

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS) – UNIT HISTORY

by Gary Gibbs

The Society is grateful to Captain RC Quinsey Royal Signals for the following information on his unit.

- 1917 – Wireless Company, Egypt and Palestine
- 1923 – 2 Wireless Company
- 1946 – 2 Special Wireless Regiment
- 1947 – 2nd Wireless Regiment
- 1959 – 9th Signal Regiment
- 1999 – Joint Service Signal Unit (Ayios Nikolaos)
- 2003 – Joint Service Signal Unit (Cyprus)

In 1917 some 11 officers and other ranks were employed on signal intelligence duties at General Allenby's headquarters, from which the successful operations in Palestine were concluded. By 1918 they were organised as 2nd Wireless Observation Group. After the First World War, Egypt Signals were organised into three companies. Of these 2 Wireless Company was formed in 1923 out of the two wireless sections which had been established in Egypt and Mesopotamia in 1917. The unit consisted of a headquarters and one section at Sarafund, in Palestine, and another in Baghdad. When the latter section closed in 1929, at the end of the British mandate in Iraq the whole unit was concentrated in Palestine.



The Tactical Recognition Flash as worn by the Joint Service Signal Unit (Cyprus). It is 60mm wide by 50mm deep. It is divided by three coloured bands, light blue at the top, red in the centre and navy blue at the bottom. The map of Cyprus is in black, ASSP in white and the lightning flash in yellow. The badge has a black merrowed edge.

During World War Two, the unit manned the wireless intercept station at Sarafund on behalf of the code and cipher-breaking centre at Bletchley Park. The strategic 'sigint' work of the unit was supplemented by 2nd Special Wireless Group, which arrived in Heliopolis in February 1941. The latter group co-ordinated the work and the wireless intelligence sections attached to Army and Corps headquarters.

In 1946, 2 Wireless Company and 2 Special Wireless Group merged to become 2 Wireless Regiment. The imminent end of British Rule in Palestine forced the removal of the Regiment to Cyprus in 1947, where it has remained ever since. Initially,

headquarters were located at Famagusta, and later renamed *Ayios Nikolaos*. On 1st April 1999, the Regiment combined with 22 Signal Unit, RAF, to form the Joint Service Signal Unit (*Ayios Nikolaos*) and was renamed the Joint Service Signal Unit (Cyprus) in May 2003.
