NATO Communication and Information Systems Services Agency (NCSA), Sector Mons
(Formerly Regional Signal Group SHAPE – RSGS)

Unit History
(As of: March 2005)

NCSA Sector Mons is collocated with Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Casteau, near the town of Mons in southern Belgium. The sector’s mission is to provide Communication and Information Systems (CIS) delivery through the operation, control and support of in-service NATO CIS and installations within the geographical area of Belgium, France, and Luxembourg. Besides SHAPE, the sector’s customer base of over 3,000 users includes its parent NATO CIS Services Agency (NCSA) Headquarters, Allied Command Transformation – Staff Element Europe (ACT-SEE), Partnership Coordination Cell (PCC), Partnership for Peace Staff Element (PSE), NATO Airborne Early Warning Force Command (NAEW FC), the European Union military liaison staff, and the National Military Representatives from NATO’s 26 nations.

The origins of NCSA Sector Mons date back to 27 April 1951 when the 7th US Signal Service Battalion was assigned to duty with SHAPE, then located in Fontainebleau, France. On 31 March 1967, the unit moved from France to Casteau, Belgium, and became the communications support element under “SHAPE Signal Support Group” (SSSG). The communications support for SHAPE was reestablished in Building 103 (now demolished), adjacent to Avenue de Rome. In 1981, the SSSG was renamed “SHAPE Signal Group” (SSG) and continued to operate under that name until 31 July 1985. That year, the unit was redesignated “Regional Signal Group SHAPE” (RSGS). This coincided with taking additional responsibility as Controller, Regional Operations Centre (ROC) in Casteau. As a multi-national unit of approximate brigade/regimental strength, its mission was to install, operate, and maintain communications facilities in support of SHAPE. It provided HQ CIS services and performed some operations on central components of Allied Command Europe (ACE) systems. “A” Squadron operated and maintained the Kester satellite ground station and had the Cable and Support Maintenance Troop. “B” Squadron operated and maintained the Telecommunications Control Center, NATO communications circuits, and Line-of-Sight transmission systems.

In 1987, RSGS moved to its present location at Bldg 117 on SHAPE. The ROC was later renamed NATO Communications and Information Systems Operating and Support Agency (NACOSA) Support Element Casteau (NSE Casteau), as RSGS was joined to the NACOSA community. In 1999, “C” squadron was added as a third squadron to RSGS to handle Automated Data Processing operations. C Squadron originated from the previous Integrated Systems Support Centre-SHAPE Systems Branch (ISSC-SSB) of NACOSA and prior to that, ISSC-SSB was called ADP Support Branch which was part of SHAPE CIS Division.

With NATO’s restructuring, RSGS was redesignated as NCSA Sector Mons during an NCSA Activation Ceremony on 7 September 2004. It is one of ten sectors within NCSA,
established in August 2004 from the former NACOSA. The sector is organizationally comprised of three squadrons: Customer Services Squadron (“CSS”), Network Squadron (“NWS”), and Command Squadron (“CMS”). The sector also has administrative control of the Satellite Ground Terminal at Kester (SGT-F1). The SGT was initially under NWS, but since has been internally realigned to CMS. The CSS is the front line interface with the users. NWS provides interfaces into the NATO-wide area communications systems. CMS oversees the sector headquarters staff, as well as monitors/controls vital service oriented requests from the user through well established service level agreements. The sector remains focused in providing services to SHAPE HQ and its assigned area footprint, as well as engaging in NCSA’s support to NATO operations, exercises, and support for newly fielded CIS systems and projects.

Regional Signal Group SHAPE (1985-2004)

Mission

RSGS installs, operates and maintains communications facilities in support of SHAPE. To this end, personnel from NATO member nations join together in the Signal Group to provide an entire spectrum of communications services which affect not only this Headquarters but the entire SHAPE community as well. Additionally, under the operational control of the Commander, RSGS in the capacity as Controller Regional Operating Centre Casteau, members of the Belgian Armed Forces and civilians operate and maintain the major command and control communications systems supporting NATO HQ, Brussels.

Regional Signal Group SHAPE (Distinctive Insignia – Symbolism)

SHIELD: The shape of the shield, the green background and the upright swords are intended to denote a multi-service unit under the aegis of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe.

The atomic element phosphorous with its 15 electrons is intended to represent communications and electronics and the 15-nation character of Allied Command Europe. Phosphorous is utilized in the construction of solid state devices, and is an essential component of modern communications equipment. The central position of the phosphorous atom symbolizes the role of communications that the Regional Signal Group SHAPE provides; the foundation for the Supreme Allied Commander Europe’s (SACEUR’s) command and control of ACE.

MOTTO: The motto, “Rapide, Precis et Souple” means Fast, Accurate and Responsive; the principles of modern communications.
NCSA Sector Mons (2004 – Present)

Mission

NCSA Sector Mons, located in Mons, Belgium, installs, operates, maintains, and supports core Communication and Information Systems (CIS) capabilities during peacetime, crisis, and war in its NATO Area of Responsibility and as otherwise directed.

NCSA Sector Mons (Distinctive Insignia – Symbolism)

NATO Communication and Information Systems Services
Agency
(NCSA)
Sector Mons

Shield Description

A bright yellow-orange shield escutcheon emblazoned in the center with a white and blue compass, a circle with white lines extending from the points of the star, and a diagonal metallic gold lightning bolt superimposed on the compass. Directly above the compass are the capital letters “NCSA” inscribed as a tab in deep blue, while below the compass is a wavy bend with forest green background forming the shape of a mouth and the inscription “SECTOR MONS” in yellow capital letters. The border of the shield is trimmed in metallic gold.
Symbolism

- The white and blue compass, including the circle and extended white lines from the points of the star, symbolises the NATO standard.
- Superimposed on the compass is the lightning bolt, traditionally associated with communications support units. The sector traces its support relationship with Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) as far back as 1951.

- The capital letters “NCSA” and “SECTOR MONS” inscribed refer to the unit’s reorganisation in 2004 from Regional Signal Group SHAPE to NATO Communication and Information Systems Services Agency (NCSA), Sector Mons.

- The bright yellow-orange shield escutcheon signifies that the sun does not set on the sector’s horizon in supporting the military Alliance’s daily missions in an adaptive security environment – a steadfast presence as SHAPE’s and collocated commands’ CIS service provider during peacetime, crisis, and war.

- The wavy bend with forest green background signifies the sector’s local geography – the Belgian landscape, rooted in famous military battles and diverse cultural history.

- The metallic gold border trim around the shield represents the sector’s team commitment to NCSA’s enterprise approach of connecting NATO’s operational areas to NATO’s communication networks to enhance user interoperability and capability for interacting seamlessly.