



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

AWACS celebrates 30th anniversary

From www.nato.int

It's been 30 years since the E-3A first landed in Geilenkirchen airbase in Germany, marking the start of a new era in airspace surveillance.

It all started with a highly successful Spotters Event on June 15. The gates of the airbase were opened to the public and on June 16 and 17 to mark this special occasion.

It was a unique opportunity for the public to have an idea of what goes on behind the gates of the air base

and provided some insight into the Component's history, aircraft and daily operations.

The AWACS aircraft were of course in the spotlight during the celebrations, but some of the NATO nations represented at Geilenkirchen also brought in a special aircraft from their country to create an extensive and unique display for the visitors. Guests also enjoyed a varied entertainment programme.

But behind the celebrations lies a very serious purpose. Since its

arrival on 28 February 1982 the E-3A AWACS with their distinctive "radar dish" have conducted countless missions including air policing, counter-terrorism, crisis response and demonstrative force operations.

As well as providing air support to meetings of Alliance heads of state, governmental and non-governmental meetings, and NATO summits, the AWACS have also played a crucial role in NATO operations, such as Unified Protector in 2011. The fleet is currently carrying out air surveillance

above Poland in support of the Euro 2012 Football Championships which run until July 1.

Reflecting on the past three decades, Brig. Gen. Burkhard Pototzky, Component commander said, "Over the last 30 years, the men and women of the E-3A Component have earned an outstanding reputation for professionalism, dedication and complete success at every endeavour."

For more pictures from the 30 Year Jubilee, see page 6 and 7.

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COMMANDER'S CORNER

Dear members of the
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Two weekends ago, we celebrated the 30 Year Jubilee of the NATO E-3A Component. To mark this occasion, we opened the gates of our base to the outside community. As many of you know, we had a great deal of difficulty organizing this event. But, time and time again, you have shown you will step up to any challenge and complete it with outstanding results.

Despite the growing pains and adversity experienced in putting the Jubilee together, we were very successful in our efforts. The results were evident this past weekend.

More than 40,000 people from the local area visited the base on June 16th and 17th to celebrate the Component's 30th Anniversary with us.

The success of this celebration would not have been possible without hard work and dedication from all of you over the past twelve months as we prepared for the celebration.

Even with the all last minute changes and final details being ironed out, we came together as a Component and in the end accomplished our goal.

I am proud to report we have received nothing but positive feedback from the public and the local media about the "30 Year Jubilee" event.

You made it happen. Even while continuing to accomplish your daily mission locally and supporting operations in Afghanistan, you were able to work through the obstacles and differences and put on a world class show for the public. Because of your efforts, we were able to show the members of the surrounding communities what we do here at

Geilenkirchen and, more importantly, why it is so important to all our countries.

As your commander, I am extremely impressed with the way you came together as a team to make the Jubilee happen. Job well done.

Burkhard Pototzky
BRIG GEN BURKHARD POTOTZKY

Keeping an eye on the ball

From www.nato.int

Not many people would immediately associate NATO with the Euro 2012 Football Championship. But NATO's "Eye in the Sky", the AWACS (Airborne Warning & Control System) will be playing an important role in the security of the European teams' competition.

As a consequence of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, NATO governments have been able to request the air surveillance and control capability of NATO AWACS to assist with security for major public events.

Poland, as co-host of the competition along with Ukraine, is the latest NATO member to make such a request.

Other high-visibility events to which the AWACS have been called in include the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Greece, the 2004 European Football Championship in Portugal,

and the 2006 World Cup Football Championship in Germany, as well as important meetings held by other international organisations.

The fleet of Boeing E-3A 'Sentry' AWACS conduct a wide range of missions such as air policing, counter-terrorism, crisis response and demonstrative force operations.

As well as providing air support to meetings of Alliance heads of state, governmental and non-governmental meetings, and NATO summits, the AWACS have also played a crucial role in NATO operations, such as Unified Protector in 2011.

The NATO AWACS is the Alliance's largest collaborative programme and is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. In keeping with the Secretary General's "Smart Defence" initiative, the programme is an example of what NATO member countries, in this case 18 nations, can achieve by pooling resources and working



Courtesy photo

NATO E-3A Component Squadron 3 crew on board the AWACS over Poland during the European Soccer Championships 2012.

together in a truly multinational environment.

So as football fans watch their national teams battle against each

other in the Euro 2012 tournament, they can be reassured that some of their fellow citizens are united in ensuring the security of the competition.



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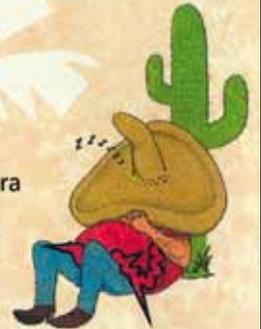
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Squadron 2 Lions celebrate 30 Year Jubilee in Afghanistan; Fly 500th OAA Mission

Their squadron's deployment motto may have been "ROTO 18 - Hostile and Uncooperative." However, they were anything but.

Squadron 2, their maintainers, CIS personnel and the support team kicked off their 37-day deployment by aggressively taking on the build up of the Morale and Welfare Activity (MWA) facility, celebrating the E-3A Component's 30 Year Anniversary, flying the 500th combat mission sortie over Afghanistan and raising money to help fight cancer.

The outgoing Force Element Commander, Lt. Col. Helmut Diwo, had laid much of the ground work for the MWA by organizing the material and equipment. Squadron 2 provided extra on site engineering and on demand construction teams to build the "Runway 27/09" walk strip, GK (East) Tower, Outside Deck, and a MacGuyver-esque brick grill that will last for years to come and be enjoyed by those that follow.

During the build-up process, Squadron 2 worked with OFW

Kira Weber, of the German FeldJagerEinsKP, in Mazar-e Sharif on a very unique fund-raiser, a multi-hundred euro head shaving and haircutting event.

The "victim" was hesitant to take part but agreed to only on condition that 400 euro would be raised. Lt. Col. Thorsten "TOAST" Hinrichsen organized the high speed/low drag haircutting fund drive and people were lining up to drop their euros in the hat.

"I regret being only the second guy in line to donate and I'd like to challenge our sister squadrons to surpass us for this good cause," said the Detachment Commander, Lt. Col. "Woody" Query.

Weber was amazed by the outpouring of support, stating "this was the most money ever raised in a single hair cutting event." By the time it was all said and done, the initial donation collection goal was easily surpassed with a total of 1,070 euros being collected and one cue ball added to the motley crews of Squadron 2!

As the 500th mission and 30 Year Jubilee approached, the crews and CIS personnel and maintainers wanted to ensure the new MWA facility had a proper name - one that instilled a sense of "everyone is welcome here."

During a celebratory BBQ event to commission the new MWA and celebrate both the jubilee and upcoming milestone mission, everyone voted and the resounding answer was "Area 52" - appropriately named after the local aircraft call

sign used by all crews. For the current Force Element Commander, Lt. Col. Kees Pauw, the 30 Year Jubilee surely was an epic celebration that was regrettably missed, but "... steady improvement and quietly getting the mission done has its own satisfaction!"

Colonel Hoppe, Kommodore EG Mazar-e Sharif, was on hand June 19 to congratulate the crew who flew the 500th Operation Afghan Assist mission.

The crew who flew the 500th Operation Afghan Assist mission and the crew chiefs responsible for aircraft launch and recovery of the aircraft pose for a photo.



Courtesy photo

Hungarian MOD visits Component



The Hungarian Minister of Defence, H.E. Csaba Hende and the Hungarian Deputy Chief of Defence, Lt. Gen. Zoltan Orosz, visited the E-3A Component June 21 at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen. Minister Hende received a mission briefing, met with all Hungarian personal on the base and flew on a four hour sortie. The purpose of the minister's trip was to familiarize himself with the Component's mission and the AWACS.

Photo by Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria

Norwegian Component personnel receive medals

Capt. Inge Skribeland,

Twenty Norwegian officers were awarded national medals for participating in various operations. The Norwegian National Military Representative to NATO (NMR), Maj. Gen. Trond Karlsen from SHAPE, honored the officers during a ceremony June 21 at the E-3A Club on NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen.

During the ceremony, 13 current and four former Component members were honored with medals for participating in Operation Afghan Assist (OAA), Operation Unified Protector (OUP) and Operation Active Endeavour (OAE). There were also three officers from other locations, who received medals for participating in OUP.

Several of the officers received medals for participating in all three operations. All in all a total of 36 medals were awarded. Maj. Stig Falck was also awarded with a medal for more than 25 years of service in the Norwegian Armed Forces.

Norwegian officers have participated from the start in all three operations and have proved their professionalism throughout the operations. With a high ops tempo and rapid rotations into the different theaters they have contributed and are still contributing to the overall success of the ongoing missions.

Operation Unified Protector was an especially demanding mission

were the crews, as well as the ground personnel, were put to the test of what is possible to achieve. The mission has been described as a success and the Norwegian personnel can be proud of their contributions to the overall success of the mission.

The general mentioned in his speech that the feedback he gets on the performance of the Norwegian personnel is very positive. He expressed his concerns about the strain put on the families of the officers that also had to cope with all the deployments. The general showed his gratitude towards the wives by handing out flowers to all of them.

After the medal ceremony, General Karlsen spent time with the Norwegian personnel during a lunch in the E-3A club. The general was eager to learn about the experiences gained during the operations, but also about the work that is being performed at the Component every day.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

The different medals given, some of them with Roman numbers which indicates several rotations in the same operation.

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Photo courtesy of the Sports Department

Swimming pool reopens

Bert Hendriks and Fritz Stelten (right) from the Sports Department test the water temperature of the new pool that is heated to a pleasant 24 degrees Celsius. The completely renovated swimming pool was officially opened on June 19 by Maj. Peter Gerisch, Head Services Branch. Additionally, the pool was blessed by Father Boudreau and Padre Gorline. The heated swimming pool is open Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for lap swimming only, Monday to Friday from 1 to 7 p.m. for public swimming and Saturday to Sunday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. for public swimming. The entrance fee is 2.50 euro per person with a MWA card and 3.50 euro per person for those without a MWA card. A 10+1 entrance booklet can be purchased for 22.50 euro with a MWA card or 33 euro without a MWA card. Season passes are also available. For more information, ask the staff at the swimming pool.

Flying Squadron 1 welcomes new boss

Members of Flying Squadron 1 witnessed a change in leadership June 19 on NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen. During a change-of-command ceremony at the E-3A Club, Col. John Backstrom, Operations Wing commander, handed over command of Flying Squadron 1 from Lt. Col. Marc A. Lynch to Lt. Col. Steven W. Klingman. The ceremony featured the "traditional" passing of the flag and the signing of the official transfer of authority certificates.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

The E-3A Component held its 29th Sports Day May 24 on NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen. The Component has been hosting a sports day annually since 1983 as a way to raise unit morale and esprit de corps through competitive competition. This year, more than 500 people participated in 25 events ranging from soccer and basketball to archery and long jump. For results from the Component Sports Day, please check the Sports WSS Portal page.

SPORTS DAY 2012

Photos: Andrea Hohenforst Design: Visual Media Services



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