

Air Force aspects. It consisted of 29 Squadrons, 13 Royal Air Force, 2 U.S.A.A.F., 3 Royal Hellenic Air Force, 2 Yugoslav Air Force and 9 Italian Air Force. These forces were divided between Greece and Italy. B.A.F. also had operational control of part of a No. 216 Group Transport squadron located at Bari, which was used for special duties operations to Yugoslavia.

OTHER FORMATIONS UNDER THE COMMAND OF AIR C.-IN-C. M.A.A.F.

41. In addition to the four main fighting formations, the Air C.-in-C. M.A.A.F., also had under his control Air Headquarters Malta, No. 336 Photo Reconnaissance Wing, and the Mediterranean Air Transport Service.

Air Headquarters, Malta.

(Air Vice-Marshal K. B. Lloyd, C.B.E., A.F.C., Air Officer Commanding.)

42. Air Headquarters, Malta, had at one time formed part of M.A.C.A.F. but was placed directly under Headquarters M.A.A.F. in February, 1945. As the battle front moved northwards the importance of Malta as an operational base decreased. It still remained, however, a natural centre for the direction of oversea air operations in the Mediterranean. Since Malta was a permanent R.A.F. base, the A.O.C. Malta had responsibilities in two directions—his responsibility to the Air Ministry for the implementation of R.A.F. long-term policy, and his responsibility to the Air C.-in-C. for such war commitments as he was required to undertake. The latter consisted of the air defence of Malta and North Africa, the conduct of all anti-submarine operations within his operational area under the general co-ordinating direction of A.O.C., M.A.C.A.F., and air sea rescue services within his area. The air defence and anti-submarine requirements had almost completely disappeared, and A.O.C. Malta's chief commitment in this direction was the maintenance of a skeleton organisation which could be rapidly expanded should a new air or submarine threat arise.

43. The A.O.C. Malta had therefore under his command only one air sea rescue squadron in Malta, and one air sea rescue squadron and one French single-engine fighter squadron in North Africa.

No. 336 Wing.

44. This wing, which consisted of one twin-engined and two single-engined squadrons, had previously formed part of the Mediterranean Allied Photographic Reconnaissance Wing. The latter had, however, been dissolved before I assumed command when it became American policy to make each of their air forces as self-contained as possible. No. 336 Wing remained as a completely R.A.F. formation under the operational control of M.A.A.F. It met the photographic reconnaissance requirements of all three services—Navy, Army and Air Force—working on priorities allotted to it by the Mediterranean Photo Reconnaissance Committee, which also co-ordinated the work of the American photo reconnaissance elements of XIIth and XVth Air Forces.

Mediterranean Allied Transport Service.

(Brigadier-General L. V. Beau, Commanding General.)

45. M.A.T.S. was an integrated British-American organisation whose principal function was the co-ordination and direction of all air transport activities within the limits of the Command jurisdiction of the Air C.-in-C. M.A.A.F.

46. M.A.T.S. was responsible for co-ordinating those services which the R.A.F. Transport Command Group in MEDME (No. 216 Group), and the U.S.A.A.F. Air Transport Command operated within the Air C.-in-C.'s theatre.

47. In addition M.A.T.S. had under its immediate operational control a pool of American transport aircraft, which varied in strength, but which normally consisted of three squadrons.

R.A.F. FORMATIONS IN MEDME NOT UNDER COMMAND OF AIR C.-IN-C. M.A.A.F.

48. All the formations described above came under the operational control of the Air C.-in-C. and therefore as deputy Air C.-in-C. I had such responsibility with regard to them as was delegated to me by the Air C.-in-C. However, as Commander-in-Chief, R.A.F., MEDME, I was responsible for certain other formations which did not come within the jurisdiction of the Air C.-in-C. These were:—Headquarters R.A.F. Middle East and the Directorate of Maintenance and Supply.

Headquarters, Royal Air Force, Middle East.

(Air Marshal Sir Charles E. H. Medhurst, K.C.B., O.B.E., M.C., Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief.)

49. Headquarters R.A.F. Middle East was the basis from which the R.A.F. organisation in the Mediterranean had been created. It now had very few operational commitments and its chief functions were the provision of operational training and maintenance facilities, serving the requirements both of MEDME and Air Command, South East Asia. In March, 1945, it had only four squadrons under its command—one air sea rescue, one general reconnaissance, one photographic reconnaissance and one single-engined fighter.

50. There were located in Aden and East Africa six general reconnaissance squadrons, but these were under the operational control of Air Command South East Asia.

The Directorate of Maintenance and Supply.

(Air Vice-Marshal C. B. Cooke, C.B.E., Director of Maintenance and Supply.)

51. The Director of Maintenance and Supply (D.M. & S.) was responsible for all Maintenance and Supply matters within MEDME Command. The maintenance organisation was a functional one, and D.M. & S. was responsible to me for the technical direction of all maintenance units and operational formations. His Headquarters, named Rear Headquarters, MEDME, was at Algiers, and he controlled three maintenance groups—No. 206 in Egypt, No. 214 in Italy, and No. 218 in North Africa. In my headquarters at Caserta, there was a small maintenance policy and planning staff, headed by the Command Maintenance and Supply Officer (C.M.S.O.), who was responsible for advising me on behalf of D.M. & S., and also for informing D.M. & S. of all policy decisions so that plans could be prepared to implement them.