


SRH-300

U. S. NAVAL SUPRAD STATION

ANTIGUA

BRITISH WEST INDIES

CERTIFIED TO BE UNCLASSIFIED
by Director, NSA/Chief, CSS

 Date: 12 July 1984

REVIEWER'S NOTE:

This document was prepared as UNCLASSIFIED by Naval personnel who had access to classified records. The first review to verify the fact that the report does not contain sensitive information was conducted by personnel of the Naval Security Group. The original of this document was retained by them and has been placed in the NSG Repository, Crane, Indiana. A final review to insure releasability was conducted by NSA.

A Brief History
of the
U.S. Naval SUPRAD Station, Antigua
British West Indies

NOTE: The attached document was prepared in 1980 by Naval personnel with access to various historical records, with the objective of bringing diverse documents into a usable narrative history of a Naval activity. The document does not constitute an official Navy history and no claims are made regarding its completeness and accuracy.

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Station "AW"

The U. S. Naval Supplementary Radio Station (Station "AW"), Antigua, British West Indies, was placed in commission at 2000Z, 5 February 1943, and was assigned the primary mission of obtaining radio direction finder bearings on German Naval units and the secondary mission of providing assistance to friendly aircraft within the Caribbean DF Net.

The coordinates of the station were 17° 05' 52" North and 61° 45' 24" West. The installation was physically located on the shore of a shallow bay on the eastern side of the island of Antigua within the limits of the U. S. Naval Air Station; approximately one and one-eighth miles from the NAS Headquarters building. (The Naval Air Station was apparently downgraded as a command during late 1943 or early 1944 as it was identified as the U. S. Naval Auxiliary Air Facility, Antigua, in April 1944.)

The only available physical description of the station states that it consisted of two Quonset huts; one used as barracks space while the other housed operations and administrative functions. Both buildings were located near the edge of the bay facing seaward while the DF hut was located about 400 feet away on the tip of a small peninsula extending out into the bay some 125 feet. A fourth building contained the power house and washroom and was located adjacent to the operations/admin hut.

Utilities for the station were supplied from the Naval Air Station. Electrical power was brought in via overhead lines to a point approximately 600 feet from the station. From there the wires ran underground, parallel to the water lines, to the power house.

The DF set installed at the site was a Model DT high frequency direction finder housed in the regular type of shelter for this equipment.

Messing facilities were provided by the Naval Air Station. Recreation facilities were available at the NAS USO with ocean swimming permitted in a fenced-in area (designed to keep sharks and other unfriendly creatures out).

While participation in NAS organized sports programs and on-island liberty were encouraged, the watch schedule at the station did not lend itself to either pursuit, at least in the early days. In January 1944, the watch schedule reportedly consisted of three three-man watch sections although by October 1944, it had changed to four three-man watch sections. A typical watch section in October 1944 consisted of the DF Operator, the DF Tip-off Operator and the Reporting Circuit Operator.

a. The DF Operator, in addition to taking bearings, also guarded specific frequencies to pick up German Naval targets.

b. The Tip-off Operator maintained receivers on the Net Control tip-off frequencies and passed tip-offs to the DF Operator via a Teletalk communications system.

c. The Reporting Circuit Operator is presumed to have maintained a watch on Net Control reporting frequencies and passed bearing reports to Net Control. He also maintained a guard on specific German Naval frequencies as well as searched for and guarded specific frequencies tipped-off by Net Control.

It is known that RMC George A. Nelson was the first Radioman-in-Charge and that he was still on board in June 1943. In January 1944, as previously stated, the station employed three three-man watch sections but it is not known if this was normal or the result of a short-term personnel shortage. In April 1944, RMC George S. Mills was identified as Radioman-in-Charge.

On 26 October 1944, consideration was being given to closing the station due to low productivity. This consideration was given impetus by the decision to reduce the U. S. Naval Auxiliary Air Facility, Antigua, to a caretaker status. The DF site was totally dependent upon the NAAF for support. On 8 November 1944, the Caribbean DF Net Control Officer considered the abandonment of the Antigua DF station advisable. On 17 November 1944, CNO (OP-20G) announced the decision to close Antigua on or before 15 January 1945. Apparently Antigua had been offered to the Coast Guard since a hand-written notation was found indicating the Coast Guard didn't want the station. On 25 November 1944, an Assistant Director of Naval Communications (OP-20G) memorandum to the Strategic DF Net Control Officer, Caribbean Area, directed the transfer of the Supplementary Radio Station, Antigua, personnel and equipment to the Supplementary Radio Station, San Juan, on or about 1 January 1945. On 11 December, Antigua was directed to secure DF and associated functions as of 0000Z, 15 December 1944, which was done. On 23 December, the Caribbean NCO reported to OP-20G that the Antigua administrative radio circuit was secured at 1700Z 23 December and that all personnel were scheduled to depart Antigua via the Army boat for San Juan on 25 December.

On 29 December 1944, Antigua's address (Officer-in-Charge, U. S. Naval Supplementary Radio Station, Navy #11 FPO New York) was deleted from the Standard Navy Distribution List.

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The only complete listing of personnel is found in an October 1944 report which also showed four watch sections:

NAME	RATE	DUTIES	
L. E. Johnson	RMC	Officer-in-Charge	
A. E. Collins	RM2	Material	
H. W. Dail	RM2	DF Operator	Section ONE
C. H. Lingenfelter	RM3	Tip-off Operator	" "
J. L. White	RM2	Report Circuit Op	" "
W. M. Lapoint	RM2	DF Operator	Section TWO
H. J. London	RM2	Tip-off Operator	" "
J. Coach	RM3	Report Circuit Op	" "
E. Rapoza	RM2	DF Operator	Section THREE
A. F. Yates	RM2	Tip-off Operator	" "
R. H. Lyons	RM3	Report Circuit Op	" "
T. H. White	RM2	DF Operator	Section FOUR
H. M. Langdon	RM2	Tip-off Operator	" "
C. L. Morgan	RM3	Report Circuit Op	" "

Based on the numbers of bearings reported in monthly reports, the level of activity at Antigua was never very high and showed a generally steady decline paralleling the decline of German fortunes of war during World War II.

A summary of monthly bearing totals is as follows:

YEAR	MONTH	BEARINGS	REMARKS
1943	February	181	Station commissioned 5 Feb 43
	March	352	
	April	162	
	May	312	
	June	140	
	July	198	
	August	74	
	September	82	
	October	109	
	November	129	
	December	50	
	1944	January	
February		76	
March		60	
April		43	
May		30	
June		35	
July		41	
August		29	
September		18	
October		21	
	November	67	

Subj: Supplementary Radio Station Properties - Method of acquiring
of and status of acquisition.

Area Approximately 190 acres.

Port Isabel, Texas

How obtained Leased from Yturria Land and
Livestock Co.

Cost \$150.00 per annum.

Type of contract Renewable until 6 months after
national emergency.

Area 1080 acres.

Antigua, B.W.I.

How obtained Base leased for 99 years from the
British Government. No specific
information on the D/F site is
shown.

G. P. MCCINNIS

0006