

## 31 COMBAT COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON



### **MISSION**

31st CCS provides combat-ready forces for worldwide deployment of communications, computer and weather systems to support wartime and contingency taskings. The tactical communications equipment include telephone switching centers, message traffic centers, network systems control facilities, wideband radio systems, satellite terminals and weather systems. In addition to equipment, the 31st CCS maintains the support assets, including vehicles, tents, power generators and environmental control units necessary to support 200 deployed personnel and equipment in an austere environment for extended periods of time.

### **LINEAGE**

31 Communications Squadron, Command constituted and activated, 7 Dec 1959  
Organized, 1 Feb 1960  
Inactivated, 1 Oct 1970  
Disbanded, 15 Jun 1983  
Reconstituted and redesignated 31 Combat Communications Squadron, 15 Jul 1988  
Activated, 22 Jul 1988

### **STATIONS**

Offutt AFB, NE  
Tinker AFB, OK, 22 Jul 1988

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Strategic Air Command  
1 Communications (later, 1 Aerospace Communications) Group, Command, 1 Feb 1960

3 Combat Communications Group, 22 Jul 1988

### **COMMANDERS**

Capt Robert L. Altman, 29 Sep 1988

Maj John Patricola, #2002

Lt Col William Uhrig, 2009

Lt Col Jeffery Katzman, 2012-2013

Cpt Christopher Abbot, 2013

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

#### **Campaign Streamers**

#### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

#### **Decorations**

Meritorious Unit Award

1 Jun 2008-31 May 2009

#### **Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards**

1 Jul 1965-30 Jun 1967

1 Jul 1967-30 Jun 1969

1 Jul 1969-30 Jun 1970

1 May 1990-30 Apr 1992

1 Apr 1992-31 Mar 1994

1 Apr-31 Dec 1994

1 Jan 1995-31 May 1996

1 Jun 1996-31 May 1997

1 Jun 1999-31 May 2001

1 Jun 2001-31 May 2002

### **EMBLEM**



31 Communications Squadron, Command emblem: The emblem is symbolic of the squadron and its mission. The telephone and radio tower represent the two major professions within the organization and combined they reflect the support provided by the unit. The lightning bolts signify the constant operational accuracy maintained by the unit and the constant progress toward the future by the modernization of communications equipment.

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

The 30th Communications Squadron mission was to provide communications to Headquarters Strategic Air Command (HQ SAC)

Early in 1948, the 30th Communications Squadron assumed control of the base telephone exchange and an air/ground radio station. At the same time, it took control of radio teletype and point-to-point manual Morse Code operations at McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey.

In November 1948, Headquarters Strategic Air Command (SAC) moved to Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska from Andrews Field. The move included the 30th Communications Squadron which ended its duties at Andrews Field and at McGuire AFB. At the time, the squadron had 5 officers and 138 enlisted personnel.

At Offutt AFB, the squadron took on the task of furnishing telephone, teletype, and radio support for both SAC and the base. It organized into three operational units, these being: telephone, communications center, and radio operations. Some squadron personnel were on detached duty at Mead/Elkhorn, NE. where Radio Operations was established by 1950. The detachment worked out of two old fire stations. One was used as a receiver site and the other as the transmitter site. They were separated by several miles. Equipment consisted of SP600 receivers and BC610 transmitters and AN/TRC keying lines between Mead and Offutt. When the detachment moved to Elkhorn to the new GLOBECOMM Building, the detachment used Collins R388 receivers and one SOCS position where the detachment used a new single side band (SSB) receiver (transceiver).

Also, when the detachment moved to Elkhorn, it used microwave instead of ANTRC keying lines".

The facilities were primitive by today's standards. The telephone exchange was manual rather than automated. The communications center had only three teletype circuits and used slow manual encryption methods. The radio equipment used was obsolete and used primarily for Morse Code operations. Most of these systems were located with HQ SAC which occupied buildings on the north side of the base.

By January 1952, the duties of the 30th Communications Squadron had expanded to include: tactical telephone systems, interbase communications center facilities, cryptographic facilities, air/ground Morse Code and voice communications, point-to-point manual Morse Code and radio/teletype communications, and telephoto facilities. Its personnel had increased to 16 officers and 369 enlisted.

In April 1952, the squadron participated in the first of what later became a series of local flood control efforts. It furnished manpower to assist in sandbagging dikes to contain the Missouri River between Omaha, Ne. and Council Bluffs, Ia.

By June 1952, voice came into use on air/ground systems replacing manual Morse Code systems. The Elkhorn receiver site became a detachment of the 30th Communications Squadron. The SACCOMNET now terminated 45 circuits at Offutt AFB and used 100wpm teletype equipment.

In January of 1957, the squadron's communications center, telephone exchange, and single sideband voice radio became operational in the new HQ SAC underground Control Center. By November, the closed circuit television system had been installed and placed into operation in the underground center. This was the first closed circuit television system within the Air Force.

By late 1959, the 30th Communications Squadron had grown to four times its size of 1948. It now had 28 officers, 546 enlisted, and 16 civilians.

On February 1, 1960, the 1st Communications Group-Command was organized. The 30th Communications Squadron was assigned to the group and assumed its original role as a communications center squadron. The 31st Communications Squadron was organized to assume the telephone and maintenance responsibilities from the old 30th Communications Squadron. The 32nd Communications Squadron was organized to assume radio and television responsibilities from the old 30th Communications Squadron. The 32nd had its headquarters at Elkhorn with detachments at Hooper and Offutt.

The 30th Communications Squadron and its derivative 31st and 32nd were inactivated October 1, 1970. Any remaining functions of the squadron from its early days would eventually be absorbed into what became the 1st Aerospace Information Systems Wing.

The 31st CCS deployed to Haiti in September of 1994 as part of Joint Task Force 190 in support of Operation Uphold Democracy to provide initial air traffic services and communications to

employing forces. Established and maintained command and control voice, data and messaging circuits with superb reliability, and interfaced their tactical equipment with commercial satellite communications links enabling connectivity with National Command Authorities in the U.S.

In April 1995, the 31<sup>st</sup> CCS was tasked to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency in extricating victims from the bombed Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The squadron provided manpower and life support equipment for around-the-clock recovery efforts.

1997, the squadron was the lead Air Force communications element for Exercise Roving Sands, the largest exercise in the continental United States; and Exercise Bright Star, the largest multinational exercise in Southwest Asia. The squadron deployed 89 people and seven major systems to Egypt to provide all base-level communications support at Cairo West Air Base, the aerial port of debarkation for 7,000 exercise participants and the primary airfield for coalition air operations.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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#### Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit yearbook. *Tinker AFB, OK, Vol 4, 2002 Yearbook*. 2002.