

Records of the National Security Agency/Central Security Service
[NSA/CSS]
(Record Group 457)
1917-93

Overview of Records Locations

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457.1 Administrative History

Established: NSA established in the Department of Defense (DOD) by National Security Council Intelligence Directive 9, December 29, 1952, under authority of a Presidential memorandum, October 29, 1952, effective November 4, 1952. CSS established in DOD by DOD Directive S-5100.20, December 23, 1971, under authority of a Presidential memorandum, November 5, 1971. NSA Director serves as Chief, CSS. Most CSS functions are carried out by NSA personnel.

Predecessor Agencies:

In the War Department:

- Cable and Telegraph Section (MI-8), Military Information Section, War College Division (WCD), War Department General Staff (WDGS, Apr. 1917-Feb. 1918)
- MI-8, Military Intelligence Branch, WCD, WDGS (Feb.-Aug. 1918)
- MI-8, Military Intelligence Division (MID), WDGS (Aug. 1918-Nov. 1929)
- Code and Cipher Section, Office of the Chief Signal Officer (OCSO, Jan. 1921-Apr. 1930)
- Signal Intelligence Section, War Plans and Training Division, OCSO (Apr. 1930-Apr. 1938)
- Signal Intelligence Service (SIS), OCSO (Apr. 1938-Aug. 1941)
- SIS, Operations Branch, OCSO (Aug.-Dec. 1941)
- SIS Division, Operations Branch, OCSO (Dec. 1941)
- SIS Division, Army Communications Branch (ACB), OCSO (Jan.-Mar. 1942)
- SIS Division, ACB, Supply Service, OCSO, Services of Supply (SOS, Mar.-June 1942)
- Signal Intelligence Division (SID), Army Communications Service (ACS), OCSO, SOS (June-Sept. 1942)
- Signal Security Branch (SSB), Army Communications Division (ACD), Signal Operating Services, OCSO, SOS (Sept. 1942-Jan. 1943)

- SSB, Office of the Chief Engineer, ACD, Signal Operating Services, OCSO, SOS (Jan.-Mar. 1943)
- Signal Security Service (SSS), Signal Control Section, Signal Security Division, Signal Operating Services, OCSO, SOS/Army Service Forces (ASF, Mar.-June 1943)
- Signal Security Agency (SSA), Signal Security Branch, ACS, OCSO, ASF (July 1943-Dec. 1944; administration only, Dec. 1944-Sept. 1945)
- SSA, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence (G-2), WDGS (operations, Dec. 1944-Sept. 1945)
- Army Security Agency (ASA), G-2, WDGS (Sept. 1945-April 1947)
- ASA, Intelligence Division, WDGS (April-July 1947)

In the Department of the Army, National Military Establishment:

- ASA, Intelligence Division, Army Staff (July 1947-May 1949)

In the Department of the Navy:

- Cryptologic (Cipher) Bureau, Office of Naval Intelligence (1917- 18, to MI-8)
- Confidential Publications Section (Op-58), Division of Operations, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OCNO, Jan.- Oct. 1917)
- Code and Signal Section (Op-58), Division of Operations, OCNO (Oct. 1917-Jan. 1920)
- Code and Signal Section (Op-18), Director of Naval Communications (Jan. 1920-June 1922)
- Code and Signal Section (Op-20-G), Division of Naval Communications (DNC), OCNO (July 1922-Mar. 1935)
- Communications Security Group (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO (Mar. 1935- Mar. 1939)
- Radio Intelligence Section (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO (Mar.-Sept. 1939)
- Communications Security Section (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO (Oct. 1939- Feb. 1942)
- Radio Intelligence Section (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO (Feb.-Oct. 1942)
- Communications Intelligence Organization (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO (Oct. 1942-July 1946)
- Communications Supplementary Activities (Op-20-2), DNC, OCNO (July 1946-Jan. 1947)

In the Department of the Navy, National Military Establishment:

- Communications Supplementary Activities (Op-20-2), DNC, OCNO (Jan. 1947-May 1949)
- In the Department of the Air Force, National Military Establishment: Air Force Security Group, Office of the Chief of Staff (July-Oct. 1948)
- United States Air Force Security Service (Oct. 1948-May 1949)

In the National Military Establishment:

- Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA), Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS, May-Aug. 1949)

In the Department of Defense:

- AFSA, JCS (Aug. 1949-Dec. 1952)

Functions: NSA coordinates and directs the signal intelligence (cryptological) activities of the United States, including cryptanalysis (deciphering of intercepted communications) and cryptography (developing systems to enhance U.S. communications security). CSS coordinates military cryptological activities within DOD.

Finding Aids: Preliminary inventory in National Archives microfiche edition of preliminary inventories.

Security-Classified Records: This record group may include material that is security-classified.

**457.2 Records of the Predecessors of the National Security Agency
1917-55**

History:

Army predecessors:

Army cryptanalytic origins date from April 28, 1917, when, by Chief of Staff (COS) memorandum, a code and cipher decryption unit was established as the Cable and Telegraph Section, MI-8, in the Military Information Section (MIS), War College Division (WCD), War Department General Staff (WDGS), headquartered in Washington, DC. MI-8 remained under MIS when it became, by General Order 14, War Department, February 9, 1918, the Military Intelligence Branch (MIB), WCD, WDGS, and subsequently, by General Order 80, War Department, August 26, 1918, the Military Intelligence Division (MID), WDGS. Absorbed navy cryptanalysis functions, July 1918. MI-8 moved to New York City by order of COS, May 20, 1919, where it continued intelligence activities as the Code Compilation Company under Herbert O. Yardley. Disbanded November 1, 1929, after Secretary of State Henry Stimson withdrew State Department funding of the activity.

Army cryptographic functions centralized in the Code and Cipher Section, established in the Office of the Chief Signal Officer (OCSO), January 1, 1921. A unified army cryptologic agency was established in OCSO, effective April 14, 1930, by assigning functions of the abolished MI-8 to the Code and Cipher Section, pursuant to a memorandum from the Adjutant General's Office (AG311.5, 4-14-30), which implemented amendments to Army Regulation 105-5, May 10, 1929, defining the duties of OCSO. The new agency, the Signal Intelligence Service (SIS), was placed under the War Plans and Training Division and designated for administrative purposes as the Signal Intelligence Section until it was made an independent operating unit by Office Orders No. 31, OCSO, April 23, 1938.

SIS placed under newly established Operations Branch by OCSO reorganization of August 8, 1941. Designated as a division of Operations Branch, December 27, 1941. Placed under newly activated Army Communications Branch (ACB), OCSO, January 1, 1942. Army reorganization of March 9, 1942, under War Department Circular 59, March 2, 1942, and EO 9082, February 28, 1942, placed OCSO under Services of Supply (SOS; renamed Army Service Forces, ASF, by War Department General Order 14, March 12, 1943, and abolished effective June 11, 1946, by ASF Circular 138, May 14, 1946), and created a Supply Service within OCSO to which the ACB (including SIS Division) assigned.

SIS Division redesignated as Signal Intelligence Division (SID) under renamed Army Communications Service (ACS) in OCSO reorganization of June 22, 1942, and further redesignated as Signal Security Branch (SSB) under Army Communications Division (ACD), successor, under the Signal Operating Services, to ACS, in OCSO reorganization of September 30, 1942. Beginning January 7, 1943, SSB reported to ACD through the Office of the Chief Engineer.

Signal Security Division (SSD) established as an operating unit of the Signal Operating Services, by Office Memorandum No. 34, OCSO, March 2, 1943. Signal Security Service (SSS) previously authorized as a field activity of OCSO by Office Memorandum No. 181, OCSO, July 25, 1942, was formally established as successor to SSB on March 2, 1943, and placed for administrative purposes under Signal Control Section, SSD, but reported directly to Signal Operating Services. SSS renamed Signal Security Agency (SSA) by Office Memorandum No. 73, OCSO, July 9, 1943, and placed for administrative purposes under a headquarters element, the Signal Security Branch, in reconstituted Army Communications Service. On December 10, 1944, the SSA was transferred operationally to the War Department General Staff, under the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (G-2), but continued administratively under OCSO until September 15, 1945, when it was redesignated the Army Security Agency and assigned formally to G-2. ASA designated as a field activity of newly established Intelligence Division, successor, by WDGS Staff Circular 5-2, War Department, April 19, 1947, to Office of Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence.

When the War Department was abolished by the National Security Act of 1947 (61 Stat. 495), July 26, 1947, army G-2 functions and components, including ASA, transferred to Department of the Army in the National Military Establishment.

(For administrative history of ASA subsequent to establishment of Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA), May 1949, see U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command history under 457.3.)

Navy predecessors:

Ephemeral cryptanalytic agency, the Cryptographic (or Cipher) Bureau, established in 1917 within the Office of Naval Intelligence, was functionally absorbed by the army's MI-8 in July 1918.

Confidential Publications Section (Op-58) established January 1917 in Division of Operations, OCNO, absorbing the cryptographic functions vested since at least 1848 in the Signal Office, Bureau of Navigation. Renamed the Code and Signal

Section, October 10, 1917, and placed (as Op-18) under the authority of the Director of Naval Communications, January 15, 1920. Op-18 established a Research Desk, responsible for cryptanalysis, in January 1924, thereby creating a unified naval cryptological activity.

Code and Signal Section formally made a part of the Division of Naval Communications (DNC), as Op-20-G, on July 1, 1922. Successively redesignated Communications Security Group (Op-20- G), DNC, OCNO, March 11, 1935; Radio Intelligence Section (Op-20- G), DNC, OCNO, March 15, 1939; and Communications Security Section (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO, October 1, 1939.

Op-20-G reorganized as an exclusively cryptanalytic operation, the Radio Intelligence Section (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO, February 12, 1942, with former cryptographic and security functions assigned to separate sections, designated as Op-20-Q and Op-20-Y, respectively. Renamed, October 20, 1942, the Communications Intelligence Organization (Op-20-G), DNC, OCNO. Naval communications intelligence elements collectively designated Communications Supplementary Activities (Op-20-2), DNC, OCNO, July 10, 1946.

Department of the Navy made a component of the National Military Establishment by the National Security Act of 1947 (61 Stat. 495), July 26, 1947. (For administrative history of Communications Supplementary Activities and its successors subsequent to establishment of Armed Forces Security Agency, May 1949, see Navy Security Group Command history under 457.3.)

Air Force predecessors:

Separate Department of the Air Force created in the National Military Establishment from air elements of the abolished War Department by the National Security Act of 1947 (61 Stat. 495), July 26, 1947. Cryptology planning initiated in the Office of the Chief of Staff by Air Force Security Group, organized July 1, 1948, under authority of a draft letter from the Air Adjutant General (AAG), June 23, 1948. U.S. Air Force Security Service, responsible for air force cryptological activities, authorized by AAG Letter 322 (AFOOR 848e), October 20, 1948, with formal organization pursuant to General Order 2, United States Air Force Security Service, October 26, 1948. (For administrative history of this agency subsequent to establishment of Armed Forces Security Agency, May 1949, see United States Air Force Electronic Security Command history under 457.3.)

National Military Establishment/Department of Defense predecessors:

In addition to the separate armed services cryptological agencies that were continued under the military departments following the creation of the National Military Establishment, the Secretary of Defense authorized, May 20, 1949, an armed forces communications intelligence agency under the Joint Chiefs of Staff, subsequently established as the Armed Forces Security Agency by JCS Directive 2010, May 24, 1949, with general oversight and coordinating responsibility for military cryptology. AFSA continued without change in function when the National Military Establishment was redesignated Department of Defense by the National Security Act Amendments of 1949 (63 Stat. 578), August 10, 1949. Pursuant to recommendations (June 13, 1952) of a special committee chaired by George

Brownell, AFSA was superseded by NSA, December 9, 1952. NSA, reporting directly to the Secretary of Defense, was made responsible for coordinating a national cryptological program, including civilian and military elements, with the military cryptological agencies retaining responsibility (under NSA oversight) for service-specific communications intelligence and security activities. Oversight of military agencies made responsibility of Central Security Service, 1971. SEE 457.1 and 457.3.

Textual Records: History (1776-1939) of the Signal Security Service, 1944-48. Records relating to Herbert O. Yardley, 1917- 33. Records relating to controlled German agents, 1944-45. Messages of German intelligence or clandestine agents, 1942-45. German navy reports of intercepted radio messages (B./X.B. Berichte), 1939-45. German navy/U-boat message translations and summaries, 1941-45. Japanese-German diplomatic messages, 1940-42. Translations of Japanese "Red Machine" diplomatic messages, 1934-38. Translations of intercepted Berlin/Tokyo radio messages between German navy liaison personnel, 1942-45. Far East Magic diplomatic summaries, 1942-45. Special collections of Japanese diplomatic messages, 1938-45. Japanese romanization of worldwide place names, 1945. Translation reports of intercepted Japanese army messages, 1942-45, and army attache messages, 1941-45. Japanese army water transport messages, 1943-44. Translations of Japanese air force messages, 1943-44. Intelligence reports and bulletins pertaining to Japanese naval communications (U.S. and British), 1942. Translation reports of intercepted Japanese naval and naval attache messages, 1942-46. Japanese naval radio intelligence summaries, 1942-46. Vichy French diplomatic messages, 1941-45. Sunset daily intelligence reports, European Theater of Operations, 1942-45. Intelligence reports from U.S. joint armed service and other government agencies, 1941-48. U.S. Army records relating to cryptology, 1927-52. U.S. Navy records relating to cryptography, 1918-50. Miscellaneous cryptological studies, ca. 1920-52. Public cryptographic suggestion files, 1931-55. Russian codes and ciphers, 1907-31. Intercepts concerning Allied-Swiss negotiations on the disposition of German assets and looted gold, 1945-46.

Related Records: Personal papers of Herbert O. Yardley are in the NSA Archives, Ft. Meade, MD.

Subject Access Terms: Ultra.

457.3 Records of the National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS) 1917-93

History: CSS exercises oversight responsibility for the following military cryptological agencies:

U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command

Established, effective January 1, 1977, to consolidate the U.S. Army Security Agency (USASA) and the U.S. Army Intelligence Agency (USAIA), components of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, by General Order 25,

Department of the Army, December 30, 1976.

USASA was a redesignation of ASA, pursuant to Army Regulation 10- 122, Department of the Army, May 13, 1957. ASA (SEE 457.2) had remained under Intelligence Division when it was redesignated successively as Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, 1950, and Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, 1955.

USAIA was the successor, effective June 30, 1974, by General Order 58, Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, June 21, 1974, implementing General Order 20, Department of the Army, June 19, 1974, to U.S. Army Intelligence Command, a redesignation by General Order 23, Department of the Army, July 1, 1965, of the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps Command, established effective January 1, 1965, by General Order 38, Department of the Army, November 20, 1964. (For an administrative history of the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps Command and its predecessors, see RG 319.)

Naval Security Group Command

Established July 1, 1968, directly under OCNO, as successor to Naval Security Group, a redesignation, December 12, 1950, of the Navy Security Group, successor, under Security Branch (Op-202), DNC, OCNO, January 28, 1950, to Communications Supplementary Activities (SEE 457.2). DNC transferred to Office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Operations and Readiness, with Security Branch redesignated Op-302, June 1, 1954. Security Branch abolished January 3, 1955, Naval Security Group thereafter reporting to DNC through the Special Assistant to the Director of Naval Communications Security (Op-30-G), successively designated the Assistant Director of Naval Communications for Communication Security Matters, July 13, 1955; the Deputy Director of Naval Security Group Matters, May 1957; and the Deputy Director of Naval Communications for Naval Security Group (Op-94-G), May 5, 1959. DNC superseded, July 1, 1967, by Naval Communications Command (Op-94), with Naval Security Group reporting through Deputy Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Cryptology (Op- 94G).

United States Air Force Electronic Security Command

Established August 1, 1979, as successor to United States Air Force Security Service (SEE 457.2), by Special Order GB-14, United States Air Force Security Service, July 26, 1979.

Textual Records: NSA studies on cryptology, 1917-77. U.S. Army records relating to cryptology, 1952-85. Office of Policy records relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, 1964-93.

Bibliographic note: Web version based on *Guide to Federal Records in the National Archives of the United States. Compiled by Robert B. Matchette et al. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1995. 3 volumes, 2428 pages.*

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