

6916 ELECTRONIC SECURITY SQUADRON



MISSION

With more than 250 people assigned, 6916 members perform duties on board Strategic Air Command aircraft in support of tasked objectives.

LINEAGE

6916 Security Squadron designated and activated, 1 Jul 1973

Redesignated 6916 Electronic Security Squadron, 1 Aug 1979

Inactivated, 13 Nov 1990

STATIONS

Athenia Airport (later, Hellenikon AB), Athens, Greece, 1 Jul 1973-13 Nov 1990

ASSIGNMENTS

USAF Security Service, 1 Jul 1973

6944 Security Wing, 1 Oct 1975

USAF Security Service (later, Electronic Security Command), 1 Mar 1979

Electronic Security, Europe (later, European Electronic Security Division), 30 Sep 1980-13 Nov 1990.

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Grover S. McMakin, 1 Jul 1973

Lt Col David H. Eddy, 10 Jul 1974

Capt Richard A. Oliver, 12 Jul 1977

Lt Col Allen J. Montecino, 18 Aug 1977

Lt Col Harold K. Bramble, 14 Jun 1979

Lt Col Harold K. Bramble, 1 Aug 1979

Lt Col Robert S. Cope, 24 Jul 1981

Lt Col A. Geoffrey Egge, 24 Jun 1983
Lt Col William C. Bender, 15 Jun 1985
Lt Col William H. Buchholtz, 13 Jul 1987
Lt Col Michael R. Phillips, 14 Jul 1989

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Jul 1965 - 31 Dec 1966

1 Jun 1969 - 31 May 1970

1 Jun 1970 - 31 Mar 1971

1 Apr 1971 - 31 Mar 1972

1 Jul 1972 - 30 Jun 1974

1 Jul 1975 - 30 Jun 1977

1 Jul 1977 - 30 Jun 1978

1 Jul 1978 - 30 Jun 1979

1 Jul 1980 - 31 Jun 1981

EMBLEM



On a disc quarterly blue and red within a gold border in chief a gold sun in splendor between two gold lightning flashes pilewise points terminating in chief, and in base a gold pale indented,

overall on a black fess fimbriated gold saltirewise a white key with a gold nebuly bow to dexter surmounting a white quill pen, emblem above a white scroll edged gold inscribed in blue capital letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The emblem is symbolic of the Squadron. Against the field of blue, which depicts the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations, and red, the color for urgency and danger, the golden sun signifying excellence, symbolizes a goal to aim for the accomplishment of our mission. Ensuring that air-to-air and air-to-ground communications are reliable and secure is referred to by the black band of secrecy crossing the gold strip which branches out into two lightning flashes. The sky key (nebuly heraldic symbol for clouds) identifies with Air Force security and crossed with the quill pen represents the Squadron's operational and administrative control for secure communications and processing activities. The emblem bears the National colors and the Air Force colors golden yellow and ultramarine blue.

MOTTO

UT FIAT LIBERTAS--That there might be Freedom

OPERATIONS

The "Raiders" of the 6916th are active participants in sports at every level, from intra- and intramural to the Mediterranean Sports Conference and USAFE competition. 6916th runners annually participate in the Athens Marathon, which is run along the original route run by Leonides in 490 B.C. The base commander's sports trophy, an annual overall sports award, has been retained by the unit several times after unit sports teams dominated the competition for several years running.

Base facilities are limited, but do provide all the basic services except housing. On base are the main exchange, recreation and hobby centers, the base library, the main commissary and smaller shopping facilities and informal dining facilities.

The officer's lounge, NCO lounge and consolidated open mess are located in the Apollon Palace Hotel about seven miles from the base. The Apollon Palace Hotel, a modern seven-story building with its own beach and outdoor pool, serves as BOQ, BAQ and TLF billeting. It is recognized as one of the finest billeting facilities in Europe. The four seasons store and the AAFES garage are also located off base. There is only limited dormitory space and no family housing on base or leases on behalf of military members.

The first two years of the 1990s set the stage for the future of ESC and its successor organizations. On 9 August 1990, ESC personnel from the 6916 ESS were among the first U.S. military personnel to arrive in Saudi Arabia to support the RC-135 in Operation DESERT SHIELD. With DESERT SHIELD well underway, on 10 November 1990 the 6975 ESS (Provisional) activated at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to support RC-135 operations.

The command's European Airborne Reconnaissance Program unit, the 6916 SS, moved from Rhein Main AB, Germany, to Athens, Greece, on 30 June. 1973

Operation EL DORADO CANYON: On 14 April, Air Force and Navy aircraft conducted a nighttime air strike against the Libyan SA-5 complex at Surte, the Al-Azziziyah Barracks in Tripoli, the Benghazi military barracks, the Benina military airfield, the military side of Tripoli airport, and terrorist training facilities in the port of Sidi Bilal. Between 13-18 April, ESC units in Europe provided intelligence support to U.S. activities against Libya. This support involved special taskings for the 6917 ESG, 6931 ESS, 6950 ESG, and RC-135 /RJ crews from the 6916 ESS. HQ ESE served as the in-theater ESC executive agent for this effort. The RC-135 provided intelligence support to Sixth Fleet elements during the central Mediterranean operations and later to the Search and Rescue efforts for a downed F-111. 1986

On 9 August, the 6916 ESS arrived in Saudi Arabia with two RJ aircraft and two backend crews to participate in Operation DESERT SHIELD. 1990

A proud chapter in USAFSS and ESC history came to an end on 13 November, when the 6916 ESS inactivated at Hellenikon AB, Greece. For almost 34 years, the 6916th's men and women flew the Baltic and Black Sea routes, above the deserts of Sudan and Egypt, over the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas, and the Persian Gulf. Operations from Hellenikon provided intelligence support to many major events in the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern area. such as the 1967 and 1973 Arab /Israeli wars, Beirut, Gulf of Sidra, TWA Flight 847 hijacking, the Achille Lauro, ELDORADO CANYON. The 6916th was also the first ESC unit in Saudi Arabia. 1990

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