

6910th SECURITY GROUP

LINEAGE

STATIONS

Brooks AFB, TX, 23 May 1951-27 Jul 1951
Wiesbaden, Germany

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

6910TH SCTYG AFOUA 1 FEB 70 - 1 MAR 71

The 6910 SG moved from Darmstadt to Augsburg in Germany. 1972

The USAFSS gained its first two units above squadron level, the 6910th Security Group (SG) at Brooks AFB, Tex., on 23 May and the 6920 SG on 1 September at Johnson AB, Japan. The 6910th moved to Germany later in July with its headquarters stationed at Wiesbaden and group operations stationed at Darmstadt. 1951

Yet another era in USAFSS mission operations ended on 30 June when the 6910 SG at Augsburg, Germany, and the 6994 SS at Ubon, AFS, Thailand, inactivated. The 6910 SG had served as the command's main operator in Europe since December 1953. The 6940 SS played a similar role for USAFSS in Vietnam during the war. At one time, the 6994 SS and its

detachments operated the mission equipment on some 48 EC-47 aircraft in South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. 1974

6910TM SECURITY GROUP ACTIVATED

With war raging in Korea and threats of a Soviet invasion seemingly looming in West Germany, Air Force Security Service expedited the expansion of its signals intelligence capabilities in Europe and the Far East. On 23 May 1951, USAFSS activated the 6910th Security Group at Brooks AFB, Texas—the command's first operational group-level organization.⁴⁴ Struggling to staff the 6910th and to put together a management plan for USAFSS operations in Europe, the command rushed the 6910th SG to Germany.

On 28 Jul '51, Colonel Mawy, Major Chester A. Murgatroyd, Capt. Raymond W. Pahutka and I took the 6910/h to Wiesbaden, which at that time -was the headquarters of USAFE. The city and its bases were severely overcrowded and it was necessary to split the group, with Headquarters at # 7 Beethovenstrasse in Wiesbaden and Operations at Darmstadt. The group was then deactivated at Brooks and reactivated at Wiesbaden, with an Operating Location at Darmstadt. Carlton recalled the good and bad aspects of Wiesbaden circa 1951.

The headquarters building in Wiesbaden was a fabulous old three-story mansion located near downtown. It looked like a movie set, with a cathedral entry, a marble fireplace, a grand staircase and a sunken bathtub. The city itself would make everyone's list of the best places. It had been a resort for centuries and had sustained very little war damage. The location is excellent, with swift access to the rest of central Europe.

It would have been a great assignment except for the shortage of the most basic military facilities and services. We had no vehicles and no military bus service. Supplies of any kind were rare and we mostly bought our own. Airmen were initially billeted at Camp Fieri, a scruffy little artillery Kaserne in the boondocks. It had little to recommend it, although I do not recall the food being as bad as other correspondents have reported. Later, we moved to Lindsey Air Station, which was closer to work but not much of an improvement otherwise.

The lack of family housing for married 6910th personnel also posed severe problems.

Many new arrivals had to accept remote family quarters in liavaria and see their families via weekend flights known as Hubby Hops. Remotely-housed wives were forbidden to enter Wiesbaden but it was rumored that a wife or two were hanging around the BOQ posing as Schatzies [girlfriends], surely the first time for that particular deception.

The 6910th Security Group Headquarters managed the intelligence production cycle in Wiesbaden while its analysts carried out the group's traffic exploitation mission in Darmstadt. According to Carlton, the 6910th activities at multiple locations created much confusion back at USAFSS Headquarters in Texas.

6910th SG—Retroactive Duty Assignments

The transfer of the 6910th Security Group from Texas to Germany happened with such haste that original orders had to be cancelled. Finally, the group commander and his staff were appropriately designated in special orders dated 10 September 1951.

The orders stated that the following USAF personnel, this headquarters and station, having reported to the 6910" SG in accordance with competent authority are assigned duty on the effective date indicated.

6910th Security Group Assignments— 1951

<i>Name</i>	<i>Eff. Date</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Duty</i>
<i>Col. Dabney H. Maury</i>	<i>28Jul51</i>	<i>Command</i>	<i>Commanding Officer</i>
<i>Maj. Chester A. Murgatroyd</i>	<i>28Jul51</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Comm Officer</i>
<i>Capt. Raymond W. Pahutka</i>	<i>28Jul51</i>	<i>Vtateriel</i>	<i>Air Installations Off.</i>
<i>MSgt. William E. Carlton Jr.</i>	<i>28Jul51</i>	<i>Adjutant</i>	<i>Sgt. Major</i>
<i>Lt. Col. Merle C. Brown</i>	<i>3 Aug51</i>	<i>Command</i>	<i>Deputy Commander</i>
<i>2nd Lt. Lawrence J. Johnson</i>	<i>7Aug51</i>	<i>Adjutant</i>	<i>Adjutant</i>
<i>Capt. Thomas D. Toyn</i>	<i>14Aug51</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Assistant Comms Off.</i>
<i>1st Lt. Burton A. Peterson</i>	<i>!4Aug51</i>	<i>Command</i>	<i>Unit Officer/Scry Off.</i>
<i>1st Lt. William E. Glass</i>	<i>14Aug_51</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Air Intel Officer</i>
<i>WOJG John T. Danforth</i>	<i>14Aug_51</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Comm Supt Officer</i>
<i>Maj. Ralph J. McCartney</i>	<i>15Aug_51</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Operations Officer</i>
<i>Cpl. Herbert E. Blanton Jr.</i>	<i>20Aug51</i>	<i>Adjutant</i>	<i>APR Clerk</i>
<i>1st Lt. Robert E. Duvall</i>	<i>27Aug51</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Intel Eval Officer</i>
<i>Capt. James L. Monahan</i>	<i>5 Sept 51</i>	<i>Personnel</i>	<i>Personnel Officer</i>
<i>TSgt. Arthur H. Cherry Jr.</i>	<i>5 Sept 51</i>	<i>Personnel</i>	<i>Personnel Supervisor</i>

Col. Maury designated Lt. Peterson the group's Class A Finance Officer for the purpose of paying officers and airmen assigned to the 6910th SG at Wiesbaden, Germany. Officers Murgatroyd, Toyn, Glass, Danforth, McCartney and DuVall were in Operations at Darmstadt; the remainder were based with headquarters at Wiesbaden. All of the USAFSS squadrons in Europe reported to Col. Maury (6910th SG Commander); see organization chart on the next page.

6910th Scry Gp Wiesbaden, Germany (HQ) Darmstadt, Germany (Operations) 1951-53

When the 6910th deployed to Germany in 1951, the entire organization—headquarters and operations—was to be located at Wiesbaden, but lack of adequate space in Wiesbaden caused a change of plans. As explained by Bill Carlton, who helped create the original plan, a cadre of 2nd RSM analysts were to be transferred from Darmstadt to Wiesbaden, forming the nucleus of 6910 Operations. a severe space crunch in Wiesbaden resulted in splitting the 6910th into Group Headquarters in Wiesbaden and 6910th Operations colocated with the 2"d RSM at Ernst Ludwig Kaserne in Darmstadt. The cadre of 2nd RSM analysts transferred in place to the 6910th SG, and new 6910th analysts were diverted from Wiesbaden to Darmstadt.*

Likewise, the 6910th SG Headquarters Squadron Section was activated at Darmstadt instead of Wiesbaden since the 6910th operational mission and most of its personnel were being assigned to Darmstadt. Maj. Louis R. Lammie, who had been commander of the USAFSS HQ Squadron Section at Brooks AFB, became commander of the 6910th HQ Sqdn Section at Darmstadt. Retired USAFSS Col. Duane E. Russell discussed 6910th Darmstadt Operations in 1999.

As / recall, I hit Wiesbaden with Copt. Floyd Cross and Lt. Bill Roche in March-April 1952. There, they told us to go to Darmstadt. Wiesbaden was the HQ, with Dabney Maury, and Darmstadt was the second-echelon processing, with Maj. McCartney as the Ops Chief. Maj. Russell Smith was the assistant. Various of us were the T/A [traffic analysis] officers, with me assigned to the voice problem, under Capt. Bob Duvall.

We were cohabitants with the 2nd RSM, and it was quite a learning process for all of us. Col. Dick Small, Maj. Glen Pennywitt, and others helped make our time productive, and enjoyable. One other item. As I began my tasks at Darmstadt, as a new R/T [radiophone] officer, I was led into a room where there were bales of paper strewn around. It was copies of handwritten traffic—no Cyrillic typewriters and no tapes. For weeks I waded through all this, with few fundamentals other than my personal logic to aid me.

Believe it when I say I was able to pull out some specific targets, and they were given to me to work and process. Don't believe I should identify the targets. I did go to the 2 RSM, and spend time with the R/T operators to learn Iht'lr skills. This helped me a great deal, and I relied on it a lot later on in the airborne program. [Later, Col. Duan E Russell was revered for his contributions to the USAFSS airborne reconnaissance program.]

In A philosophy inherited from the Army Security Agency, Uttoiul echelon analysis in the 6910th Security Group (and the 6920 SG in Japan) in the early 1950's was the domain of Intelligence officers, assisted by enlisted analysts. Officers continued to head individual sections within second echelon jamming centers, but USAFSS NCO's and airmen soon became the dominant work force, not only in traffic exploitation but throughout operations.

When the unit was forced to give up its facilities in Wiesbaden, Korious consideration was given to relocating the 6910th Security (Iroup to France, as Bill Carlton recalls.

In early 1953, Col. Maury returned to the United States and retirement, replaced by Col. Robert H. Augustinus as 6910 Security Group Commander.

6910th and "Euro Gehlen"

Buro Gehlen was an intelligence apparatus inherited from the Bundeswehr of World War II.47 Maj. Gen. Reinhardt Gehlen, former head of German military intelligence on the Eastern Front, thoughtfully brought his complete files with him when he surrendered to the American Army. Former 6910th Security Group Russian linguist Paul Garrett worked covertly with Gen. Gehlen's group during the early 1950's. In 2002, he reminisced about his 6910th "covert analysis work."

Completing a 12-month Russian course (R-12-23) at the Army Language School in Monterey just before Christmas 1951, Garrett's class received intercept training at Brooks AFB. In April 1952, he reported to the 6910th Security Group where he became a traffic analyst. He moved with the 6910th to Landsberg in 1953. Here's Paul's recollection of 6910th collaborative efforts with "Biuro Gehlen."

My time in USAFSS was spent initially in T/A [traffic analysis], with responsibility first for the East German sector (RABS203), then the USSR, and finally in a rather catchall operation called "R&D" [Research and Development]. The latter gave me a free rein to do whatever in the way of intelligence gathering on the Soviet AOB [air order of battle] and capability. During the time I was in T/A and working on East Germany, I had occasion to liaise closely with Euro Gehlen, the sub rosa, unofficial precursor to the West German Bundesnachrichtendienst [BND—Foreign Intelligence Service].

As you will recall, the post WWII East and West German governments were not allowed a Bundeswehr [armed forces], Luftwaffe or Bundesnachrichtendienst for a number of years after 1945, but General Gehlen, formerly head of intelligence for the Bundeswehr in WW II, had accumulated a massive amount of data on Soviet military structure and cipher systems. Most of his information had come about in the course of interrogating thousands of the three million Soviet prisoners who had surrendered to the invading German army. He was also instrumental in forming Felhherrenost (Enemy Army East under General Vlasov) made up of volunteers from the three million POW's who had their own axe to grind with the Soviets. They, poor souls, including Vlasov, eventually came to a sticky end at the hands of their Soviet captors!

In any case, after the war when the Nurnberg investigations were underway, the sniffers came calling on Gehlen and arrested him as an accessory to sundry war crimes. The crafty and highly intelligent Gehlen, had taken steps to secure his future by burying trunk loads of documents related to the Soviet military. By this time the Allies had finally awakened to the Soviet threat and they not only quite happily awarded Gehlen a dispensation, but decided as well to fund him in setting up a "private" intelligence operation dubbed "Euro Gehlen" in order to circumvent the restriction on an official government intelligence agency.

6910 SG RELOCATES TO LANDSBERG

The 6910th Security Group represented HQ USAFSS wherever the command had a special intelligence interest in Europe. As the group's Sgt. Major, Sergeant Carlton was involved extensively in coordinating activities with operating locations that the group maintained in Europe in the 1951-1953 period. In 2000, Bill Carlton recalled supporting operating locations (OL's) at Darmstadt, Rhein-Main, Landsberg, Bremerhaven and Ramstein, Germany; South Ruislip, England; Paris, France; and Rabat, Morocco. Some of the OL's served as USAFSS Special Security Offices (SSO's) at major Air Force commands. In March 1953, the 6910th sent Sgt. Carlton on TDY to OL-Landsberg to coordinate the transfer of "several tons of classified documents" to Landsberg from OL-Darmstadt. The 6910th's traffic processing function was being transferred from Darmstadt to Landsberg.

Two months later (16 May 1953), as part of a relocation of the 6910th Security Group from Wiesbaden, the unit transferred 51 assigned personnel to Operating Location, 6910th SG at Landsberg—an intermediate step in moving HQ 6910th SG to Landsberg.⁴⁸ In the same special

orders, the 6910th SG attached thirteen officers and airmen who were on permanent duty with USAFSS SSO, USAFE, Wiesbaden, to HQ USAFE. With these actions, HQ 6910th Security Group completed the move from Wiesbaden to Landsberg.

Benefiting from the Blue Note's success, Ernst Ludwig Kaserne's non-appropriated morale, welfare and recreation fund was overflowing. When word filtered down the chain of command that the 6910th Security Group was leaving, the post commander let it be known that the MWR fund was a post resource—to be left in place when the 6910 departed.

Maj. Lammie's solution was to spend down the fund on amenities for his airmen before relocating to Landsberg. Then immediately before leaving Ludwig Kaserne, he honored his airmen with "one hell of a going-away party" that 6910th alumni still discuss at reunions. Former traffic analyst Jess Myers recalled the "Auf Weidersehen Party" in 2000.

Major Lammie had the troops fall-in on the base ramp for inspection. Then he had the first sergeant call everyone to attention and then had the group dismissed. We turned around to see the huge hangar open up with about the biggest layout we have ever seen. Food, drink, and entertainment from Munich. I know that I was surprised and enjoyed being a member of this group. Needless to say that a lot of new equipment was installed in our barracks, and a major load of sports goods were provided to our group. It was a wonderful event, and we did not forget it soon.

Former IBM Tabulator mechanic Hugh Windsor added his comments on the party. I remember that party well. What a blast. At one time, if my memory serves me well, there were guys out on the hangar floor who were "prostiting" by smashing their beer steins together after a short run toward each other. This had to be stopped since the supply of steins was rapidly diminishing. What fun we feckless "Flieger" were having.

Moving to Landsberg with the 6910th Security Group, Maj. Lammie kept group morale high in Landsberg. Maj. Joseph Roberts became the HQ Squadron Section commander when Lammie rotated back to HQ USAFSS.

On 3 October 1953, the 6910th Headquarters, Landsberg, transferred in-place 42 officers and airmen, including Col. Evans and Maj. Evdokimoff, to the 6900th SW.

Col. Evans held the title of Wing Chief of Staff. Annette Jones Carlton became the 6900th Wing Commander's secretary. The remaining elements of the 6910th SG—essentially 6910th Operations—continued the group's analysis mission at Landsberg. Citing a "number of firsts in the Security Service record book," Bill Carlton showed his pride in the 6910th Security Group.

It was the first unit larger than a squadron, the first to command all USAFSS activities in an overseas theater, the first overseas unit with civilian personnel, the first to conduct general inspections of subordinate units and the first to host an overseas wedding of USAFSS personnel. It was a great outfit, and it did some things that couldn't be done and did them very well indeed. Sgt. Major William Carlton and wife Annette departed the 6900th SW at Landsberg in June 1954, bound for new assignments with HQ USAFSS at Kelly AFB. In 1956, Sgt. Carlton

transferred to the AF Office of Special Investigations while Annette became a mother and housewife. Promoted to Warrant Officer, Carlton returned to USAFSS in 1967, commanding the 6993m Security Squadron—headquartered at Kelly AFB with Operations at the Medina Annex, Lackland AFB, Texas. Retiring as a CWO-4 in 1969, Bill and Annette Carlton currently reside in San Antonio.

*6910th Security Group
Landsberg, Germany
1953-1956*

USAFSS DETACHMENT, WASSERKUPPE

In 1953, the 6910th Security Group activated Flight A, 6910th SG ill Wasserkuppe, Germany. Flight A was colocated with an air traffic control and warning unit that monitored air traffic hi the southern air corridor from West Germany to Berlin. Limited available data suggest that the subordination of the detachment changed multiple times in 1954—Flight B, 2nd RSM, Flight O, 12th RSM and finally Detachment 3, 85th RSM. When the 6910th Radio Group Mobile was activated at Sembach in September 1956, the Wasserkuppe detachment became Det 3, 6910th RGM. (The 6910th Security Group had been deactivated at Landsberg.)

Soon after USAFSS began operations at Wasserkuppe, Les Layman, a personnel clerk, traveled up the mountain to resolve some personnel issues of assigned USAFSS personnel. He discussed Wasserkuppe with the author in 2001 and 2006.

Snow was shoulder deep on the side of the road to the weather station. I drove an enclosed jeep and it was colder than the dickens. I -was told that it snowed continuously from early November to early April. The building for the new site was not completed, so they were headquartered in the same building as the German weather station. The walls were extremely thin, and when classified material -was discussed, they had to go outside.

A young 2d Lt. was in charge, and all the classified material, including the one time crypto pads, was in a locked briefcase attached by a small chain and handcuffed to the Lt. 's left -wrist, - which he said he wore 24/7. They had no safe. They did have a dedicated teletype machine hooked directly to the site at 2d RSM (Darmstadt) and were using crypto one-time pads to communicate with— which then required a thorough burning.

The 85th reported to the 6910th Security Group at Landsberg. The 85th RSM unit designator was deactivated on 8 May 1955, replaced by the 6914th Radio Squadron Mobile. As pointed out by Robinson, it was about this time that the squadron moved its operations compound to a new area. A new site was constructed on the top of a hill just above the village of Grunstadt am Weinstrasse. By then we were the 6914th RSM.

6910 RGM—SEMBACH

Activated on 1 September 1956, the 6910th Radio Group Mobile assumed the mission and resources of the 6914th. The 6910th RGM conducted intercept and first echelon analysis and reporting and assumed control of existing detachments in Berlin, Kassel, Wasserkuppe, Landshut, Hof and Wiesbaden (Camp Fieri). The 6912th RSM at Bingen also reported to the 6910th RGM, and the detachment in Linz, Austria, was deactivated in 1957. In August 1959, the 6910th RGM relocated its van-housed intercept and processing equipment from Griinstadt, colocating operations with headquarters on Sembach Air Base. The group set up its operations vans in an area next to the flight line. The 6910th moved from Sembach to Darmstadt in 1961. Chris Jones, a former 6910th Security Group Morse intercept operator-DF operator, remembers the move well.

6910TM OPERATIONS—LANDSBERG

Relocating to Landsberg, the second echelon processing element of the 6910th Security Group continued analyzing and reporting traffic intercepted by the group's subordinate squadrons—the 6911th, 6912th, 6913th and 6914th RSM's. After completing traffic analysis school at Brooks AFB, Ray M. Thompson reported for duty with the 6910th at Landsberg in May 1953, arriving about the same time that the group's Operations Division arrived from Darmstadt. Thompson worked in the civilian air section headed by First Lt. Hector Quintanilla Jr.

Our CO was 1st Lt. Hector Quintanilla Jr.

Elevating the intercept squadrons at Sembach/Grunstadt (6910th) and Darmstadt (6911th) to group-level sites was in line with expanding and realigning the USAFSS mission in Europe.

On 15 May 1961, the 6910th RGM relocated from Sembach to Darmstadt. Robert Corey, a former operator, discussed the move in 1999. We moved into a brand new building from an old wooden place at Sembach. I was on Dog trick, and the new commander (Dorothy) [last name forgotten] had brought her dog, a small cocker spaniel (female). At that time we had lost our great guard dog, a German Shepherd, and one of the AP's [air policemen] was going to get a replacement. Well, he came back with a small terrier mix, and guess what, he made friends with the Captain's dog and almost every shift, we had to throw water on both of them.

Those were the early days. In fact, at Sembach we had trailers for a while. They were nice to work in—hot! hot!. We moved to Darmstadt and found a nice air-conditioned building with all of the bells and whistles. We were the first ones in the new building, and it was at the time that was most active.

We had the Cuban Missile crisis and the Berlin Wall. The antennae field where we had our beer bust opened up and revealed a nice set of NIKES (not the ones you wear), and all of the dependents were given IBM tracking cards. I was on duty that day, and I could not leave until I was relieved. In the morning coming to work the Army had all sorts of weapons out; all I had was my headsets!!!

With the arrival of the 6910th RGM at Darmstadt, the 6911th RGM was deactivated, with its resources integrated into the 6910. As depicted in the org chart below, the 6901st Special Comm Group reported directly to Headquarters USAFSS. The 6910 ' RGM and its subordinate units had a dual chain of command. Technically, they answered to the 6901st SCG while being under administrative command of the European Security Region.

6910 SCTY GP RELOCATES TO AUGSBURG

On 10 June 1972,¹⁰⁷ the 6910th Security Group completed its move from Darmstadt to Augsburg, Bavaria—approximately 70 Km northwest of Munich. The relocation began in 1971 with activation of OL-CC, 6910th SG in Augsburg. Col. John L. Kelly II, commander of the 6910th, set up his group headquarters and billeting at Sheridan Kaserne, one of five U.S. Army posts in Augsburg; the other four were: Gablingen Kaserne, Flak Kaserne, the Quartermaster Supply Center and Reese Barracks. All of the posts were former WW II Bundeswehr camps. The 6910th headquarters was colocated at Sheridan Kaserne with a 63rd Armored Regiment tank battalion. Army Security Agency and Naval Security Group field units also had their headquarters and billets at Sheridan.

Field Station Augsburg

Field Station Augsburg, which ASA activated on Gablingen Kaserne north of Augsburg in 1970, became home to 6910th Operations. ASA, USAFSS and NSG worked side-by-side at FSA, sharing the Army's AN/FLR-9 antenna system that became operational in 1970. In 2006, the author discussed 6910th Augsburg operations with former commander Col. Kelly, who retired from USAFSS in 1975.

6910 SG/AUGSBURG DEACTIVATED

As part of a major reorganization in 1974,¹⁰⁸ USAFSS deactivated the 6910th Security Group on 30 June. Personnel with sufficient time for a follow-on assignment were reassigned to other USAFSS units in Europe. Bob Blackmon was reassigned to the 6917th Security Group in Italy. Only spent about 6 months with the unit prior to it closing, I worked at the Keller as a bartender and remember several good card games in the back room. The beer was great and I killed lots of brain cells but enjoyed the short time I spent there. I went to sunny San Vito when the unit closed.

Lenny Mingroni provides a good summary regarding the dispersal of 6910th personnel when the group was deactivated.

After the Air Force unit closed operations, I can say for the Baker Flight people: some retired, rotated stateside, off to Turkey, off to Crete, off to England, off to Italy.

A well placed source told the author that a factor in ceasing 6910th activities at Augsburg was that Gen. Galligan was tired of fighting the local Army support command bureaucracy. With the deactivation of the 6910th Security Group, two of its subordinate units in Germany, 6912th and 6913th Security Squadrons, reported directly to USAFSS Headquarters. The 6911th Security Squadron (M) reported to newly activated 6955th Security Group in Texas. The USAFSS org chart for Germany-based units at the end of 1974 follows.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 28 Nov 2011

Updated:

Sources