerated 4,798 prisoners in 119 CONUS confinement facilities, each with different standards highlighting the lack of a centrally managed infrastructure.

By the end of 1954, the high number of confinees and lack of proper facilities dictated the creation of the Air Police Correctional Specialist career field, AFSC 771X1 and a Civil Engineer construction blueprint template for base jails Air Force wide.

The staff, including psychologists, social workers, and psychiatrists, created an environment without armed guards or barred windows and doors. The curriculum consisted of academic classes, individual and group therapy sessions, athletics, and recreation. The Air Force transferred the group to Lowry from Amarillo Air Force Base, Texas, on July 1, 1967, with 109 airmen in the program. The responsibilities of the 3320th increased in the following decade.

One of the actions ATC took in response to the announced closure of Amarillo AFB was the relocation of the retraining group from Amarillo to Lowry AFB, Colorado. The retraining group, with its mission to rehabilitate and return to duty airmen convicted of criminal offenses, started the move on 1 July and completed it on 1 September 1967.

In 1968, Congress closed Amarillo AFB and on October 1, 1968 the Air Force moved the 3320th Retraining Group to Lowry AFB, Colorado, where the training became to know as the Air Force Return-to-Duty Program.

In January 1970, the Air Force initiated a test program for selective airmen with administrative discharges. Airmen who successfully completed the program could be discharged under honorable conditions.

1971 Apr 1 The Air Force activated the 3415th Special Training Group at Lowry.

1971, the Air Force established a new squadron under the 3320th Retraining Group, the 3320th Corrections and Rehabilitation Squadron (CRS) at Lowry AFB. The 3320 CRS had a 154-bed Level II facility, which housed Air Force inmates with sentences from 1-5 years. Also that year Detachment 1, 3320 CRS stood up at the US Disciplinary Barracks (USDB) at Ft Leavenworth, Kansas with a staff of 105 whose duties included medical, administrative and guard functions.

1972 Aug 1 Lowry's 3415th Technical Training School became the USAF School of Applied Aerospace Sciences.

1973 Feb Lowry's 3415th Special Training Group began drug rehabilitation as part of its mission.

Mar 28 1973 Lowry's School of Applied Aerospace Sciences gained accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

On 15 April 1974 the Group relocated from the previously mentioned World War II barracks to a new 2.8 million dollar complex. This complex included a dormitory, dining hall, administration building, gymnasium, and a hobby shop. The new facilities provided an atmosphere felt to be conducive to the mission of rehabilitation and were considered to be a vast improvement over the previous old wooden structures.

As the United States reduced its Vietnam involvement during the early 1970s, the military drug problem decreased in severity. The Air Force no longer needed a separate drug program and the number of airmen entering the special training program decreased. As a result, the 3415th

Special Training Group merged with the 3320th on February 1, 1975. 3320th Retraining Group merged with the 3415 Special Training Group, a group which had been activated in 1971 to rehabilitate airmen who had been awarded an administrative discharge by board action under the provisions of AFM 39-12. At the beginning of this program, most of the offenders had been drug abusers, and it was decided to keep the two programs separated. After the drawdown from Southeast Asia, the drug problem greatly diminished, and the conclusion was made that for a cohesive organization with centralized administration, the two should join.

The Retraining Group changed its name, on 15 June 1976, to the 3320th Correction and Rehabilitation Group to better identify the aims and mission of the unit. In November 1976, the Special Training Program was disestablished completely. In the 25 years of its existence, leading into 1977, the Group had processed over 14,000 retrainees, and had returned to active duty over 8,000 of those.

With the number of people in the retraining program continuing to decline, the Air Force reduced the 3320th Correction and Rehabilitation Group to squadron status on March 1, 1977. In February 1978, the squadron moved into smaller accommodations. Also that month, the Air Staff directed the 3320th to close its Lowry confinement center for Air Force prisoners. The number of prisoners had declined to eighteen, and maintaining a separate Air Force center for such a small number of people was not economical. The Air Force sent its prisoners to the Army's confinement facility at Fort Riley, Kansas. In June 1980, the number of Air Force prisoners increased at Fort Riley. As a result, Lowry reopened an Air Force confinement facility.

In 1992, the 3320th CRS function transferred to the Air Force Office of Security Police (AFOSP) at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, and stood up a Corrections Division with Branches for Personnel, Rehabilitation and Inmate Management. AFOSP would be renamed Air Force Security Police Agency (AFSPA) in 1993 and subsequently renamed Headquarters Air Force Security Forces Center (HQ AFSFC) and relocated to Lackland AFB, TX, in 1997.

In 1993, in anticipation of Congress' pending closure of Lowry AFB, the AFSPA stood down the 3320th Corrections and Rehabilitation Group. Simultaneously, AFSPA moved the Lowry AFB Level II correctional functions, under a joint agreement with the Navy, to Naval Air Station Miramar (now Marine Corps Air Station Miramar), California and Naval Weapons Station Charleston (now Joint Base Charleston), South Carolina, sharing a portion of their two Level II facilities. To operate this mission realignment AFSPA stood up two new Detachments, placing Detachment 2 at Miramar and Detachment 3 at Charleston each with a staff of 28 and 33 personnel respectively.

Dets 2 and 3 each contained specialists from the following career fields; Security Police, Mental Health, Personnel, Administration, Communications and special duty Military Training Leaders. That same year the Air Force Return-to-Duty Program moved to Charleston where it remained until 2007 when it was relocated to Lackland AFB, TX, under the HQ AFSFC/ Corrections Division (HQ AFSFC/SFC). Also, in 1993, the DoD reorganized the mission of the USDB and made the Army the DoD Executive Agent for this sole Level III facility. As a result, AFSPA reduced Detachment 1 to a liaison staff of six.

USAF Unit Histories
Created: 13 Jan 2011
Updated: 14 Dec 2021

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.
Unit history. *3320th Technical Training Wing. Amarillo AFB, TX.*
Unit history. *3320th Corrections and Rehabilitation Squadron.*
AFMAN 31-201 Vol 1, 9 August 2010.