

6th SPACE WARNING SQUADRON



LINEAGE

6th Missile Warning Squadron constituted, 8 Mar 1978

Activated, 1 Oct 1978

Redesignated 6th Space Warning Squadron, 15 May 1992

STATIONS

Otis AFB (later, Cape Cod AFS; Cape Cod AS), MA, 1 Oct 1978

ASSIGNMENTS

21st Air Division, 1 Oct 1978

Aerospace Defense Command, 1 Oct 1979

45th Air Division, 1 Dec 1979

1st Space Wing, 1 Oct 1983

21st Operations Group, 15 May 1992

COMMANDERS

LTC Paul Hamilton

LTC Max E. Lantz II

LTC Christopher R. Gentry

Lt Col J. Arnett

Lt Col C. Lowery (eff: Jun 95)

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Jul 1979-30 Jun 1980
1 May 1983- 30 Apr 1984

EMBLEM

Azure, on a base Celeste three barrulets wavy of the first, issuant from base a lighthouse Argent emitting two light rays fesswise Or surmounted in dexter by a flight symbol palewise and in sinister by a mullet of four of the second; all within a diminished bordure Yellow. (Approved, 31 Mar 1995; replaced emblem approved, 17 Jun 1980. Approved, 17 Jun 1980)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

EVER AWARE

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 6th Space Warning Squadron guards the U.S. East Coast against sea-launched and intercontinental ballistic missiles. The unit then determines how many missiles were launched and their probable destination, and reports that to the North American Aerospace Defense Command's Missile Warning Center, Cheyenne Mountain AS; U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB; and National Command Authorities. This unit helps form a two-layered, worldwide network of missile warning systems. The system also detects intercontinental ballistic missiles launched toward North America.

Its secondary mission is tracking Earth-orbiting objects such as the International Space Station, the Space Shuttle, any object that deviates from its known orbit, or any new orbiting objects. Typically, the 6 SWS performs approximately 2,600 satellite tracks totaling about 9,100 observations daily. This critical tracking information is electronically transmitted to the Joint Space Operations Center Space Situational Awareness Operations Cell at Vandenberg AFB, CA, where it's used to maintain a space catalog including more than 13,000 currently orbiting objects. The United Nations Registry Report, using this space catalog, helps national and international agencies make sure satellites will safely launch and orbit, avoiding collisions.

The Air Force is installing two giant wind turbines at Cape Cod AFS, MA, a part of the Joint Base Cape Cod complex, to power the Pave PAWs early warning radar system that the 6th Space Warning Squadron operates there, according to a service release. "This is a great opportunity to demonstrate how renewable energy can be used in line with mission operations," said Steve Mellin, the squadron's support officer. The Air Force anticipates that the turbines will be ready to go by January, after which they will be capable of producing a combined 3.2 megawatts of power, states the Oct. 22 release. When the winds are active, the turbines will produce more electricity than the station needs, so the Air Force has an arrangement to sell the excess energy to the local electric company. Air Force officials expect to save more than \$600,000 annually by using the wind turbines, recouping more than 50 percent of the station's annual electricity bill.

The renewable energy project is expected to pay for itself within 12 years, states the release.
2013

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.
Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.