

4392 CIVIL ENGINEERING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

4392 Civil Engineering Squadron

STATIONS

Vandenberg AFB, CA, 21 Jul 1961

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Col Daniel J. Coonan

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

The emblem for the civil engineering squadron was approved Sept. 29, 1964, and was based on a design submitted by the squadron earlier that year. About the only change made by the USAF heraldic artists at Randolph AFB, Tex., was to delete all landmarks from the globe and turn the missile back toward a more "favorable" direction—originally, it formed an inauspicious "bar sinister" diagonally across the emblem. The dark blue background encased in a narrow black border alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations with the missile in flight

representing the unit's main purpose of ground maintenance support to missile facilities and organizations. The missile is white with grey shading and is emitting a yellow propulsion flame at its base. The sweeping light blue contrail with its grey borders contains four golden yellow lightning bolts which denote "electrical maintenance support and tracking facilities." The four white receding stars refer to outer space experimental phases, present and future, to other planets." Projecting into the disc from the scroll is a white 'embattled' tower shaded in grey and outlined in black. Perched on top is ATLAS supporting a gear (light blue) encircled dark blue globe with white grid lines. The tower design is reminiscent of the castle insignia of the Army's Corps of Engineers, and reflects the history of the Air Force's civil engineering with the teeth of the gear depicting its twelve sections, covering maintenance support to space experiments, combat ready and outer space flights. The feat of ATLAS signifies that "man's knowledge and strength are essential for supporting the policy of peace through deterrent power.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

4392nd CES is tasked with the unique mission to support the continuous missile launchings which differentiate Vandenberg from the rest of the bases. And when one considers that almost 1,000 ballistic missiles, space boosters, meteorological rockets, missile targets and sundry others have been launched here since this squadron was activated, it should be apparent that the squadron's extra support mission is not one of a mere routine nature. The 1,500 military and civilian CES personnel have their hands full. After every launch they are faced with refurbishment of the launch facility; beforehand, they must provide operational maintenance, heavy equipment support and depot level repairs. Even during the launch they are busy providing fire protection for the site. In some cases, they are involved in launch facility engineering design or prototype and follow-on modifications. And all this in addition to their normal base support role which is no small task in itself on a base as large as Vandenberg. During a typical, year's operation, for example, the 4392nd CES provides the base with 2.8 billion gallons of water, and 900 million cubic feet of gas. Its crews maintain 1.5 million square yards of lawn, 2.9 million square feet of parking area, and 19,000 square feet of cold storage space — as well as more than 1,400 base buildings and over 2,000 family housing units.

CES personnel also are responsible for the upkeep of 327 miles of paved and unpaved base roads, about 500 miles of electric lines, almost 800 miles of gasoline, 296 miles of water mains, and 17 miles of rail road.

The 4392nd CES was designated and organized July 21,1961, and assigned to the 4392nd ASG under 1STRAD. Its men and equipment were those rendered surplus by the inactivation of Again, as in all the other similarly numbered support squadrons on the base, personnel continued on in their jobs without interruption by the change in unit designation, and, as with the others, without benefit of carrying on the history, lineage or honors of their previous unit. The 4392nd CES came into being that day and had no connection with the 392nd, other than for taking over its mission at Vandenberg.

Since its activation the new squadron has seen its inherited support responsibilities increased rapidly as the base expanded from its initial 64,000 acres to almost 100,000 with the acquisition of the Naval Missile Facility at Point Arguello and Sudden Ranch.

Base Housing increased with the leasing of 150 units in nearby communities and the construction of another 274 on base. In 1967, a modern 124-bed hospital was added and a year later the new base chapel was completed. New missile launch facilities for all of the Minuteman weapon systems were constructed, and the annual launch rate requiring CES support rose from a low of 25 when they were first activated to a constant 100-plus since 1963.

With the increase in launch activity and its consequent increased workload for the squadron. Headquarters USAF recently approved a reorganization for the 4392nd CES, effective April 1, 1969, authorizing the addition of a separate Missile Launch Support Branch as well as a realignment of manpower, codes and titles. So far, the squadron has won one Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for its meritorious service, and bids fair to add others to its record in the future.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.