New FOB Commander at Trapani

Text and photos
Lt.Col. Antje Kalka


The outgoing FOB Commander had taken over command in September 2009. In the presence of the Force Commander, Maj.Gen. Stephen D. Schmidt, the Commander of 37th Wing, Col. Mauro Gabetta, and distinguished guests from the Component, Brig.Gen. Pototzky stressed Lt.Col. Montagnino’s extremely successful performance as FOB Commander: “His excellent leadership, soft-spoken intelligence and laser-sharp insight ensured that the Component, its personnel and its aircraft, were well taken care of and were the symbol of freedom and unity across the world.” In saying this, Brig.Gen. Pototzky referred to the strategic location of FOB Trapani in Sicily in light of E-3A command and control role of the airspace in the Mediterranean and around Libya.

Maj. Gabriele Gualazzini, the new FOB Commander, is not a newcomer or an unknown face for the Component. Before becoming Chief of Operations at Trapani in April, he flew more than 1,500 hours for the Component. “He is one of our outstanding evaluators and chief pilots from Squadron 1,” Brig.Gen. Pototzky said.


Maj. Gabriele Gualazzini receiving command of FOB Trapani.
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De Vierdaagse – The Walk of the World

By Janina Bien

From 19-22 July a team of NATO colleagues, both military and civilian personnel, participated in the famous ‘De Vierdaagse’ – The Walk of the World in Nijmegen. The E-3A Component International Marching Team marched 90 km a day, 4 days in a row, in Nijmegen region in the Netherlands. The ‘Vierdaagse’ of Nijmegen is the biggest marching event in the world. Participants from more than 60 nations met this year for the 95th edition. More photos and details to follow in the next Skywatch on 12 August.

Letter to the editor – Nothing to fear

For every Skywatch edition our readers can participate in a survey on the WSS homepage, under ‘Current information’, with the possibility to give us feedback and also to offer suggestions.

PAO has received this feedback via WSS in response to the article ‘Nothing to fear’ written by Mr. Steve McPadden and published in the last Skywatch. We think it might be interesting to you:

“Hello, my comments are on the current article on the front page of the Skywatch. I was part of the first maintenance crew to arrive and volunteered to stay a little longer to assist in getting our feet firmly established there. In all, I spent 92 days there before arriving back home in Germany.

This article couldn’t have been better written. It truly is an excellent article, and portrayed my feelings almost exactly. I would like to mention the ‘Beach House’, since I had put a lot of time into building it.

Please pass along my feelings to whoever wrote this story. I have a journal I wrote about my time, and a lot of his thoughts were the same ones I had.”

By Janina Bien

On 18 July the final game of the FIFA Women’s World Cup 2011 took place in Frankfurt am Main.

In this concluding game of the Championship two amazing women’s teams were playing, namely the U.S. team versus the Japanese team.

One of our U.S. colleagues, Mrs. Karma Maurer of the A5 Requirements Division, was of course in favor of the American ladies, but she was also excited about the Japanese ladies’ fabulous win.

‘Of course the American flag was first to be displayed and as my colleagues placed the Japanese flag on my door, I decided to keep displaying them both. I was excited for both teams, they both played great,’ Mrs. Maurer said.

Fair Play in the Women’s World Cup 2011 & in Headquarter’s building 222

By Janina Bien

Photo courtesy www.sxc.hu
ITW/MSEG receives ISO 9001 Certification

As directed by the Force Commander, MSEG established a management system based on the requirements of ISO 9001, a world-wide standard for quality management systems. The MSEG engineering processes mirror accepted industry best practices and comply with the NATO nations’ statutory and regulatory airworthiness and quality policies, rules and regulations.

MSEG is responsible for providing engineering services and support for:
- E-3A aircraft on-board mission and mission sensor systems;
- pre- and post-mission support systems;
- related on-site engineering facilities and test laboratories;
- engineering investigations and reviews.

With the introduction of ISO 9001 compliant processes, a new roles-based working approach was implemented. Under this role-based approach, the owner of MSEG is the ITW Commander (ITWC), who also fulfills the role of a customer representative to MSEG.

Lt.Col. Giorgio Mariani is the head of MSEG and is closely supported by Mr. Roger Haag as the Engineering Manager, Mr. Ulrich Maassen as the Quality Manager, and Mr. Albert Schoeler, Mr. Nico Housen and Mr. Michael Brunstedt as the Product Managers for E-3A sensor (radar & ESSA) software, E-3A mission software and E-3A ground software respectively.

It has been a challenging task for MSEG staff to develop, document and implement the complex processes that are needed for an ISO 9001 compliant aircraft software engineering posture, while in parallel providing continued engineering support for the E-3A fleet. Therefore a small team of experienced consultants from ALTTRAN Technologies were brought in to provide guidance and support for this project. As lead consultant for MSEG during this time, Mr. Michael Strauss states, “We have been working hard as a team, civilian and military experts from MSEG and the consultants, and we have reached our goal. MSEG can be very proud of having achieved the ISO certification in their first attempt and within 18 months from the project start – this is an impressive result compared to benchmark values from the commercial market!”

Lt.Col. Mariani summarized, “As the head of MSEG, I understand the value and the importance of the quality management system. My staff and I are committed to applying and gradually optimizing our management system, workflow, methods and tools in accordance with ISO 9001 such that we can meet the expectations of our customer in an even more cost-effective way with equivalent or higher quality.

With a focus on our customer’s requirements, MSEG policy, strategy and goals are oriented towards achieving efficiency and effectiveness in performing engineering tasks for safe-to-fly and safe-to-operate E-3A mission, sensor and ground systems.”

Additionally Mr. Haag said, “The MSEG Management System has been designed and implemented to reliably and repeatedly fulfill the customer’s and users’ requirements for providing effective and efficient software engineering products and services. This encompasses all phases of the engineering life cycle; from requirements elicitation to product and service delivery, including post-delivery support to our customer for these products. The goal is to provide visibility into all aspects of the engineering process.”

Mr. Maassen emphasizes the importance of disciplined engineering. “MSEG as a software design organization aims to support the continuous airworthiness of the E-3A aircraft for its mission system. Consequently, the principles, rules, regulations and procedures described in this MSEG management handbook and in the supplementary process description and work instruction documents are binding and have to be strictly followed by all MSEG personnel.”

The next step for MSEG towards the achievement of OSS&E compliance is the effective harmonization of MSEG internal processes with all MSEG external interfaces, such as those to NAEWC Force Command, E-3A Component and Wings, NAMSA and NAPMA. The goal is to make these interrelationships visible and effective and to continuously improve them for optimum performance.

Additionally, MSEG and its staff are well aware that the MSEG management system, along with its processes and role based working arrangements, needs to be presented and explained to the leadership of the Force and to the various stakeholders in the E-3A community that interface with MSEG.

"MSEG management and all of its organic and contractor personnel are fully aware that the disciplined engineering of our products and services is a prerequisite for the operational safety, suitability and effectiveness (OSS&E) of the E-3A Component’s mission," he says.

The Information Technology Wing (ITW) ensures that all Wing-assigned IT systems and services are managed, maintained, operated and protected according to their mission criticality and in compliance with NATO rules and regulations. In 2010 the ITW was restructured and the Mission Systems Engineering Group (MSEG) was established, as the IWME Division within the ITW, responsible for providing ‘industry-standard’ engineering services for the E-3A Mission System, Mission Sensor System and Ground Support Systems.

By Ulrich Maassen
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Portugal is not unfamiliar to NATO’s AWACS and TCA crews. The Component regularly uses the military base in Beja, north-east Portugal, for exercises and real world operations. Here at the Component there are about a dozen Portuguese military and civilian members.

History
The history of Portugal goes back to the Middle Ages. In 1139, the Reconquista marked the country’s independence. It grew to become the Portuguese Empire with overseas territories in Africa, Asia and South America. With the handover of Macau to China in 1999, the era of the territories ended.

The Republic of Portugal is a country with just one land border on the eastern side, to Spain; on the western and southern sides it is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean. It is a parliamentary republic and a member of international organizations, including the United Nations, the European Union and NATO. The revolution in 1910 ended the monarchy. In the 28th May Revolution in 1926 it became a dictatorship, which ended in 1974 when it adopted democracy after a left-military coup.

Portuguese is the official language. In the 15th and 16th centuries this language spread worldwide as Portugal established a colonial and commercial empire. As a result, Portuguese is now also spoken and the official language in Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, São Tomé, Principe, Guinea-Bissau and East Timor.

Tourism
Tourism is an important source of income. Not only the capital Lisbon but also the city of Porto are often visited by tourists, and the Algarve’s coastline is stunning. Madeira has always been a favorite holiday island and the Azores are becoming popular too. The Portuguese coastline varies from breathtaking rock formations and steep cliffs to sandy beaches. Portugal is also popular for its amazing golf courses.

Culture and cuisine
Portuguese cuisine is diverse. One of the popular dishes is made with dried cod, ‘bacalhau’ in Portuguese, and there are a variety of recipes for preparing it. Other fish dishes are grilled sardines and ‘caldeirada’, a potato-based stew made from several types of fish. Typical Portuguese meat dishes are made with beef, pork, lamb, or chicken, they also include roast suckling pig and spicy chicken piri-piri.

The Portuguese art of pastry originated in medieval monasteries and is widely spread across the country. Using very few ingredients, such as almonds, flour, eggs and some liquor, these monasteries managed to create a spectacularly wide range of different pastries. The little pastry ‘pastéis de Belém’ (or ‘pastéis de nata’) originally from Lisbon can now be found throughout the country.

Popular Portuguese wines are the ‘Vinho Verde’ and the Port, Madeira and ‘Moscatel’ wines. In the evening hours, while you are enjoying dinner and a good glass of wine at local pubs, the ‘Fado’ can be heard. ‘Fado’ - meaning destiny, fate - is a form of music characterized by melancholy tunes and lyrics, with subjects often referring to the sea or the life of the poor. However, in reality ‘Fado’ is simply a form of song that can be about anything, but must follow a certain structure. Amália Rodrigues, Carlos do Carmo, Mariza, Mafalda Arnauth, and Cristina Branco are amongst the most famous names in the Fado genre.

The westernmost point of Europe is Cabo da Roca, Portugal.

An irresistible treat, the famous pastry of Belém: a fluffy crust with a sweet, creamy, custard filling.

The Belem Tower in Lisbon, a UNESCO World Heritage site, built in the early 16th century.

(Source Wikipedia)
By Maj. "Super" Mário Cavaco

The area of the town of Óbidos is located on a hilltop, encircled by a fortified wall, but divided between the two parishes of São Pedro and Santa Maria within the municipality. Óbidos remains a well-preserved example of medieval architecture and its streets, squares, walls and castle are a popular tourist destination.

Once the wedding present of a queen, the preserved medieval town lying 100 kilometers north of Lisbon is without doubt one of Portugal’s most classic walled settlements, mostly rural, with approximately 143 km² and about 11,000 inhabitants. Walking the ramparts, visitors can enjoy views of windmills, vineyards and surrounding farmlands. In the residential area below, narrow cobblestone streets are lined with whitewashed houses sporting terracotta roofs.

This is a small county, one of the oldest in the entire region, and it is dominated by fields and greenery lapped by the country’s largest watershed, the lagoon of Óbidos, well known for its natural heritage. Banks covered by wild plant life make this lake the perfect habitat for numerous species of birds and fish, giving an idyllic picture of natural beauty as a great tourist attraction.

The name Óbidos probably derives from the Latin term ‘oppidum’, meaning ‘citadel’ or ‘fortified city’. Roman occupation of the area was confirmed by archaeological excavations revealing the existence of a Roman city (civitas) near the hilltop on which the village and castle were established. This Roman settlement is most certainly the mysterious Ebrobrittium cited by Pliny the Elder as situated between Collipo (near present-day Leiria) and Olisipo (Lisbon). Archeological surveys discovered the remains of a forum, baths and other Roman structures near the settlement.

The historical core of Óbidos houses centuries of history and tradition. Roman in origin 1st century, Óbidos is intrinsically linked to the fortifications built at that time. Very near the town we find the ruins of the Roman city Ebrobrittium.

But in addition to its houses, walls and castle, Óbidos is now heritage alive and well-known to the Portuguese and many foreigners who visit the events organized here. Medieval Market, Festive Opera, Festival Internacional de Chocolate Óbidos, the Christmas Village and Holy Week are just some of the major events that attract thousands of people every year. Additionally the shops are piled high with local handicrafts, while in spring the town is ablaze with geraniums, morning glories and bougainvilleas.

In gastronomy Óbidos maintains its traditions. Due to the proximity of the sea and the lagoon of Óbidos, the cuisine features many dishes made with fish and shellfish. The rich green fields and traditional livestock are also reflected in the cuisine, such as common stewed goat or lamb and barbecued meats. Bundles of eggs and lampreys of Gaeiras and Moorish are examples of regional sweets. The pear is the region’s most famous fruit, mainly produced in the county parish of Usseira. Thanks to the excellence of its microclimate, the region produces great wines such as well-known white wines and the Gaeiras Oiro of Óbidos. Of special importance is the typical drink Ginginha.

Óbidos is undoubtedly one of Portugal’s main attractions, not only due to its architecture and vast natural heritage, but also because of its great cultural dynamism. For all these reasons, Óbidos and its castle are one of the seven wonders of Portugal.

(Source www.obidos.pt and www.portugalvirtual.pt)
Air show 2011 in Belgium

Text and photos CMSgt. Ronny Aerts

On 6 and 7 July the Belgian SAR Air Base in Koksijde held its international air show. Koksijde is located on the Belgian coast, very close to the French border.

The air show has a rich history, which started in 1947, and since 1980 it has used the term ‘open door, air show and defense days’. This event is also very famous for its ‘scoops’, like the first landing of an American Air Force (USAF) B-1 bomber on Belgian (maybe also on European) territory, as well as the well-known first over-flight of the F-117.

This year too, there was a very attractive program filled with highlights. That was especially the case because of the 65th birthday of the Belgian Air Force, 50 years of the Heli SAR, 40 years of Alouette III and 35 years of the Sea King. Therefore there were many planned events on base, but also outside as the town of Koksijde organized a birthday concert with an over-fly of different planes from the Belgian Air Force.

On the Belgian air base Koksijde there were plenty of activities on the two days that attracted the visitors who attended, more than 60,000 in total. On the days prior to the air show the following teams arrived: Victors (PZ2A), Saudi Hawks (Hawk), Thunderbirds (F-16) and the Turkish Stars (NF-5), but also Belgian and Dutch Air Force military participants plus military participants from the United Kingdom, Baby Blue and Team Iskry (TS-11).

On the official first day of the famous air show the Patrouille de France (Alpha Jet) and the Red Arrows (Hawk) arrived, who honestly also performed best. Their shows were very impressive, and many visitors also came to Koksijde to see the American Thunderbirds. The static display of the aircraft mentioned above was also the reason why so many visitors came to this famous event.

Unfortunately, the E-3A could not be displayed at this air show due to the ongoing operations. Nevertheless the Belgian National Support Unit (NSU) decided to participate and to promote the E-3A Component and its mission in support of the operations Afghan Assist (OAA) and Unified Protector (OUP). From previous participation at the air show in Beauvechain (Belgium) we already knew that the visitors very much appreciated being able to ask any questions in their mother tongue about the daily business of the AWACS mission. My three colleagues and I, all from the Belgian NSU, provided the visitors with promotion material such as the already well-known and always popular E-3A cutouts, posters and stickers.

We also received many questions about our aircraft fleet and we also successfully countered the rumor that an E-3A was flying over Antwerp for some reason. We found out that a lot of people know the plane, but they do not really know exactly what it is for. As they also had no idea what the E-3A looks like from the inside, they were able to gain some idea of this by looking at the displayed pictures on the boards that our Component’s Public Affairs Office provided us with. The visitors would have loved to see an E-3A aircraft in reality, but they also understood that the ongoing operations are essential and have first priority.

So, after two days of hard work, we can say that it was a very interesting air show and we think that the 60,000 visitors agree with us.

New LWAF branch patch

By CMSgt. Christian Vogel

With the introduction of the latest E-3A, two branches of the Aircraft Servicing & Inspection Branch (AMS) were merged into one. The former Aircraft Inspection Branch and the Flight Line Maintenance Branch were combined to form the Aircraft Servicing & Inspection Branch. Both sections had their own patches, so it was time to create a new one displaying the work of the two sections and this new branch.

The branch technicians are responsible to get the E-3As flying. All kinds of inspections are required prior to and after flight, all servicing actions and major inspections are performed by the crew chiefs and the inspection technicians down in Hangar I and on the airfield. The patch itself displays the tasks and tools used by the branch. We see our ‘Sherlock Holmes’-type E-3A with a magnifying glass representing the inspection portion. A ground cord, headset and shocks are used during an aircraft launch or an aircraft landing and parking. A warning horn is always used if the aircraft is towed. Last but not least the important tools of a crew chief and the aircraft technicians have to be shown: a hammer, a screwdriver and an oil can.

Our special thanks to Mr. Martin “Ron” Hewson (AMS) and Branch Technician Mr. Ralf Meurer for their great artistic work.
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MWA card issuing office
MWA cards are being issued in Bldg. 80 (Services Branch Accounting Section), room 16. Office opening hours: Monday-Thursday 0900-1130 & 1300-1500, Friday 0900-1130. A MWA card costs €60 for everyone for a period of twelve months – payment only in cash. As a MWA Card holder you will receive a 30% discount on all food/beverage items purchased at the E-3A Club and Rotodome, and also on participation in all MWA programs on base. You will also receive the food services newsletter and the weekly Rotodome menu per email, if you wish.

Shopping cards
All Component members and dependants with an ID card expiration date in 2013/2014 are reminded to pick up their shopping cards in August 2011. Component personnel that have not yet picked up their shopping cards from the first two phases, please do so as soon as possible. The shopping card is being issued free of charge at Bldg. 80, room 13, opening hours are Monday-Friday, 0900-1130.

Food Services System
Point of contact is Mr. René Peeters, ext. 4930, email rpeeters@e3a.nato.int

Rotodome
Opening hours: Monday-Friday 0600-2100, on weekends 0800-2000.

No Sports staff available at the New Gym from Monday-Thursday after 1700, Friday after 1430 and at weekends.

Patrons wishing to check out equipment need to do so before the above-mentioned times. Management apologizes for this inconvenience.

All Component personnel are authorized to utilize the sports facilities free of charge. However, participation in fitness classes with instructor, i.e. spinning, aerobics, dance classes, etc. is restricted to personnel in possession of a valid MWA membership card. Dependents are required to be in possession of a valid membership card to utilize the Gym. Daily checks will be conducted.

Swimming pool season
Monday-Friday: 1100-1500 lap swimming only, from 1300-1900 public swimming.
Saturday-Sunday: 1100-1900 public swimming.

See Sports Department Web Page for details on entrance fees.

Fitness classes
Come along and try out one of the many fitness classes offered at the Sports Department. See schedule on the Sports Department WSS Page.

Closure of the New Gym's main hall
Closure of the New Gym’s main hall (left side). Effective immediately and until further notice, the left side of the New Gym’s main hall is closed due to a water leakage (rain seeping through the roof/ceiling). Therefore, team sports requiring the entire hall will either have to cancel their scheduled games or use just the right side of the main hall, which is still usable and separated with the room divider.

Roof/ceiling repair work will commence in due course. Should the rain subside and the safety conditions improve, the entire hall will be re-opened again on a case by case basis. Therefore teams already having reserved hours should be in close contact with the Sports Department, ext. 4946 for updated information.

International Library
Operating hours 1100-1500, Monday through Friday in Bldg. 96.

International Youth Activities
Information and registration at the IYA Office in Bldg. 95, ext. 4954/4955.

IYA summer break trips to big amusement parks offering a huge variety of playgrounds, shows, rides and attractions for children of different age groups:
- Phantasialand 3 August, Bobbejaanland 10 August, Walibi 17 August, 0800-2000.

Children aged 5 and up can be dropped off from 0745. Fee for children chaperoned in groups: €45, pay only €32 per child per trip with your valid MWA card. Chaperones go free.

Parents with children of all ages and individual guests are welcome to join IYA field trips for a fun day out with your family and your friends. Inquire at the IYA Office about individual rates.

Skywatch Classifieds are free to all NATO personnel.
Advertisements must be typed, including name, office symbol and duty extension. Advertisements for services that generate a regular income will not be accepted. Submissions are due to PAO, mail Stop 33, e-mail: pao@e3a.nato.int, by noon Wednesday, 3 August.

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Next NATO Skywatch: 12 August
Submissions due by: 4 August

IYA trip to Augustusburg Palace and Seven Mountains with Rhine river cruise.
Get Saturday, 6 August, 0830-2000, we will first travel to famous Augustusburg Palace and gardens, a Rococo masterpiece listed as UNESCO World Heritage. From the former capital Bonn a cruise boat will take us to beautiful Königswinter. You can visit the Drachenfels with its castles from different periods and enjoy the spectacular view of the Rhine valley and Seven Mountains. Take the historic train up and down the hill and/or Afterwards you may want to explore the big Sea Life Aquarium with its 360° glass tunnel and giant panoramic windows to watch sharks, rays, green turtles, seahorses, star fish and many more marine inhabitants. Our luxury bus departs from the parking lot outside the front gate. Cost is €39 for ages 14 and up, €30 for ages 4 to 13 and €21 for ages 3 and under. With your valid MWA card pay only €27 for ages 14 and up. €22 for ages 4 to 13 and €15 for ages 3 and under including cruise ticket and guided tour at Augustusburg Palace.

IYA fall soccer season for boys and girls born between 1997 and 2008.
Children and teenagers of all nationalities are invited to learn and play this sport together. The season will be full of fun-filled and exciting games and tournaments. Cost is €50 per player, with your valid MWA card pay only €35. Fees include participation award. Registration from 1 to 26 August.

18-19 August: Military soccer tournament at Brunssum’s Slag Heap sports complex.
The German National team and German Legion along with several sections from JFC Brunssum will host the world’s greatest military soccer tournament at Brunssum’s Slag Heap sports complex. Come watch the competition, or better yet, put together a team and join the fun! On 18 August there will be a tournament for international delegation teams and later that day for women. On Friday two tournaments will start, one for ‘oldies’ (over the age of 30) and for ‘youngsters’ (under 30). On both days we have entertainment for the evening, including delicious BBQ, live music and a DJ, and on Friday the big raffle and cocktail bar.

Thrift Shop
Opening hours 1000-1400 on every Tuesday and Thursday.

1st Friday of every month
A tri-border Texas Hold’em Poker Tournament will be held every 1st Friday of the month at the JFC Conference Center at 1900. Cost: €20. For further information, please call +31-45-526-3262 or +31-45-526-2592.
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