FOREIGN TECHNICAL DIVISION

Foreign Technology Division. Air Technical Intelligence Center established 21 May 1951; redesignated Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center, 21 September 1959; discontinued 1 July 1961. Foreign Technology Division constituted, activated, and organized 1 July 1961.

LINEAGE
FTD Predecessor Technical Data Laboratory
T-2 Intelligence
Technical Intelligence Department
Air Technical Intelligence Center
Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center
Foreign Technology Division

December 1942 August 31, 1944 July 1, 1945 March 9, 1946 August 1947 May 1951 September 21, 1959 July 1, 1961

STATIONS
Wright Patterson AFB, OH, 1 Jul 1961

ASSIGNMENTS
Materiel Command
AAF Air Technical Service Command
Air Technical Service Command
Air Materiel Command
Air Materiel Command
Dir/IN, Hq USAF
Dir/IN, Hq USAF
Air Force Systems Command

COMMANDERS
Col Donald L. Putt Jul 1945-Dec 1946
Col Howard M. McCoy Dec 1946-Jul 1949
Col Harold E. Watson Jul 1949-Sep 1951
Col Frank L. Dunn Sep 1951-Aug 1952
Col John A. O'Mara Aug 1952-Sep 1952
BG William M. Garland Sep 1952-Oct 1953
Col. George L. Wertenbaker Oct 1953-Jul 1954
MG Harold E. Watson Jul 1954-Jul 1958
Col John G. Eriksen Jul 1958-Nov 1958
MG Charles B. Dougher Nov 1958-Feb 1961
BG Arthur J. Pierce Feb 1961-Jul 1964
BG Arthur W. Cruikshank, Jr. Jul 1964-Aug 1966
Col Raymond S. Sleeper Aug 1966-Nov 1968
Col George R. Weinbrenner Nov 1968-Jul 1974
Col James W. Rawers Jul 1974-Jul 1975
Col John B. Marks, Jr. Jul 1975-Jan 1977
Col Howard E. Wright Jan 1977-Jun 1981
Col David S. Watrous Jun 1981-Feb 1983
Col Earl A. Pontius Feb 1983

HONORS
Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS
The Foreign Technology Division of the Air Force Systems Command (AFSC) is headquartered in Buildings 856, 828, and 829 in Area A. The mission of the Foreign Technology Division is to acquire, collect, analyze, produce, and disseminate foreign aerospace scientific and technical (S & T) intelligence to meet the requirements of AFSC, theUSAF Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, and the Defense Intelligence Agency. It is the only S & T intelligence organization in the Air Force. Basically, FTD collects all possible knowledge about

the strengths and weaknesses of foreign aerospace technology and attempts to provide accurate predictions as to what technologies other nations might develop, in order to prevent technological surprises to the United States.

Under various titles, the Foreign Technology Division traces its lineage directly from the establishment of the Technical Data Laboratory at Wright Field in December 1942. FTD served most of World War II in this capacity, and its operations included the evaluation of foreign documents, aircraft, and related equipment. Part of the related equipment included the dreaded German V-2 rocket.

During the war years, the impact of the radical and advanced design concepts of new enemy weapons forced the Allies to a new appreciation of technical intelligence. The V-2 intelligence analysis was a good example. Several months before the Germans launched the V-2 missiles against London, the Soviets noticed a number of large blast craters on the Polish front. An Army Air Forces intelligence team operating out of the Technical Data Laboratory went to Poland, retrieved all the fragments in and around the craters, and returned to England. By assembling these fragments, a joint British-American intelligence team was able to identify the weapon as a ballistic missile.

As the war reached its climax in Europe and the intelligence needs of air operations declined, the technical exploitation mission expanded. After the Allied landing on D-Day, Air Forces officers and civilian scientists closely followed the ground armies to exploit captured German research and development (R & D) centers. Wright Field provided the majority of the officers and civilian scientists detailed to this operation.

Meanwhile, important organizational changes were taking place at Wright Field. With the merging of the Materiel Command and the Air Service Command in 1944, T-2 Intelligence was created and replaced the Technical Data Laboratory. This organization continued its major role in exploiting captured materiel, documents, and manpower. On April 27, 1945, Gen. Carl Spaatz gave top priority orders to T-2 Intelligence to complete the collection and transfer of enemy materiel and documents to the United States as quickly as possible.

Late model German aircraft and engines were spotted all over the Reich, but their removal to the United States presented a major logistical problem. Furthermore, a war was still being fought, and although most of the airplanes were either flyable or reparable, they did not have sufficient range to cross the Atlantic Ocean. If these advanced design aircraft were to be saved from destruction, either by friendly or enemy troops, someone had to act quickly.

Harold E. Watson of Wright Field masterminded a bold plan to organize and train pilots to fly out captured German aircraft, including the new jets.* Much of this "acquisition" occurred under enemy fire, and required both bravery and resourcefulness. Scarcity of jet fuel was another major hurdle. On several occasions, German tractors were drained of their diesel fuel so that captured aircraft could be evacuated.

Naturally, the priority items were jet airplanes. In one instance, Colonel Watson located an ME-262 jet fighter, received a quick cockpit check from Willi Messerschmitt, the famed

aircraft designer, circled the field, refueled, and delivered the prize to Melun, France. He returned in a war-weary C-47 and checked out other American pilots.

Transportation problems became a prime concern when the British told Watson that a small aircraft carrier, the H.M.S. Reaper, would be leaving Liverpool, England, for New York in July 1945. This gave the colonel less than three weeks to get the remaining captured aircraft to Cherbourg, France, to meet the sailing date.

Forty German airplanes were delivered to Cherbourg in 20 days, although some had to be flown in from Denmark and Norway. When deliveries stopped on July 8, 1945, nine jet airplanes, including six different versions of the ME-262, and 30 unorthodox propeller types, had been flown to Cherbourg without a single pilot injury. The operation provided the United States with a flyable model of every German combat airplane.

One of the more interesting stories to come out of the operation occurred in May, immediately following General Spaatz's directive. Colonel Watson had learned that a German defector might deliver a Junkers 290 in Munich, and was on hand to take possession. Within minutes after the plane landed, Watson and his copilot took off for Nuremberg and later Orly, France. The plane was fitted with American radio equipment and flown by Colonel Watson to Wright Field in July. A thorough inspection upon his arrival revealed explosive charges under the main fuel tanks. For some inexplicable reason, they had not exploded.

This exploitation, however, was not limited to aircraft. T-2 Intelligence at Wright Field also concentrated on the capture of German technical libraries and document repositories. As the captured documents began to flow into Wright Field in December 1945, the evaluation, classification, cataloging, indexing, and microfilming of Nazi Germany’s aeronautical R & D literature from 1933 to 1945 became one of the outstanding accomplishments in the history of documentation. At the completion of this project in November 1947, 1,500 tons of documents had been processed.

Meanwhile, top United States military leaders became convinced that the abilities of captured German scientists were needed in this country's R & D programs. While the Army concentrated on the Peenemunde rocket experts, the Air Force chose gifted individuals whose talents matched R & D requirements in a large number of fields. Beginning in July 1945, contacts were made with these scientists during which time their capabilities, willingness to work, Nazi affiliations, and other necessary information were determined. The first scientists arrived at Wright Field in the fall of 1945.

Air Technical Intelligence operations also progressed in the Pacific. As the Japanese abandoned aircraft and other materiel, analyses of these items pinpointed many of their production problems and shortages of resources.

In the late 1940s, the Foreign Technology Division began to develop its scientific and technical (S & T) data base with the exploitation of published foreign literature. By the mid-1950s, this emphasis on documentation produced an impressive file of retrievable S & T information. With

the addition of raw intelligence gained from the Korean conflict, including a MiG-15 Russian-made jet fighter delivered by a North Korean defector, more modern methods and techniques were needed to reduce this vast amount of documentation to useable data. As a result, FTD became a pioneer in the use of computers for intelligence analysis. It was also during this period that radar intelligence, electronic intelligence, and machine translation capabilities were established.

By 1961, the division's photo analysis process had become automated, with a capability added in 1963 which provided invaluable information on foreign aerodynamic, ballistic missile, and space vehicle systems. That same year, the data base was automated as a computerized library of scientific and technical information from many sources, available for instant recall.

Capabilities acquired by FTD during the 1970s included Human Intelligence Targeting and Laser Signal Analysis, and the consolidation of all scientific and technical data bases into a single, comprehensive scientific and technical data base. The use of automated microfilm storage, retrieval, and display equipment gave improved accessibility of parent documents, and thus improved overall processing, as well as information dissemination and retrieval.

With the completion of Building 856 in 1976, the FTD headquarters complex included Buildings 856, 828, and 829 and totaled over 460,000 square feet of modern office and laboratory facilities. A project of special significance was completed in 1982 with the modernization of FTD's Photo Laboratory.

FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY DIVISION—FTD Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio FTD acquires, analyzes, and disseminates foreign scientific and technical information to provide assessment of foreign technology for application in the development of the Air Force weapons systems.

Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 19 Sep 2010
Updated:

Sources
AFHRA