

21st OPERATIONAL WEATHER SQUADRON



LINEAGE

STATIONS

Sembach, Germany

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 21st Operational Weather Squadron provides weather support for all US Air Force and Army in the European Command and is based at Sembach Kaserne, Germany, they are commonly referred to as USAFE Operational Weather Squadron.

After 34 years, the premiere weather unit of World War II is back on the front lines of operational forecasting within the European theater. This rebirth of history comes not through reactivation, but rather, a re-designation of the former USAFE Operational Weather Squadron at Sembach AB, Germany.

The USAFE OWS dates back to 1997 when it was the first OWS tasked to provide mission support to commanders throughout the United States European Command theater and to our NATO allies. Its area of responsibility covers the greatest territory of all Air Force weather units, 21 million square miles, spanning 91 nations from the western Atlantic Ocean to the eastern shores of Russia, and from Iceland and Scandinavia to the southern reaches of Africa.

With the realignment of Europe's U.S. Air Component Forces in 2005, the USAFE OWS now reports to the 616th Support Group, part of the 16th Air Force, and was re-designated as the 21st Operational Weather Squadron. Along with the name change comes an inherited rich history of excellence dating back to 1943.

Activated at Bradley Field, Conn., in April 1943, the 21st Weather Squadron quickly moved overseas and was assigned to the 9th Air Force in October of the same year. With the purpose of providing dedicated meteorological intelligence to ground units, the 21st WS became the first fully deployable weather squadron in history with men trained specifically for combat; during Operation Overlord, 14 mobile weather units deployed 30 men in support of the ground troops. Following the Normandy invasion, Bronze Stars were awarded to 81 servicemen of the 21st WS.

The unit also earned the European-African-Middle-Eastern service streamer and three additional campaign streamers in Northern France, Rheinland, and Central Europe, for their unparalleled support to the war fighter.

Following its inactivation in 1946, the 21st WS saw duty once again from 1956 to 1971 in Spain. In June 2005, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force directed the 21st WS to re-activate and consolidate with the USAFE OWS to become today's 21st Operational Weather Squadron as of Nov. 1, 2005.

This move indicates that USAFE's OWS, while still the theater source for weather, no longer reports directly to the major command staff. The patch of the 21st WS, approved in 1960, illustrated the need for accurate upper air forecasts to ensure the safety of aircraft flying at greater altitudes in the age of such airframes as the U-2 and SR-71. Today's emblem depicts a knight leaping to the defense of the warfighter by providing accurate weather intelligence reaching all aspects of the battle space-weather in the air or on the ground. One thing is guaranteed, the 21st OWS continues to live up to its namesake's heritage, providing critical mission support to leaders and operations conducted throughout EUCOM.

Contents

- [hide] 1 Mission
- 2 Personnel and resources
- 3 Lineage
- 4 Duty Assignments
- 5 Emblem
- 6 Awards
- 7 Commanders
- 8 References
- 9 External links

[edit] Mission

The 21st Operational Weather Squadron provides highly accurate, timely and relevant environmental situational awareness to Air Force, Navy, and Army Commanders operating in US European Command in partnership with NATO. The 21st OWS is responsible for producing and disseminating mission planning and execution weather analyses, terminal aerodrome forecasts, and briefings for Air Force, Army, SHAPE, EUCOM, USAFE, USAREUR, SOCEUR, and NAVEUR forces operating at 491 DoD installations/sites encompassing 92 countries and 23M square miles within the Atlantic Ocean, Europe, Russia, Africa and the Middle East.

This weather squadron is responsible for base or post forecasting, developing weather products, briefing transient aircrews, and weather warnings for all of their geographical units. Using automatic observing systems located at all military installations and communicating with their combat weather flights, the squadron is able to 'watch' the weather in their entire area of responsibility from one central location.

The Operational Weather Squadron is the first place a newly schooled weather apprentice will report. At the squadron, working alongside a seasoned weather professional, the forecaster is trained in all aspects of Air Force meteorology, from pilot briefing to tactical forecasting.

The weather squadron works closely with the combat weather flights they support to ensure a flawless exchange of weather information.

[edit] Personnel and resources

21st Operational Weather Squadron's manning consists of active duty, civilian and contract personnel and is located on Sembach Kaserne, Germany, Under USAFE, Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

[edit] Lineage

Activations and Deactivations of the 21st Operational Weather Squadron

Constituted as the USAFE Theater Weather Support Squadron Activated on 1 Dec 1997
Redesignated USAFE Operational Weather Squadron on 17 Feb 1999

[edit] Duty Assignments

List of duty assignments and parent units from 1997 to present.

Sembach Kaserne, Germany, Headquarters USAFE, 1 December - Present

21st OWS Patch

[edit] Emblem

Approved on 20 August 1998.

Blue and yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. The knight represents the unit's readiness and its dedication to support the warfighter and its role as a "keeper of peace". He leaps over a weather vane symbolizing a commander's ability to overcome adverse weather conditions due to accurate weather information provided by the Squadron. The horse signifies the unit's key mission of carrying tailored intelligence information to operational customers and the ability to complete the Air Force mission. The lance carried by the knight denotes the Squadron as the "tip" of weather forecasting services reaching into the theater to make a difference; the shield connotes the ability to safeguard those who may be in harm's way. The wind anemometer within the shield is a standard trademark for Air Force weather personnel and a key tool for the craft. The developing thunderstorm in the background symbolizes the weather hazards that may impede combat operations.

[edit] Awards

Fawbush-Miller Award 1999 and 2004

USAF OWS of the Year 2008

[edit] Commanders

Lt Col Ralph Stoffler, 1997–1999

Lt Col John Murphy, 1999–2001

Lt Col Carolyn Vadnais, 2001–2003

Lt Col Tim Hutchison, 2003–2005

Lt Col John Shepley, 2005–2007

Lt Col Brian Pukall, 2007–2009

Lt Col David Andrus, 2009–2011

Lt Col Eugene Wall, 2011-Present

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 18 Nov 2010

Updated:

Sources