

Emblem Significance Statements—USAFSS to AF ISR Agency



The United States Air Force Security Service (USAFSS) command emblem symbolizes the command mission. It consists of a shield divided equally into quarters by a vertical and horizontal line and identifying scroll. Significant of the command's worldwide influence, the first quarter is blue, thereon a green sphere with yellow land markings. Pertinent to transmission, the second quarter is red, thereon a yellow lightning streak. Significant of the United States Air Force, the third quarter is yellow, thereon a blue half wing. Symbolic of protection and security, the fourth quarter is blue, thereon over a sword with point to base (hilt and pommel yellow), a white shield, thereon a yellow flame shaded red. The emblem was approved by Headquarters USAF in August 1952.



On a field of blue, a silver shield bearing a chesspiece is displayed over a blade of lightning, and identifying scroll is unfurled underneath. The blue field, as the dominant color, represents the Electronic Security Command's (ESC) Air Force subordination; to preserve the link with the Air Force Security Service emblem, whose principal color was blue; and symbolizes the valor and loyalty of the men and women of the command. The lightning blade of the sword is drawn from the USAFSS emblem to preserve tradition and to represent the identification with electronics. Connecting the bolt to a sword hilt suggests its transformation into a weapon, much as the more passive mission of USAFSS evolved into the active role with which ESC is charged. Immediate readiness of response is also embodied in the lightning bolt sword. The silver shield has its origin in the USAFSS emblem, denoting now, as then, both defense and the security resulting from that defense. The chesspiece--a black knight--conveys several meanings. Classic deception as embodied in the Trojan horse is suggested. The color black takes meaning from the rule of chess that black moves second; black's tactics are therefore counter moves, representing ESC countermeasures missions. The knight is a powerful chessman; he strikes from unexpected quarter, and is the only piece able to strike while obstructed. He employs elegant rather than brute force. All these attributes combine to symbolize C3 Countermeasures and the move/countermove nature of electromagnetic warfare.



The emblem of the Air Force Intelligence Command (AFIC) is symbolic of its diverse missions. The knight chesspiece had its origin in the ESC emblem and conveys classic deception, as embodied in the Trojan horse. It is a powerful chessman; he strikes from unexpected quarter and is the only piece able to strike while obstructed. The shield had its origin in the USAFSS emblem, denoting now, as then, both defense and the security resulting from that defense. It is separated into four quadrants to symbolize the Command's worldwide mission of support. The double-edged sword refers to the military role of the Air Force. It signifies the readiness of AFIC to electronics in both defensive and offensive operations to ensure the security of the nation.



The Air Intelligence Agency (AIA) maintains the Air Force colors of blue and yellow in its command emblem. 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 globe signifies the intelligence the agency provides to the Air Force Global Reach - Global Power Mission. The key represents the Agency's efforts to unlock its protagonist's secrets. The teeth on the ward symbolize the disciplines of intelligence gathering - SIGINT, HUMINT, IMINT, and MASINT. The chess knight reflects counter-intelligence and the ability to use intelligence information in a variety of ways. The compass rose symbolizes intelligence operations reaching the four corners of the earth and the use of satellite information gathering.



Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency-- 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 four quadrants together represent a traditional coordinate system used to precisely identify a point on a plane. The first quadrant signifies persistence in the unit's warfighting role. The second quadrant signifies the unit's strategic to tactical ISR integration role for national level decision-makers and combatant commanders. The third quadrant signifies the dedicated, selfless and professional military and civilian personnel who make up the unit. The fourth quadrant signifies the United States Air Force's core values. The chess knight conveys the ability to strike from an unexpected quadrant while obstructed, and embodies the unit's ability to excel in crowded and often obstructed battlefields. The double-edged sword signifies the ability to wage offensive and defensive operations. The key symbolizes the Agency's ability to unlock adversarial secrets. The four teeth on the key symbolize the ISR disciplines which are Signals Intelligence, Imagery Intelligence, Human Intelligence, and Measurement and Signatures Intelligence.