BRIEF HISTORY

From USAFSS to AIA — A Legacy More Than Half a Century Old Continues

Origins

During WWII, intelligence, most notably signals intelligence (SIGINT) proved invaluable in helping the Allies secure victory. The successes of the ULTRA and MAGIC efforts in the European and Pacific theaters respectively, undoubtedly helped shorten the war and save American lives.

The nation's euphoria over the victory in 1945 quickly gave way to a post WWII political climate defined by the Cold War. A bipolar world began to emerge when a massive Soviet Army presence in Eastern Europe threatened to engulf the western portion of that continent and the U.S.' principal allies under communist rule. With the country rapidly transitioning to a post war economy and the U.S. military machine in the midst of an even more unprecedented demobilization effort, America's leaders realized how important establishing and keeping intelligence organizations intact would be to the national security future of the United States.

In order to gain a real appreciation for just how intelligence operations were conducted during the post WWII years, it is necessary to examine why the AIA predecessor organizations were established and what their original missions entailed.

Major General Richard P. Klocko.

The AIA beginnings can be traced to the autumn of 1947, when then Colonel Richard Klocko (who would later command USAFSS) transferred from the Army Security Service Headquarters at Arlington Hall, Va, to an office in the newly created air staff. Once there, Klocko and others began to lay the groundwork for establishing a new, separate air force major command charged with the responsibility for processing and reporting special intelligence information. The concept of a separate air force intelligence organization, one vastly different from the army and navy structures, quickly received the approval of Air Force's second Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg. Within the framework of the newly organized air staff, responsibility for intelligence matters initially fell under the purview of the deputy chief of staff for operations.

Radio operators train at Brooks AFB in the summer of 1949.

The seeds of the new air intelligence organization were sowed months earlier at the Army Security Agency (ASA), and AIA began to take shape with the establishment, on 23 June 1948 of the Air Force Security Group (AFSG) in the Directorate of Intelligence at HQ USAF in Washington, D.C. As the junior service in the new Department of Defense (DoD) structure, the AFSG faced many obstacles when dealing with its sister services on policy matters regarding the cryptologic and communications security (COMSEC) missions of the new air force.

Other National Military Intelligence Reorganizations

One of the more significant intelligence reorganizations of the immediate post war period saw President Harry S. Truman abolish the Office

Arlington Hall--the first home of USAFSS.

of Strategic Services in September 1945. This event preceded the January 1946 creation of the Central Intelligence Group—the forerunner of the CIA. The establishment of the DoD in 1947 significantly influenced the subsequent development of the nation's air force intelligence structure.

In 1949, other changes in the organization of the nation's intelligence structure resulted when the Joint Chiefs of Staff announced the establishment of the Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA), and charged it with overseeing cryptologic and COMSEC operations throughout the military. Then in 1952, the ASA was renamed the National Security Agency (NSA).

The USAFSS Established

Because the Air Force leadership wanted the new service to have an active role in producing intelligence information, they established USAFSS on 20 October 1948 at Arlington Hall Station, VA, and Colonel Roy H. Lynn assumed command on 26 October 1948. Just one year after its own birth, the new military service now had in place a Major Command (MAJCOM) tasked with two important charters—to carry out a cryptologic mission and to provide COMSEC for a fledgling Air Force.

After three months of negotiations with the ASA the new MAJCOM gained its first subordinate units on 1 February 1949, when the

1st Radio Squadron, Mobile (RSM) in Japan, the 2nd RSM in Germany, the 8 RSM at Vint Hill Farms, VA, and the 136th Radio Security Detachment at Fort Slocum, NY, were transferred to USAFSS from the ASA.

The initial exposure of the USAFSS staff to the full scope of ASA operations and missions provided valuable firsthand experience for the newly formed USAF MAJCOM. The new organization had an initial authorized strength of 156 personnel—34 officers, six airmen and 116 civilians.

Korea

When elements of the communist North Korean Army swarmed across the 38th Parallel on 25 June 1950, the Korean peninsula was an unfamiliar region few Americans knew existed. The entry of the U.S. forces into a United Nations "police action," found an understaffed (just 3,050 personnel) and somewhat untrained USAFSS in its infancy.

Operators of the 15th Radio Squadron Mobile during the Korean War.

Construction of the front of Bldg. 2000--later known as Ardisana Hall--winter 1952.

The USAFSS was tasked to support the Korean conflict and the command quickly ordered the 1st RSM to alert status on 27 June 1950. By November 1950, a detachment of the 1st RSM deployed to Korea in time to become involved in a retreat from the rapidly advancing North Korean Army. Not hindered by the quick evacuation, the 1 RSM contributed significantly to United Nations and Far Eastern Air Forces (FEAF) operations during early 1951. The detachment provided invaluable intelligence information on the movements of major North Korean Army units from Manchuria to Wonsan. The intelligence information enabled UN air and naval units to interdict the enemy advance.

Within the air operations realm, the intelligence furnished by a USAFSS detachment in June 1951 enabled American F-51 and F-86 fighters to inflict heavy losses on the enemy. By early 1952, the first detachment of 33 airmen underwent language training at Yale University and established operations at Ehwa University outside of Seoul. USAFSS' performance during the Korean conflict earned the MAJCOM a permanent place at the table of the American intelligence community. In early 1953, USAFSS personnel, flying aboard converted 5th Air Force C-47s, began experimental airborne operations in the Far Eastern Theater. The operation, known as Project Blue Sky, used the modified C-47 aircraft to relay communications to allied ground forces on the Korean Peninsula. The USAFSS organization grew steadily during the Korean War. As the Korean conflict wound down, USAFSS had grown considerably and reported an authorized strength of 17,143 airmen, officers and civilians.

Headquarters Moves/ Organizational Changes

The USAFSS originally began operations at Arlington Hall, VA. With the Army and Navy intelligence hierarchies planted in Washington D.C., the air staff directed that USAFSS Headquarters be relocated elsewhere. Brooks AFB, TX, surfaced as the best choice for a new home. Headquarters USAFSS and related functions moved there in April 1949. Colonel Klocko and the USAFSS staff prepared plans to temporarily relocate only to Brooks after Major General Charles P. Cabell, the Air Force's first director of intelligence, secured funds for the construction of a headquarters for USAFSS at Kelly AFB. Construction of a new $4,798,000 USAFSS Headquarters building at Kelly AFB began in late summer 1951. Operations commenced at the new headquarters (Bldg. 2000) when personnel began the move into the newly constructed headquarters building during the first week of August 1953.

Within HQ USAFSS, several organizational changes took place in the first few years of its existance. In July 1953, the newly established Air Force Communications Security Center located at

The C-130A-II--successor to the RB-50.

Later in 1963, in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, the command activated three Emergency Reaction Units (ERUs)—the 6948th Security Squadron , Mobile (SSM), at Goodfellow AFB, TX, the 6926th SS M, at Clark Air Base and the 6911th SSM, at Darmstadt, Germany.

Fixed Ground Operations Flourish

As the 1950s gave way to the 1960s, USAFSS support to national level customers expanded rapidly. The USAFSS ground units sprang up in a few out of the way places around the globe. The 6937th Communications Group, at Peshawar, Pakistan, situated just west of the historic Khyer Pass, began operations in April 1958. The command also operated at Samsun and Trabzon, Turkey, Zweibrucken and Weisbaden in Germany, Kirknewton, Scotland and other locations. As 1959 drew to a close, 21,602 airmen, officers and civilans comprised a still growing team of USAFSS intelligence professional.

Fixed Operations significantly improved when the first of USAFSS' AN/FLR-9 "Elephant Cage" antennas reached operational status at the 6950 SS at RAF Chicksands, England and the 6917 SS, San Vito Air Station (AS), Italy in 1964. Other "Elephant Cages" entered service throughout the 1960's, by the end of which the antenna was operational with the 6922nd SS at Clark AB, the Philippines, the 6981 SS, Elmendorf AFB, AK, the 6920th SS, Misawa AB, Japan, the

Operations site of the 6937th Communications Group, Peshawar, Pakistan 1969.

Kelly AFB took on responsibility for the USAFSS COMSEC mission from the HQ USAFSS Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS) for operations. Also at this time, the 6901st Special Communications Center at Brooks AFB took over the operational functions previously performed by the USAFSS DCS for Operations. Shortly thereafter, on 8 August 1953, with the new Headquarters building complete, the 6901st now renamed the Air Force Special Communications Center, moved from Brooks AFB to "Security Hill" at Kelly AFB.

Airborne & Contingency Missions Evolve

Modern USAFSS airborne operations commenced in 1952 using converted B-29 Super Flying Fortresses. Crews from USAFSS began flying operational airborne missionon in the Pacific on Strategic Air Command (SAC) RB-50 Superfortresses in March 1954. C-130A-IIs, more maintainable and having longer endurance than their predecessors, began replacing RB-50s in 1958. In 1962, USAFSS crews first flew missions aboard SAC sponsored RC-135 aircraft.

As regional trouble spots began to develop in the Cold War world, USAFSS reacted accordingly. In 1956, the first USAFSS mobile unit deployed to the Middle East in response to instability in the area.
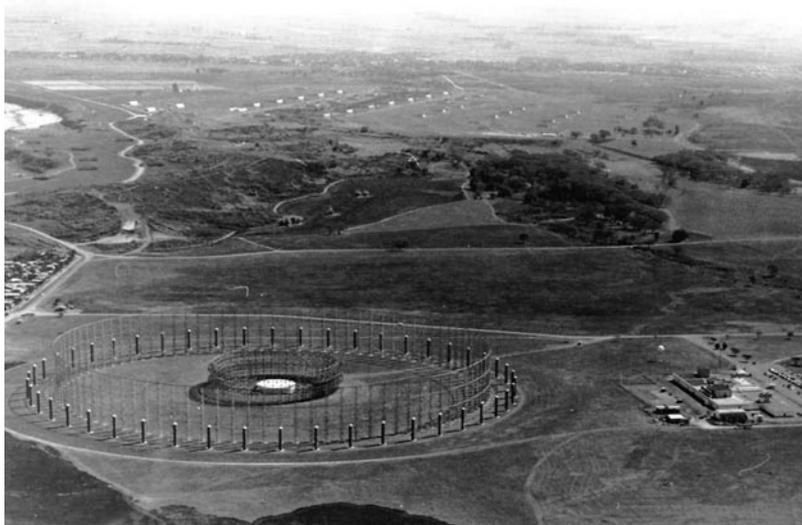
AN FLR-9 and Operations building at the 6922 SS, Clark AB, Philippines

6933rd SS, Karamursel AS, Turkey, and the 6913th SS, Augsburg, Germany. Other important USAFSS/ESC field sites included Iraklion AS, Crete, Wakkanai AS, Japan and Shu Lin Kou AS, Taiwan. The introduction of several high technology systems like IATS, STRAWHAT and TEBO at USAFSS ground sites during this time further automated many time and labor intensive unit field operations.

Vietnam

The USAFSS involvement in Vietnam began in late 1961. On 20 December 1961, HQ Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) directed the command to deploy a capability to establish an Air Force Special Security Office and related intelligence functions at Tan Son Nhut Airport near Saigon. Later in early 1962, the Air Staff began to make firm plans to provide intelligence support to the Commander-in-Chief of Pacific Air Forces in Southeast Asia. USAFSS resources and personnel would play a leading role. By the end of 1962, USAFSS' 6923 RSM and three subordinate detachments located in Vietnam and Thailand, were serving national intelligence customers and providing tactical support for the fast growing number of military units operating in the Southeast Asia theater of operations.

By mid 1964, U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia significantly increased. In August 1964, Major General Richard P. Klocko, now USAFSS commander, met with the commander of PACAF's 2nd Air Division (AD) at Tan Son Nhut Airport, South Vietnam, to work out issues for USAFSS support to the 2 AD. Over the course of the next four years, USAFSS personnel provided key support to COLLEGE EYE threat warning operations for U.S. aircrews conducting air operations over North Vietnam.

A USAFSS crewed EC-47P from Phu Cat AB, Vietnam in flight.

With the air war in Southeast Asia escalating, DoD added six RC-135 aircraft to the SAC inventory. Based at Kadena AB, Okinawa, and supported by USAFSS crews, the 6990th SS activated at Kadena AB, Okinawa on 15 July 1967 in support of the added RC-135s. The first USAFSS manned Combat Apple - RC-135 mission staged out of Kadena AB, Okinawa on 12 September 1967. During the Vietnam conflict, USAFSS personnel also served with distinction aboard the EC-47, supporting search and rescue operations for downed U.S. airmen.

With U.S. involvement in the Vietnam conflict increasing significantly, USAFSS took on the role as the central evaluating agency for USAF electronic warfare activities in 1967—the first major change in the command's mission since its inception.

By mid 1969, command manning authorizations totaled 28,637, the highest number in the history of the organization.

Post Vietnam Mission Changes

The redesignating of AFSCC as the Air Force Electronic Warfare Center (AFEWC) on 1 July 1975 gave USAFSS a greater role in the Air Force's expanding electronic warfare mission. Throughout the 1970's the command continued to furnish ERU support to tactical commanders and gained approval of its plan to offer direct support to Air Force Component commanders. The USAFSS further refined its direct support role during this time through the extensive participation in numerous military exercises.

AN FLR-9 of the 6917 ESG, Summer 1984.

Major General Doyle E. Larson, ESC's first commander.

The ESC Takes Shape

By the end of the 1970's, USAFSS had become thoroughly involved in electronic warfare. The command had first demonstrated this operational capability during the Tactical Air Command (TAC) sponsored exercise Blue Flag 79-1 at Hurlburt Field, Florida in late 1978. The ESC began to take shape on 1 February 1979, after the USAFSS transferred the operation and maintenance of its Telecommunications Center to the Air Force Communications Service (later called the Air Force Communications Command.) On 1 August 1979, the USAFSS was redesignated the ESC with Major General Doyle E. Larson as the commander. With this change, ESC assumed a broad responsibility for improving the Air Force's use of electronic warfare technology in combat. From an operational standpoint, ESC also gained more challenging and critical national missions, with the 6920th Electronic Security Group (ESG), Misawa AB, Japan starting Operation LADYLOVE in the early 1980s.

The ESC Matures

The ESC focused its attention for much of the 1980's on supporting warfighters and theater commanders. During this time, the command began to concentrate its efforts on carefully tailoring its products for use by operational commanders in military operations. In 1985, the command took over responsibility for computer security from the Air Force Computer Security Office at Gunter AFS, AL.

In Korea, ESC's 6903rd ESG underwent a major mission change in 1986. By year's end, the Korean Combat Operations Intelligence Center (KCOIC) had achieved initial operational capability. The KCOIC consolidated ESC, and other U.S. and Republic of Korea intelligence functions under one roof to better serve the operational needs of the theater commander. Also during 1986, ESC began an association with the USAF Space Command with the activation of the Headquarters Space Electronic Security Division at Peterson AFB, Colorado. That same year, ESC personnel began supporting USAFE COMPASS CALL operations staging from Sembach AB, Germany.

The 1980's witnessed the fruition of technologies that would foreshadow present day intelligence support. Systems like PARSEC and the Conventional Signals Upgrade became operational, changing profoundly the way command organizations carried out their rapidly expanding missions. These new modern, computer-based, state-of-the-art automated systems replaced those based on outdated technologies from the 1950's and earlier.

The ESC in JUST CAUSE & DESERT STORM
Ushers in a New Era

In December 1989, ESC field units, the ESC staff and the AFEWC played an on-the-scenes role in Panama, ensuring the success of Operation JUST CAUSE. As the 1980's drew to a close, the ESC had made its mark as a prime source of

Operations site of the 6948th Electronic Security Squadron (ESS), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, summer 1990.

intelligence products for the command's expanding list of customers.

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

As DESERT SHIELD gave way to DESERT STORM during the second half of January 1991, ESC personnel were engaged in key intelligence support roles both in the air and on the ground. The 6948th ESS operated from three different locations in Saudi Arabia and Turkey during the conflict, providing air commanders with valuable intelligence and communications support. The unparalleled success of U.S. and coalition forces in DESERT STORM ushered in the age of information warfare. Iraq's command and control system, killed with airpower several weeks before the ground war began, became a prime example of how information dominance was used in warfare. Within the now emerging doctrine of information warfare, it was clear that ESC forces played a large role in helping the U.S. to achieve operational supremacy over Iraqi forces during the war in the Persian Gulf.

The AFIC Formed

The ESC was redesignated AFIC on 1 October 1991. The new organization, commanded by Major General Gary W. O'Shaughnessy, consolidated, restructured and streamlined the functions of Air Force intelligence resources into a single command. AFIC formed by merging the personnel and missions of the Air Force Foreign Technology Center at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, the Air Special Activities Center, Fort Belvoir, VA. and elements of the Air Force Intelligence Agency, Washington D.C., and ESC into one command. AFIC provided direct intelligence support to national decision makers and field air component commanders. Support furnished by AFIC focused on the interrelated areas of intelligence, security, electronic combat, foreign technology, and treaty monitoring. During AFIC's first year, the new command established a strong foundation for meeting the changing intelligence needs of the warfighter.

An RC-135V RIVET JOINT aircraft in flight. AIA and its predecessor organizations have served aboard this venerable reconnaissance platform for over four decades.

The AIA—Pioneering Air Force INFORMATION OPERATIONS (IO)

The need to establish the AIA stemmed from the introduction of the objective Air Force—the one base, one boss concept authored by Air Force Chief of Staff General Merrill A. McPeak. Because of this a further restructuring of Air Force Intelligence beckoned, and AFIC was resdesignated as the AIA on 1 October 1993. Commanded by Major General Kenneth A. Minihan, the new organization reported directly to the USAF Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence. This move emphasized increased support to the warfighter. The Air Force Information Warfare Center (AFIWC) was established at Kelly AFB on 10 September 1993 by combining AFEWC with the securities functions from the Air Force Cryptologic Support Center. AFIWC's primary mission remains that of channeling all electronic battle field information toward the objective of gaining information dominance over any adversary. The AFIWC became a significant player in AIA activities.

During the 1990s, one significant fact became more prevalent than ever—U.S. military forces now operate in an information age, where the need for precise, instantaneous intelligence is increasing and expanding across the entire spectrum of military operations. Within today's framework of the USAF Global Presence strategy, the AIA serves as an

integral part of the presence component in the application of this principle. The agency and its supported units help the U.S. maintain a "virtual" advantage by providing battlespace forces with unique information. This helps the U.S. maintain global situational-based capabilities. The AIA plays a prime hour-to-hour, day-to-day role in helping maintain global awareness.

The new agency now supports customers from nearly every governmental department and agency, and all of the U.S. Armed Forces. The Agency plays an active role in supporting almost every military contingency operation in which U.S. armed forces are committed. AIA, today, a remarkably diverse organization defends the information highway, providing the best battle space information to the right customer—anywhere, anytime. Since the beginning of 1996, AIA has been taking steps to develop and become the leader in IO. With an emphasis on participating rather than just supporting combat operations, AIA is now moving boldly towards a new frontier. On AIA's horizon is an environment in which the Agency will play a central role by insuring that America's military forces achieve and maintain information superiority. This will become the prime objective in shaping future battlespace.

Clearly, national security events during the last half of the 1990s signaled the need for precise battlefield information. In response to national taskings, AIA found its assets and people being deployed to places like Bosnia Herzegovina, Southwest Asia, and Kosovo. The activation of the Air Force Information Warfare Battlelab in 1997 and the USAF approval in August 1998 of an Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) for IO Doctrine have shown that IO will continue to evolve and that it will be an integral and sustaining part of future US military operations. The emergence of Information Superiority as an Air Force Core Competency in the landmark 1996 *Global Engagement* publication ensured the products and services provided by AIA will mean the difference between success and failure for the warfighter. At the end of the 20th Century, AIA had become an essential part of US Aerospace Operations. The Agency's IO mission is rapidly becoming an indispensable ingredient in the overall mission of the Air Force.

IO in the 21st Century

Now in the 21st Century, AIA and its IO mission have fully integrated with ACC to become an essential part of US Aerospace Operations. The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., signaled the absolute necessity for the U. S. to have an IO capability. This was evident during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan in 2001. The Agency's mission is an indispensable element in the mission of the USAF. It is also the one
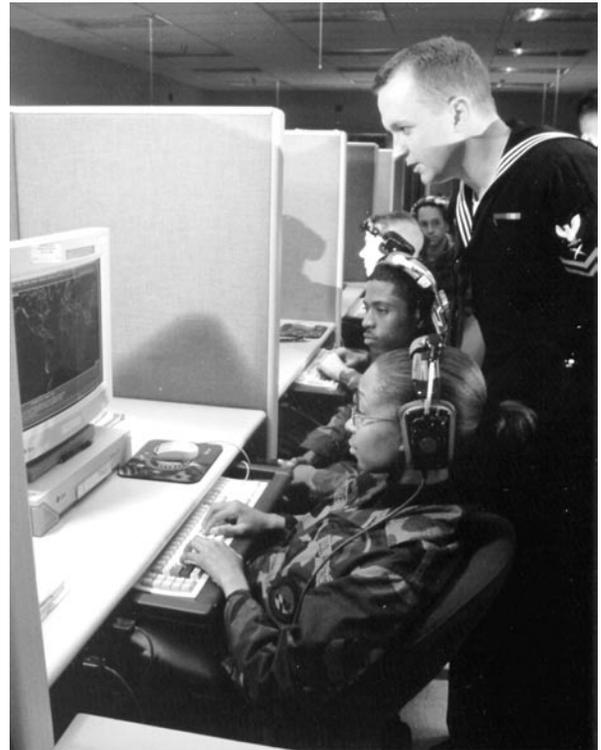
AIA personnel work side-by-side with the other services. Members of the 93rd IS conduct intelligence collection operations at the Medina Regional SIGINT Operations Center--1998.

indispensable element that will ensure the success of any military operation undertaken by the United States.

For 55 years, AIA's personnel and their predecessors have withstood each challenge that confronted them. As recent events in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM have shown, air and space power and the employment of precision guided munitions, driven by an unparalleled, all-encompassing IO capability, have changed the manner in which modern warfare is conducted.

In the new century, the people of AIA are collecting, controlling, defending and exploiting information. These efforts have enabled Agency people to meet the challenge of aerospace information superiority, the continuance of which is crucial to our helping shape and maintain-to our advantage-the future battlespace. The 21st Century is taking shape as the age of information and space. AIA, its people and its capabilities continue to be called upon to make the difference in securing a successful completion of present and future US national security challenges.