

# 205<sup>th</sup> ENGINEERING INSTALLATION SQUADRON



## LINEAGE

205<sup>th</sup> Communications Maintenance Squadron constituted, 20 Nov, 1951

Effective date of formation, 29 Nov, 1951

Allotted to the state of Oklahoma, 26 Dec, 1951

205<sup>th</sup> Ground Electronics Engineering Installation Agency

205<sup>th</sup> Engineering Installation Squadron

## STATIONS

Oklahoma City, OK

## ASSIGNMENTS

### COMMANDERS

LTC Paul D. Kerr, Jan 1954

LTC Alfred H. Calorie, Jr., Jun 1955

LTC Paul D. Kerr, Dec 1955

LTC Roy B. McKanna, Aug 1973

LTC William T. Raison, Aug 1984

LTC Victor V. Hakala, Jan 1991

LTC Thomas H. Bogun, May 1995

LTC Scott R. Townsend

## HONORS

**Service Streamers**

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

**EMBLEM**

## **EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE**

ultramarine blue eagle on a light blue background with a golden yellow border which indicates being a part of the U.S. Air Force. The rotating electrons indicate the unit is an electronics type organization with World-Wide capability. The three white stars represent the three maintenance sections of the unit.

For almost 10 years the 205th had been operating but they had never taken the time to develop a unit insignia. One day, 19 Mar, 1964, they decided to design one and the present emblem was created.

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

205th Engineering Installation Squadron: Mobilize and deploy resources to accomplish Engineering, Installation, Reconstitution, Expansion, Enhancement, and/or Replacement of Communications-Computer Systems, ATCALs and Metrological/Navigation Systems Worldwide.

205th was assigned to the state of Oklahoma It received its Federal Recognition on 12 Jan 1954 assigned to the Oklahoma City Air Guard at Will Rogers Field. On 1 Apr 1970, all GEEIA units were realigned from AFLC to AFCS (Air Force Communications Service), and later, on 1 May 1970, all GEEIA Squadrons were redesignated as Electronic Installation Squadrons. This was done to consolidate more aspects of communications.

The unit roster for the day in inception, 12 Jan, 1954 lists three officers and 19 enlisted personnel on hand. Senior, and the squadron commander was Maj Paul D. Kerr, Second in command was 1LT Melvin W. Fourmentin, The third officer was 2LT Guy E. Foster, Jr.,

Some of the points that Col. Smith was required to take note of in this document were "Is the attitude of the community favorable to the organization and maintenance of this National Guard unit"; are the airfield, storage facilities, hangars and appurtenances owned by the state, the city, or the county and are they adequate. A single two-story barracks type building 30 x 143 feet was being looked at. It also noted that security was provided by roving city police patrols, and that guns and arms were stored in a vault of the existing ANG base. Initial authorized strength was 13 officers and 94 airmen. The unit was attached to the 137th Fighter-Bomber Wing for administration and logistical support. Federal Recognition was effective at that time, 12 Jan, 1954, with station at Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, OK.

Due to an aggressive recruiting campaign, this unit reached full strength in less than one year. The first summer camps were to such places as Casper, Wyoming (1954), Warner-Robins AFB, GA (1955), Griffiss AFB, Rome, New York (1956, 57, and 58). Beginning in 1959 the squadron began sending personnel to various locations for more detailed training.

12 Oct 1954 Col Charles M. McDermot, Acting Chief of Staff at Headquarters, Continental Air Command, Mitchell AFB, NY wrote a letter to the Chief, National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. suggesting the relocation of the 205th from Will Rogers ANGB to Tinker AFB. The letter was brief, containing but two short paragraphs. The key phrase was the last sentence of the second paragraph. It read: "It is believed that the most realistic training for this unit will be obtained by locating it on the same base as an AMC depot". The letter dutifully made its way to the Guard Bureau where it was not well received. Guard Bureau sent its response almost immediately. It read in part:

"1. The National Guard Bureau interposes no objections to relocating the 205th Communications Maintenance Squadron as outlined in basic correspondence, providing the State Adjutant General concurs in the move and adequate facilities are available for the unit.

2. Original allotment of subject unit specified activation at Tinker AFB. The Adjutant General of Oklahoma encountered some difficulty in locating the unit at that base as evidenced in correspondence to the Chief, National Guard Bureau on 2 January, 1952: "The State of Oklahoma is desirous of accepting the allocation of the 205th Communications Maintenance Squadron, but does not consider it possible to base the squadron at Tinker Field. That field is so congested now that the Commander is attempting to remove all civilian components from that base". No action can be taken by the National Guard Bureau to effect a change of station for a unit without prior request of the Adjutant General of the state concerned in accordance with the provisions of ANGR 20-38 and 20-38A. The State of Oklahoma has been requested to review the comments contained in the basic correspondence and your Command will be advised of the action desired.

In effect what they have said here is that the Air Guard originally wanted to locate the 205th at Tinker as far back as Jan 1952 but nothing was done about it. Now that the State Adjutant Generals office has input into the situation, there is very little chance of it happening. A few more memorandums were exchanged buy shortly after the matter died from lack of interest and Will Rogers ANGB has been the home of the 205th ever since.

On 8 Mar 1957 Roy Kenny, the AG for Oklahoma, sent a letter to MG Winston P. Wilson, Chief, Air Force Division, National Guard Bureau, Washington, D.C. In part the letter commented on the fact that the 205th Comm Maint Sq was experiencing some difficulty in preparing plans for upcoming annual field training exercises due to uncertainty of what the squadrons organizational structure would be. It was noted that the unit's parent command, the 1st Communications Maintenance Squadron, Griffiss AFB, NY was reorganizing under a new concept and, having been named as parent training support of operational concepts, mutual use of technical equipment, and training objectives. On the positive side it was noted that the combination of the expansion of the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA - now the FAA) facilities at Will Rogers Field and the recently announced construction of a Western Electric Plant in Oklahoma City, will provide a sufficient pool of personnel, who are trained in the technical fields required for the new squadron, to alleviate any personnel manning and maintenance of required strength problems. It was hoped that these industries should also, provide an opportunity to recruit a enviable number of technicians who are normally denied to the average National Guard unit. It was also noted on the down side that the proposed CAA

expansion at Will Rogers would absorb the squadron's present building, thus complicating the housing problem.

At approximately the same time in 1958 that the Oklahoma Air National Guard was assigned an air defense role, the air force began a program to centralize its electronics installation resources. Before, each command had its own centralized electronics installation-engineering structure. To eliminate the duplicated facilities, several ground electronics engineering and installation squadrons, better known as GEEIAs, sub-ordinate to the U.S. Air Force Logistics Command, were formed. Two of the squadrons, the 205th and 219th, were eventually assigned to the Oklahoma Air National Guard.

Beginning in 1959 the squadron started sending personnel to various locations for various types of training. By 1961 we had began to look into doing training for the Air Force, other Guard bases and even the U.S. Navy.

A report dated 1963 noted that prior to 1960, the training concept was to send a complete Guard unit to a field training site to work on a simulated project. It further noted that in 1960, GEEIA, as the gaining command, questioned this procedure and as a result, valid Air Force requirements were selected as training projects. This served to increase the Guardsmen's mobilization potential and, as a by-product of the training, gave the Air Force a positive return of 33,000 additional manhours during field training in CY 1961.

On 8 Oct, 1964 we received General Order #40 from the Office of the Adjutant General, State of Oklahoma announcing yet another realignment of unit manning for the 205th. The new document called for a strength of fourteen officers and 246 airmen. As Guard units grew in size and strength the balance of operational capabilities shifted dramatically. By October, 1964 the Deputy Chief of Staff, Communications, USAFE noted in an article in the CED Newsletter that "two-thirds of all communications officers, world-wide, are reserve officers." This was viewed by the active side of the force as alarming statistics. But the Guard was being filled with some extremely qualified people at the regulars expense.

A page from a unit manning document dated 1 Oct, 1966 listed the capabilities of the 205th to be as follows. Specific team capabilities are: (1) Four telephone switching equipment teams. (2 ) Five outside wire and antenna systems teams. (3) Ten cable splicing teams. (4 ) Three air traffic control radar equipment teams. (5 ) Seven aircraft control and warning equipment teams. (6 ) One automatic tracking radar equipment team. Four radio equipment relay teams. Four flight facilities equipment teams. Six ground radio communications equipment teams. (10) Two teletype equipment teams.

Ten days later the 205th received General Order #63 dated 11 Oct, 1966. It was from the State of Oklahoma Military Department and contained two interesting bits of information. First it reorganized and redesignated the 205th Communications Maintenance Squadron as the 205th Ground Electronics Engineering Installation Agency Squadron effective 24 Oct, 1966 and it called for a manning of 11 officers and 246 airmen.

Between late 1966 and early 1967 it was called Project Fast Race. Operating from Wiesbaden

AB, Germany we ran the program that saw the pullout of all electronic equipment from French bases. We were asked by the French government to conclude our operations from French soil. Lt. Col. Kerr was overall coordinator of the project which used GEEIA ANG Squadron volunteers to perform the job. The project lasted almost 90 days. TSgt. Bill McGuiness and CMSgt. Enloe provided the administration support for the team while CMSgt. Earnest Wolf was the workload coordinator.

Many of us remember the big white "golf Ball" that sat by itself on the northwest side of the base for many years but only a few of the old timers remember where it came from. We have an unsigned document dated 13 Aug, 65 titled: LAST RITES FOR DICKINSON RADAR TOWER. In part, this document said that the 205th Communications Maintenance Squadron had presided over the last rites for the AB-259A radar tower that was being removed from its present site at Dickinson, North Dakota for reassembly at Will Rogers ANGB. It was a solemn occasion as last rites for the tower were read from the TO. by SMSgt. Samuel H. Brown. The radar tower would be used by us to support an FPS-6 radar set at home. A second tower was taken down at the same time and returned to Air Force stock. Our 'new' tower would join the FPS-90 facility the 205th operated after dismantling that from a site at Cottonwood AFS, Idaho. It would appear that "scrounging" was the order of the day back then as we do today.

Later, on 1 April 1970, Oklahoma's GEEIAs were reassigned to the Air Force Communications Systems. In May of that year all GEEIA squadrons were redesignated as electronic installation squadrons, or Els, with the 205th and the 219th squadrons stationed at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base. Made up of highly trained specialists, the El squadrons were responsible for erecting antennas, installing cable systems and ground radios, or reconstituting and repairing communication facilities anywhere in the world.

On 9 Apr, 1970, we received General Order No. 31 thru the Oklahoma Military Department. It announced that effective 1 May, 1970 the 205th Ground Electronics Engineering Installation Agency Squadron would be officially known as the 205th Electronics Installation Squadron (EIS).

During the summer of 1970 when we were tasked with assisting the U.S. Department of Commerce, Environmental Science Services Administration and their National Severe Storms Laboratories located at Norman, Oklahoma. The NSSL was planning to study severe wind conditions during the following summer and required the assembly and activation of a new, powerful wind measuring Doppler radar system at Norman. This new system had only recently been released to the NSSL by the Air Force. With the approval of MG LaVern E. Weber, State Adjutant General, the 205th listed the project as a technical exercise. The job was completed in such a timely manner that it was estimated that at least a year was shaved off the expected time of completion for the project.

27 Jul 1973 the 205<sup>th</sup> along with members of other units here and at Tulsa, the 205th was mobilized by then Governor David Hall for civil disturbance duty. The order was the direct result of destructive rioting by prisoners at the State Prison at McAlester, Oklahoma. The prison's total industrial complex was destroyed and most of the cell blocks were uninhabitable. More than a thousand prisoners were left to wander aimlessly in bands within the prison walls.

Army Guardsmen had been called in from the beginning but by the first of August it was clear that more help was needed. Air Guardsmen were hurriedly gathered, given a crash course in riot control, equipped with arms, ammunition, and special riot control gear and sent into the fray. We were organized into a battalion with B.G Jim Isbell as commander and Col. Stan Newman as Deputy Commander. The Oklahoma City detachment was commanded by LTC Roy B. McKanna, 205th E.I. Squadron Commander. Of the 100 men from Oklahoma City in the detachment, 33 of them were from AFCS gained units. These were the 205th, the 219th, and the 137th COMF. One of our first actions was the re-establishment of radio communications with Oklahoma City and commencement of patrolling inside the prison. Air Guard units took over as Army units were relieved and sent home. In time, the entire security force at the prison were made up of Air Guardsmen and Highway Patrol personnel. We worked up to 18 hours at a stretch but the entire operation ended as a success.

During May of 1974 it was announced that the 205th E.I. Squadron was to receive the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the period 1 Jan, 1973 thru 31 Dec, 1973.

1 Jul 1982 the 205th was re-aligned with a new strength of 10 officers and 220 airmen. This was based on the new "Team Concept". Among the changes were the movement of the Nav Aid personnel from the radio section to the electronics section

During July the 205th conducted a joint exercise with the 219th E.I. Squadron, OKANG, and two Texas ANG units, the 272nd and the 273rd. This nine day exercise was code named SOUTHERN CHALLENGE. It was created as a replacement for HEALTHY COMET.

The 205th would consider 1991 as a highly successful year during which they completed 16 jobs worldwide, certified six new team chiefs, and expended 9,573 installation manhours.

April 1992 Working with Strategic Communications Wing One at the newly-built Naval facility at Tinker AFB, members began digging ditches for approximately 200,000 feet (almost 40 miles) of cable. It started raining the day they started digging, and it didn't let up for 26 days. The resulting mud hampered heavy equipment normally used by the teams, and members resorted to physically hauling sand in 5-gallon buckets. This project, completed by us saved the Air Force over \$100,000.00.

Oct 1992 saw the 205th complete a 5-year project at Tinker AFB. The project provided additional communications service (telephone, FAX, computer lines) throughout the base.

Because of our unique geographical location the 205th has never been without 'home' projects to do. We support Tinker, and the Communication Systems Center (CSC) at Fort Sill. But at the close of operations in 1994 we were able to announce the successful completion of 118% of the workload. And, while racking up this enviable record we also participated in SOUTHERN CHALLENGE II & III.

Construction team members removed an antenna tower at Bitburg AB, Germany. The tower was transported to Moody AFB, GA, where it was reinstalled. Impressed with the quality of work, the customer requested that we return to remove a radome and another tower at Bitburg

AB, Germany, and transport it via CH-47 Chinook helicopter to Spangdahlem AB, Germany. There we would reassemble the FPQ-21 weather radar and its associated equipment. We did the job and as an added bonus, shipped some unused materials to Honduras where they were used to install similar equipment.

Closer to home and even more gratifying to us was a project we accomplished for the Boy Scouts of America. We installed a badly needed communications system at Camp George Thomas near Apache, Oklahoma. The estimated savings was in excess of \$26,000.00. This was money desperately needed elsewhere by the kids.

During Nov 1994 the 38th Engineering Installation Wing was activated. It is the first of its kind although the EI mission has a career dating back to 1958. The Wing replaced the Communications Systems Center (CSC) as the gaining command for the 205th.

Also at this time, LTC Thomas H. Bogan, who was assigned to State Headquarters, assumed command of the 205th. Bogan served in the Radar Section and as Installation Officer and the OIC of the Radio Section before becoming Commander.

One of the saddest tasks accomplished by the 205th personnel was the rescue activities they performed in conjunction with the Murrah Federal Building bombing. Among other things we acted as counselors for the survivors.

During the period Apr through Aug 1996, five teams of 205th personnel participated in Emerald Coast 1996 at Spangdahlem AB, Germany. This was a joint project with 12 other ANG EI units. From Apr thru Sep 1996, many members of the 205th and 219th EIS, along with members of the 137th CES, 137th COMF, and the Oklahoma Army National Guard, embarked on a joint effort to complete the Reserve Component Automation System (RCAS).

**2005 24 Sep** A three-person antenna team from the 205th Engineering & Installation Squadron, Texas ANG deployed to Randolph AFB, Texas to support hurricane relief efforts.





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Air Force Order of Battle

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Updated:

Sources