

224 JOINT COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

The 224 Radio Relay Squadron (RRS) organized 1 Jul 1952
Redesignated 224 Mobile Communication Squadron (MCS), 16 March 1961
Redesignated 224 Mobile Communications Squadron (Contingency), 16 Mar 1968
Redesignated 224 Combat Communications Squadron, 1977
Redesignated 224 Combat Communications Squadron (Contingency)
Redesignated 224 Joint Communications Support Squadron, 1 July 1985

STATIONS

St Simons Island, GA
Brunswick, Georgia

ASSIGNMENTS

251 Combat Communications Group, 1953
253 Combat Communications Group, 1955
226 Combat Communications Group, 1970

COMMANDERS

Lt Col William A Way 1950-1958
Maj Edwin R Fendig Jr. 1958-1960
Lt Col William A Way 1960-1966
Lt Col Albert V Medlin Jr. 1966-1971 1980-1983
COL Claude M Strickland Jr. 1971-1980

Lt Col Wallace M Moody 1983-1986
Lt Col Owen M Ulmer Jr. 1986-1991
Lt Col Lester L Preiss III 1991-1995
Lt Col John Patrick Jr. 1995-1998
Lt Col Floyd H Harbin 1998-2003
Lt Col William Collins 2003-2006
Lt Col Richard B Austin IV 2006-2008
Lt Col Deborah J Nazimiec 2008

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1971 - 30 Jun 1973

1 Jan 1976 - 31 Dec 1977

1 Jan 1989 – 31 Dec 1990

1 Jan 2006 – 31 Dec 2007

EMBLEM



The 224 Joint Communication Support Squadron emblem reflects its increased around the world involvement. The center stars five points represent the rapid satellite communications reaching out to all. The smaller four stars represent the four branches of the armed services while the rainbow represents the unit's location in Georgia's Golden Isles.

The 224 Joint Communication Support Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, between four mullets, one and one in dexter side and one and one in sinister side, a stylized satellite Or, charged with a

roundel Tenné, emitting five flashes Argent, all within a narrow bordure Yellow. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "224 JCSS" in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force 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. The orange satellite center represents the worldwide communication support mission of the Squadron. The five lightning flashes of the larger star symbolize the rapid deployment of communications equipment with purity and discretion in support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Governor of the State of Georgia. The smaller four stars represent the unit's ambitious and enduring support of the four branches of the armored services. The number of smaller stars on each side—two and two—and the total number of stars—four, renders the numerical designation of the Squadron.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The mission of the 224 JCSS is to provide an organized militia: trained, disciplined and motivated to serve, protect and defend the State of Georgia and the United States.

The 224 Radio Relay Squadron (RRS) was organized on St Simons Island with a strength of 4 Officers and 95 Enlisted 1 Jul 1952

Assigned to the 251 Communications Group. Springfield, Ohio, with the 14th Air Force, as the gaining command. 1953-1955

During November 1954, the Secretary of the Air Force, Harold Talbot, visited the 224 to see firsthand how well they had adapted to their new mission. He was impressed on how fast the 224 responded to the new mission requirements. In 1955, the 224 received the first of many inspections from the 14th Air Force, based at Robins AFB, Georgia. The unit passed the inspection with flying colors. In 1956, the 224 was required to pull their first annual field training exercise away from the unit. They convoyed from St Simons Island, Georgia to Otis AFB, Maryland over two lane roads covering 1200 miles in only two days. This was before the interstate system was well established. They set up, operated and redeployed with no equipment failures or loss of personnel.

Assigned to the 253rd Communications Group. Wellesly, Massachusetts. 1955-1970

The new 224 RRS had a different mission and was outfitted with communication equipment. Personnel numbers were established to reflect 99 airman (4 Officers and 95 Enlisted). On 1 October 1960, the 224 became self supporting unit when the Guard Bureau authorized the addition of a Medical section, a Food Service section and a major increase in the Ground Power and Vehicle Maintenance sections. Along with these new sections, the 224's mission was increased to include replacing fixed communication units that may be destroyed in the event of

war. Because of these changes the manning level was increased to 191 personnel (10 Officers and 181 Enlisted).

On 16 March 1961, the 224 RRS changed to the 224 Mobile Communication Squadron (MCS). Along with the designation change came a change in mission. The manning went from 191 to 185 (11 Officers and 174 Enlisted). Even though the manning decreased, the number of career fields jumped from 17 to 27 resulting in a major retraining phase for the 224 MCS. Again the 224 met the task of having everyone qualified in a short amount of time. During this time the 224 was the only southern guard unit in the northern group (Springfield, Ohio and Wellesly, Maine). This resulted in the 224 traveling to the north for many years.

In 1967, the unit was tasked to participate in a competition called SENTRY POST. The unit took fourth for overall communication units and first for the Radio Relay Squadrons.

Finally on 1 July 1985, the 224 CCS made its most recent transformation into what is now known as the 224 Joint Communication Support Squadron (JCSS). The unit's mission changed drastically from that of a Combat Communication Squadron to a unique Joint Chiefs of Staff directed assignment. The unit promptly received new state of the art equipment and was thrust into a new era. The 224 became part of the renowned Joint Communication Support Element (JCSE) - headquartered at MacDill AFB, Florida, responsible for providing communication to any command, anywhere in the world on very short notice as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The "Greater JCSE", as we are referred to, is comprised of an active duty joint service unit (JCSE) and two Air National Guard units (224 JCSS GAANG and 290 JCSS FLANG). As a result of this fortunate opportunity, the 224 has been exposed to the military's finest communication technology and is tasked with frequent demanding missions that test the unit's strength as a viable irreplaceable link in a "total force" concept. Personnel have deployed to almost every continent in the world in a vast array of complex missions which further demonstrate the ability of the 224 to shoulder its responsibility and establish itself as a reliable communications provider. The 224 receives state of the art equipment at the same time and in some cases prior to the active duty components. Consequently they have been called upon to train active duty and guard units as they receive the like type equipment.

Changed to its current assignments, the 224 Joint Communications Support Squadron, directly supports our Active Duty counterpart, the Joint Communications Support Element at MacDill AFB, Florida. The 224th JCSS mission is to provide communications to the Joint Chiefs of Staff from anywhere around the world. Since Taking on the JCSS mission we have had no group affiliation. We report through JCSE to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

In December of 1988, the 224 h vacated its home on St Simons Island and moved into its custom built training complex located near the Glynco Jetport in Brunswick, Georgia. Full-time manning was nearly doubled to accommodate the influx of new equipment. Total strength was increased to 241 personnel which included 31 AFSCs (career fields). In the months prior to DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, the 224 had already been called to provide communication equipment for the impending situation. Personnel were sent to Saudi Arabia to install communication

equipment for the major influx of troops for the war. As the situation grew, the number of personnel and the amount of equipment that the 224th sent to the war increased immensely. During DESERT STORM and PROVIDE COMFORT, the 224 had personnel in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Northern Iraq.

2003 Only two days before, members of the 244th Joint Communications Support Squadron (JCSS) of the Georgia Air National Guard were performing duty in an undisclosed part of the world as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, America's war on terrorism. On Thursday, December 19, thirty-seven Guardsmen stepped off a C-130 to their awaiting families at the Brunswick Airport less than one week away from Christmas. The return of the Georgia Guardsmen to Brunswick followed the unit's second overseas deployment since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Guardsmen were initially sent to Afghanistan during the unit's first nineteen-month deployment that began Oct 1, 2001. Following more than six months at home, the unit was again called up on November 1 and deployed overseas. The 224 JCSS is one only two Air National Guard squadrons assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for specialized communications needs of battlefield commanders. The unit's more than 200 members specialize in installing high-tech and reliable telephone, high-speed Internet, and satellite communications networks in battlefield environments. "Many of our Guardsmen had been home only six of the last 15 months," said Lt Col Floyd Harbin, commander of the 224. He admitted that not all the Brunswick-based Guardsmen returned home for Christmas. Those who did come home weren't sure they would make until two days before they were informed that they would return to Georgia. Harbin suggested that the homecoming may be a short one since the unit was called up for two years of active duty, and there are still several months to go on this commitment. "We could be back on a plane going again within 72 hours," Harbin said. "That's the mission of the 224 and it all depends on what happens going on in the world today." Post Script: Soon after this writing an undisclosed number of 224 JCSS Guardsmen were again called to duty and deployed to a classified location

2003 224 Joint Communications Support Squadron rotated home more than 30 members of the unit from an overseas location in the Middle East. The members of the 224 JCSS have served continuously in Operation Enduring Freedom-America's war on terrorism-since their federal activation just days after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In addition, they were engaged in "Operation Iraqi Freedom". Additionally, members of the unit have served in eight countries around the world. This will be the return of this unit's equipment and a majority of their deployed personnel which signals the end of their mission. The 224 JCSS provides communications for the Special Operations community. The unit is headquartered in Brunswick, GA.

Georgia 's 224 Joint Communications Support was presented its fifth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award on Saturday, June 21st at award ceremonies held at the Brunswick-based unit. The award, presented by Col. John B. Morrison Jr., Commander of the Joint Communications Support Element, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. , was made before unit members, families and friends of the unit. The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award is awarded by the Secretary of the Air Force to numbered units which have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service or outstanding achievement above and apart from similar units. The 224 was recognized for its

exceptionally meritorious service in the accomplishment of a significant mission against an armed enemy involving conflict with or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing foreign force. The citation recognized the 224 Joint Communications Support Squadron, Joint Communications Support Element, United States Joint Forces Command which distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious service from January 2006 to December 2007. It was during this period that the 224 JCSS successfully deployed thirty-four percent of its Citizen-Airmen to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of joint special operations forces in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

While deployed, the squadron is credited with the delivery of a full spectrum of communication services, often under fire, at areas like Camp Al-Saliyah , Qatar , Balad Air Base, Camp Habbaniya and Camp Taji , Iraq and Forward Operating Base Solerno, Afghanistan . The citation further acknowledged the 224's technical expertise as the Department of Defense's 'cutting edge leader' in the deployment of the latest tactical communications technology. The fifth AFOUA adds to the squadron's recent award of the Joint Meritorious Unit Award presented twice in the past five years for its exceptional service in the Global War on Terrorism.

Consistent, secure and reliable communications is an essential command and control element in a battlefield environment. Brunswick's 224 Joint Communications Support Squadron is a high-value asset designated by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide deployable tactical communications for Joint Task Force Headquarters and Joint Special Operations Task Forces. This unit is often first to deploy in order to establish reliable communications networks and other C4 services to enhance command and control between units, services, or coalition forces. Reporting operationally to the Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE), U.S. Joint Forces Command, at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida, Georgia's 224 JCSS can globally deploy within 72 hours of notification to provide scalable C4 support to geographic combatant commands and U.S. Special Operations Command. Forty-four percent of the unit has deployed in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom – all as volunteers. The unit expanded its mission in 2010 by bringing Deployable Joint Command and Control systems to JCSE from SOUTHCOM Headquarters in Miami. Georgia Guardsmen boarded the USS Iwo Jima for a five-month deployment providing support to the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps forces during Operation Continuing Promise 2010, a 13-Caribbean country humanitarian relief campaign. The unit hosted a JCSE Renegade Ride Exercise in 2010 to test the JCSE ability to evacuate from MacDill in the event of a hurricane, and to redeploy to Brunswick's 224 JCSS to reestablish operational services for worldwide users. Guardsmen of the 224 also deployed to Pakistan during the 2010 flood disaster to provide communications for the host nation and DoD support efforts.

Brunswick's 224 Joint Communications Support Squadron of the Georgia Air National Guard has recently been awarded its second Joint Meritorious Unit Award presented by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the U.S. Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, VA. The distinctive honor recognizes the role played by the 224 in Command and Control Communication Computer Information weapons systems to coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally it acknowledges the domestic support the Brunswick Guardsmen provided during hurricane recovery efforts along the Gulf Coast in 2005. Georgia's 224 supported the Joint Communications Support Element located at MacDill AFB, by deploying more than 40 Guardsmen to 3 different

sites to provide Command and Control Computer Communication Information (C4I) Weapons Systems to Special Operations Forces operating both in Iraq and Afghanistan. This support enabled the war fighters to respond quickly to enemy threats as well as engage time sensitive targets. In July 2007, departing JCSE Commander, Colonel Thomas Hopkins said of the 224 that there was no way the Joint Communications Support Element could have accomplished its technically demanding and difficult mission without the efforts of the 224 JCSS. Numerous members of the 224 have received Joint Service and Army medals for exceptional leadership and technical knowledge in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. In addition to fighting the global war on terror, the squadron played a vital role in establishing communications systems in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The unit deployed over 50 Guardsmen to the effected area 48 hours after initial notification. In November 2006, the squadron operated the first "Everything Over Internet Protocol system" in the Air National Guard. In the midst of these real world commitments, the squadron experienced significant military communications and weapons systems transformation. Three additional communications teams are set to deploy in October in continued support of Joint Communication Support Element and U.S. Joint Forces Command requirements. The unit was awarded it first Joint Meritorious Unit Award in 2003

State Emergencies Activations and Deployments Since September 2001

Sep 01-Sep 03: Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom X 95 Personnel
May 04- Jun 04: Group Of Eight (G8) Summit St. Simons Island X 85 Personnel
Aug 04- Sep 04: Hurricane Charlie Support X 56 Personnel
Oct 04- Nov 04: Hurricane Francis Support X 32 Personnel
Sep 05- Oct 05: Hurricane Katrina Relief X 24 Personnel
May 06- Oct 06: Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom X 17 Personnel
Mar 07- Jun 07: Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom X 17 Personnel
Nov 07- Feb 08: Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom X 17 Personnel
May 08- Sep 08: Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom X 21 Personnel
Jan 09- Sep 09: Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom X 36 Personnel
Jan 09- Sep 09: Deployable Joint Command And Control(Djc2) X 12 Personnel

Exercises:

Sep 01: Bright Star X 12 Personnel
Jun 05: Blue H2O Exercise Key West LI X 156 Personnel
Oct 06: Smart T Exercise Forscom X 5 Personnel
May 07: Smart T Exercise Forscom X 5 Personnel
Jun 07: Rolling Smoke Ft Stewart GA Eoip 1jcs X 86 Personnel
Jun 07: Grecian Firebolt Maryland X 10 Personnel
Jul 07: Juice Ft. Monmouth NJ X 5 Personnel (First Sc2ip Deployment For 224)
Jun 08: Joint Voice Ft Stewart GA X 86 Personnel
Oct 08: State Hurrex Prep Rehearsal X 26 Personnel
Nov 08: Smart T Exercise Forscom X 5 Personnel
Mar 09: State Hurrex Prep Rehearsal X 26 Personnel
Apr 09: Cobb Ring (United Kingdom, Australia) X 12 Personnel
Jun 09: Loadex Brunswick Ga X 15 Personnel

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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

Unit yearbook. *Georgia Air National Guard. 1941-2000*. Fine Books Publishing Co. Charlotte NC. 2000.