# Signal Corps goes

***USA Signal Corps coat of arms***

***Blazon***

***Shield:*** *Argent, within a bordure tenne, a baton fesswise or, suspended therefrom a Signal Flag gules charged at center with a square of the first, in chief a mullet bronze.*

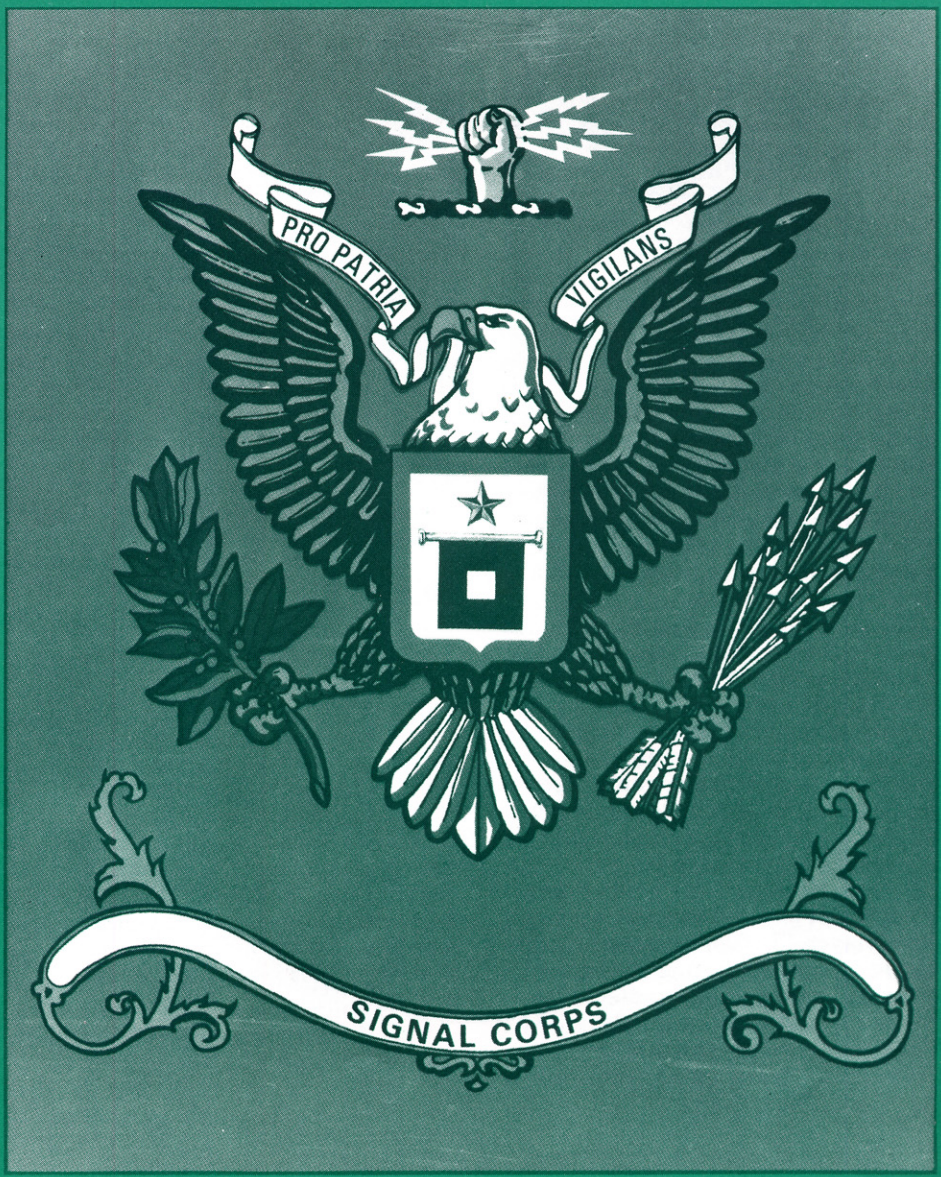
***Crest:*** *On a wreath of the colors argent and tenne, a dexter hand couped at the wrist, clenched, palm affronte, grasping three forked lightning flashes, all proper. (flashes argent).*

***Motto:*** *PRO PATRIA VIGILANS (WATCHFUL FOR THE COUNTRY).*

***Symbolism***

***Shield:*** *The signal flag suspended from a baton is adopted from a badge which originated in 1865 and was called the "Order of the Signal Corps." The bronze "battle star" represents formal recognition for participation in combat; it adorned a signal flag and was first awarded to Signal Corps soldiers in 1862. Orange and white are the traditional colors of the Signal Corps.*

***Crest:*** *The hand personifying the Corps has grasped the lightning from the heavens, and is applying it to military communications.*



# regimental

*by Sgt. Maj. William E. Zimmerman*

***USA Signal Corps distinctive insignia***

*This is a gold metal and enamel device 1 3/16 inches in height, which consist of a gold eagle grasping a horizontal baton from which is suspended a red Signal flag with a white center. Enclosing the flag is a wreath of gold laurel with a star at the bottom. A white scroll with the gold inscription "PRO PATRIA" and "VIGILANS" drapes the insignia.*

*The basic design originated in 1865 from a meeting of Signal Corps officers, led by Maj. Albert Myer, the chief Signal officer in Washington, D.C. The badge, a symbol of faithful service and good fellowship for those who served together in war, was called the "Order of the Signal Corps."*

***Symbolism***

*The motto "Pro Patria Vigilans" was adopted from the Signal School insignia and serves to portray the cohesiveness of Signal soldiers and their affiliation with their regimental home.*

*The gold laurel wreath depicts the myriad achievements through strength made by the Corps since its inception. The Battle Star centered on the wreath represents formal recognition for participation in combat. It adorned a Signal Flag and was first awarded to Signal Corps soldiers in 1862. The Battle Star typifies the close operational relationship between the combined arms and the Signal Corps.*

On 17 January 1986, the Army Chief of Staff, Gen. John A. Wickham, Jr., approved the entry of the Signal Corps into the Army's regimental system under the "whole branch" regimental concept. This approval formalizes a program that had been ongoing for several years and aligns the Signal Corps under the regimental concept along with the other branches of the Army. The purpose of the regimental system is "to enhance combat effectiveness through a framework that provides the opportunity for affiliation, develops loyalty and commitment, fosters a sense of belonging, improves unit esprit, and institutionalizes the war fighting ethos."

In order to understand how the "whole branch" regimental concept works, one needs to be familiar with the terms, *affiliation* and *association*. *Affiliation* is the lifelong relationship that soldiers have with their branch. This means that regardless of where Signal soldiers are assigned, they will be affiliated with the Signal Corps. Commissioned officers become affiliated after completing the Officer Basic Course (OBC), warrant officers after completing the Warrant Officer Technical Certification Course (WOTCC), and enlisted soldiers after completing Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

*Association* is the relationship that a soldier develops through common interests while assigned to a combat arms regiment. Although Signal soldiers may be associated with a combat arms regiment, they remain affiliated with the Signal Corps. Association is not required but may be requested by the soldier upon assignment to a combat arms regiment. Signal soldiers associated with a combat arms regiment will continue to wear the Signal Corps distinctive insignia. Association may provide some opportunity for recurring assignments with the associated unit. For example, a Combat Signaler (31K) who is assigned to a combat arms regiment at Fort Riley, Kansas, might receive recurring assignments between Germany and Fort Riley with the same combat arms regiment.

The "whole branch" regimental concept simply means that all soldiers will have regimental affiliation with their branch. In the case of the Signal Corps, only those soldiers who serve predominantly in combat arms units, (Single Channel Radio Operators (31C), Combat Signalers (31K), and Unit Level Communications Maintainers (31V)) will be allowed to associate with combat arms regiments. However, even these soldiers will remain affiliated with the Signal Corps throughout their career. No officer or warrant officer will be authorized to associate with combat arms regiments.

In the implementation plan which will become effective on 1 June 1986, the USASC&FG commander becomes the Army's Chief Signal Officer, and the Office Chief of Signal will serve as the operational headquarters for the Signal Corps' regimental activities. The USASC will be the regimental home of the Signal Corps. The Signal Center commander and command sergeant major will serve as the regimental commander and sergeant major. The Director of the Office Chief of Signal will serve as the Corps' adjutant. Additionally, the Signal Corps will have an honorary colonel, an honorary sergeant major, and selected distinguished members of the corps. Honorary members will be retired personnel. The two school brigades and their battalions will be redesignated (flagged) under the regimental plan.

The Signal Corps regimental coat of arms and the Chief Signal Officer flag have been designed approved by the Institute of Heraldry and are presently being produced. Both the coat of arms and the flag can be traced back to the 1860s and Maj. Albert J. Myer, the firstChief Signal Officer.

The Signal Corps regimental insignia is also now in production. When the insignia is available (sometime around October 1986), it will be worn by all Signal soldiers on the Army green, white, and blue uniforms IAW paragraph 31-21e and figures 31-138 and 31-139 of AR 670-1. The regimental insignia will serve as the symbol of Corps affiliation for Signal soldiers worldwide. Additionally, a regimental belt buckle has been designed and, when available, will be an optional purchase item which may be worn both with Army uniforms and civilian attire.

As part of the regimental plan, the director, Office Chief of Signal will oversee a number of activities and facilities at the home of the Signal Corps, including the Signal Corps Museum and the Signal Corps Association. The Office Chief of Signal also plans to recognize Signal Corps units in an appropriate area of the National Science Center programmed for construction on Fort Gordon.

More on the Corps' regimental program will be published in future issues of ARMY COMMUNICATOR and through other media.

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