



FACT SHEET

56TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS INTELLIGENCE SQUADRON U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet

Mission

The 56th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron conducts intelligence operations for the 27th Special Operations Wing and United States Special Operations Command components; providing operational intelligence to eight flying squadrons; and executing Mission Intelligence Coordination (MIC) and Processing, Exploitation and Dissemination (PED) operations for Special Operations RPAs worldwide. The squadron also provides oversight of the wing Sensitive Compartmented Information program, supports the wing Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection program and manages the wing's intelligence personnel, creating a highly skilled, flexible and qualified intelligence force.



Background

Born in May 1987, during the height of the Cold War, as the 7456th Tactical Intelligence Squadron, the unit was the United States Air Forces in Europe's Combat Operations Intelligence Center. It was responsible for the maintenance of national level data bases on airfield facilities and ground based air defense systems in Eastern Europe. It was also responsible for the identification of communication paths and exploitable weaknesses. The unit developed the Rapid Targeting Capability Europe concept, whereby the rapid turnaround of intelligence resulted in aircraft on target in a timely manner. This concept was the backbone of Operation DESERT STORM air operations over Iraq in 1991. The unit also operated a facility that housed a super computer mainframe, multiple message handlers, over 200 special intelligence communications circuits, and over 30 separate, standalone computer systems and networks.

After being deactivated at the end of the Cold War, the unit was reactivated as the 56th Intelligence Squadron in July of 2010, in the 23rd Air Force of the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), and was based at Cannon AFB, NM. Its mission was to execute intelligence operations for Special Operations RPAs. After it's redesignation as the 56th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron in May 2012, and it's realignment under the 27th Special Operations Wing, AFSOC; the unit became the only intelligence squadron of its kind in the United States Air Force. The unit now has the unique mission of executing intelligence operations for Special Operations RPAs; and providing operational intelligence to the aircrews of the 27th Special Operations Wing. Since reactivation, the unit has supported Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and NEW DAWN in Iraq, as well as Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan.

Lineage

Designated as 7456 Tactical Intelligence Squadron, and activated on 1 May 1987. Inactivated on 1 Oct 1991. Redesignated as 56 Intelligence Squadron on 8 June 2010. Activated on 29 July 2010. Redesignated as the 56th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron on 1 May 2012.

Assignments

7455 Tactical Intelligence Wing, 1 May 1987-1 Oct 1991. Twenty-Third Air Force (Air Force Special Operations Forces), 29 Jul 2010-30 Apr 2012. 27th Special Operations Wing, 1 May 2012-.

Stations

Ramstein AB, Germany, 1 May 1987-1 Oct 1991. Cannon AFB, NM, 29 Jul 2010-.

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards: 1 May 1987-30 Apr 1989; 1 Jul 1988-30 Jun 1990; 1 Jul 1990-1 Oct 1991. Meritorious Unit Award: 30 July 2010-30 September 2011.

Emblem Significance: Blue and yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. Red represents the enemy threat and the bloodshed as the price of freedom. The "Flaming Sword" represents combat capability and is the same sword from the United States Air Forces in Europe shield, which was the unit's original Major Command. The sword is slanted toward the east, because the unit was originally focused on targets in Eastern Europe. The "Rook" on the chess board symbolizes intelligence dominance on the battlefield. The white aircraft surround a red enemy target for a "kill". The unit's motto "Invenio Confirmo Persequor" is Latin for "Find Fix Finish", which comes from "Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze" (F3EA), which is the Special Operations Targeting Cycle; alluding to the unit's Special Operations mission.