

# **112<sup>th</sup> CYBERSPACE OPERATIONS SQUADRON**

## **MISSION**

## **LINEAGE**

112th Cyberspace Operations Squadron

## **STATIONS**

Horsham AGS, PA

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

111<sup>th</sup> Operations Group

## **COMMANDERS**

## **HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

HORSHAM AIR GUARD STATION, Pa. -- If the 111th Attack Wing's remotely-piloted aircraft (RPA) operation is the tip of the spear, then the Wing's 112th Cyberspace Operations Squadron here will be the shield. Baptized with an amalgam of diligence, aptitude and skill, the 112th COS is slated to soon become a principal force in active cyber defense for the State, Air National Guard and Department of Defense.

Created to perform against attacks that could threaten military operations, including flying missions, the 112th COS was generated to ensure timely communication that is free from disruption, interference or interception.

"The term 'freedom of maneuver' applies very much in cyber," said Pa. Air Guardsman Capt. Shaun Swenson, 112th COS mission protection team lead. "For example, look at our [remotely-piloted aircraft] unit; everything they're doing is being done through networks to remotely control and pilot that aircraft."

In 2006, a provisional-status Air Force Cyber Command was created. Two year later, it was announced that the command would be brought into permanent activation. On June 23, 2009, the Secretary of Defense directed the Commander of U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) to establish U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM). Since the spring of 2016, the 112th COS has been a piecemeal enterprise as it obtains and trains apt Airmen. It is scheduled to go live as one of the 12 current cyber squadrons in the Air National Guard.

While cyber units have various functions, the 112th COS serves the Department of Defense information network and will be focused on Air Force defensive support in the U.S. and other countries. But being an Air National Guard COS asset, they play a dual role. A state's governor may task a National Guard adjutant general to deploy that state's COS to aid civilian sector emergencies. For Pennsylvania, this means that the 112th COS could run defense on one of 16 critical infrastructure sectors.

Swenson said regarding the federal mission, "The COS here is basically a quick-reaction force to augment cyber defense personnel in active-duty units through a few different measures by assessing the cyber environment for vulnerabilities." He continued by explaining how the 112th COS fits into the state mission.

"For state agencies that have a cyber incident or hacking incident where someone gets access into their system, the COS could be tasked by the governor to assess those entities and ensure their posture is secure from further attacks."

The COS is composed of a leadership element plus five distinct teams, said Lt. Col. Claudia Malone, 112th COS and 111th Mission Support Group commander. "We have cyber threat emulation; mission protection; Hunt - also known as [defensive cyber infiltration]; the support element and cyber readiness." So, although the pieces of the COS are distinct, it is their collaboration that fortifies them.

Malone, who also served as the conversion officer for the new squadron, stated, "We have such diversity in this squadron in regard to experience, training, knowledge and [Air Force Specialty Codes]. It's exciting for me to see the collaboration and the cross talk among these experts."

As the DOD and civilian sector become increasingly tethered to networks for day-to-day operations, so does the need for cyber sentries.

"As we're more and more dependent on information-centric communications and activities, the cyber aspect of that becomes more and more important," said Swenson, who is also a civilian cyber security director. "Our technology advantage also becomes a weakness in the sense that we have such a dependency on it. So, the COS helps mission partners by further enhancing their defensive posture."

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Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.