

The Luftwaffe Group Commands and the Luftwaffe Commands represented the top-ranking Luftwaffe headquarters within their respective areas.

- b. In accordance with instructions received from their superior Luftwaffe Group Commands or Luftwaffe Commands, the Air District Commands were responsible for the following activities within their respective areas: air defense (antiaircraft artillery, single-engine fighter aircraft units, supervision of civil air defense operations), ground organization operations, supply, signal communications, administration, and medical affairs.

With the assignment of the antiaircraft artillery units to the Air District Commands, the position of Senior Antiaircraft Artillery Commander was abolished.

In those geographical areas particularly vulnerable to air attack, Luftwaffe Air Defense Commands (Luftverteidigungskommandos) were set up, each under the supervision of its respective Air District Command.

- c. The former Senior Pilot Commanders were replaced by six Air Division Commands (Kommando einer Fliegerdivision).

Each Air Division was made up of reconnaissance, bomber, dive-bomber, and twin-engine fighter units.

- d. The former Paratrooper Command (Kommando der Fallschirmtruppe) was reorganized into the Command, 7th Air Division, while the office of the Senior Command, Luftwaffe Training Forces (Hoeheres Kommando der Luftwaffe Lehrtruppe) was replaced by the Luftwaffe Training Division Command (Kommando der Luftwaffe Lehrdivision).

- e. An Air Defense Command, West (Kommando der Luftverteidigungszone West) was established to direct the construction of air defense facilities

along the West Wall and to supervise the work of the forces assigned there. The newly created office of the Senior Commander, Antiaircraft Artillery Fortifications III (Hoehrerer Kommandeur der Festungsflakartillerie III) was placed under the command of the Air Defense Command, West.

Figure 6h presents a graphic summary of the organization<sup>al</sup> structure of the Luftwaffe command apparatus during 1938.

2. Certain elements of the Luftwaffe were called into action during the annexation of Austria (March 1938) and during the occupation of the Sudetenland in October 1938.

3. By the end of 1938, the Luftwaffe had pretty nearly reached its peacetime high-point in personnel strength. It was made up approximately of the following:

- a. 13 reconnaissance group staffs<sup>109</sup>
- b. 20 close-range reconnaissance squadrons
- c. 19 long-range reconnaissance squadrons
- d. 5 single-engine fighter wing staffs<sup>110</sup>
- e. 23 single-engine fighter groups
- f. 14 bomber wing staff<sup>111</sup>
- g. 30 bomber groups
- h. 1 dive-bomber wing staff<sup>111</sup>
- i. 9 dive-bomber groups
- j. 5 coastal patrol group staffs
- k. 8 all-purpose squadrons
- l. 6 reconnaissance squadrons (Sea)

109 - The statistics on the aerial reconnaissance forces are based on a study by General Drum, Retired.

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- 110 - The statistics on the single-engine fighter forces are based on "The Development of The Single-Engine and Twin-Engine Fighter Forces", by General Grabmann, Retired, 15 December 1955.
- 111 - The figures given for the bomber, dive-bomber, and coastal patrol forces are based on their strength as of 1 June 1939 (Quartermaster General, Branch 2, No. 900/39, Classified).
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- m. 2 carrier-based squadrons
- n. 2 ship-based squadrons
- p. 20 antiaircraft artillery regiment staffs<sup>112</sup>
- p. 46 heavy antiaircraft artillery battalions
- q. 14 permanent antiaircraft artillery batteries
- r. 14 light antiaircraft artillery battalions
- s. 5 fortifications antiaircraft artillery battalions
- t. 16 antiaircraft artillery searchlight battalions
- u. 1 antiaircraft artillery training battalion

Section 12 - The Organizational Structure of the Reichs Air Ministry during  
1939.

1. Effective 1 February 1939, the Reichs Air Ministry was subjected to partial reorganization, whereby certain fundamental features of the organizational structure of 1938 were retained. The changes brought about by the 1939 reorganization were as follows<sup>113</sup>:

- a. The relationship existing among the top-level posts were altered
- b. Changes were made in the following positions:
  - 1) Chief of the General Staff
  - 2) Chief of Air Defense
  - 3) Central Branch
- c. The following agencies were newly created:
  - 1) Luftwaffe Commission (Luftwaffe Kommission)
  - 2) Chief of Flight Safety (Chef fuer Flugsicherheit)

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112 - The figures pertaining to the antiaircraft artillery forces are those applicable as of 15 November 1938, according to information received from General von Arthelm, Retired.

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113 - Directive No. 50/39, issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, under date of 23 January 1939. In addition to a rough organizational outline, this directive contains instructions of an organizational nature which were to be incorporated into the new field directives. The field directives themselves are no longer available for reference.

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- 3) Chief of Supply and Procurement
- 4) Chief of Training
- 5) Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Navy
- 6) Luftwaffe Inspectorates
  - a) No. 11 (Air Landing and Parachute Forces)
  - b) No. 12 (Navigation, Instrument Flight, Meteorology)  
(Navigation, Blindflug und Wetter)
  - c) No. 13 (Civil Air Defense)
  - d) No. 14 (Medical Affairs)

2. Once the reorganization had been carried out, the Reichs Air Ministry was made up of the following:

- a. Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe
- b. State Secretary for Aviation and Inspector General, Luftwaffe
- c. Ministerial Office
- d. Luftwaffe Commission
- e. Chief of Flight Safety
- f. Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff, together with the General Staff
- g. Chief of Supply and Procurement
  - 1) Technical Office
  - 2) Supply Office
  - 3) Industrial Economics Group (Amtsgruppe Industriegewirtschaft)

## h. Chief of Air Defense

- 1) General Air Office
- 2) Administration Office
- 3) Personnel Office

## i. Chief of Training

- 1) Luftwaffe Inspectorates

## j. Central Branch

## k. Chief of Signal Communications

1. Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army (simultaneously Inspector of the Army Air Forces (Inspekteur der Heeresflieger))

- m. Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Navy (simultaneously Inspector of the Naval Air Forces (Inspekteur der Marineflieger))

Figure 7 presents a graphic survey of the organizational structure of the Reichs Air Ministry during 1939.

3. Since the negotiations relative to a reorganization of the top-level command failed to bring about an acceptable solution, General Stämpff, Chief of the General Staff, elected to resign from his post. He was subsequently appointed Chief of Air Defense.

Colonel Jeschonnek, former Chief of the Operations Staff, was named to succeed General Stämpff as General Staff Chief. Jeschonnek's appointment became effective on 1 February 1939.

4. The responsibilities of the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff were established as follows:

- a. The State Secretary for Aviation was at the same time Inspector General, Luftwaffe (although the Luftwaffe Inspectorates were not under his command). He served as deputy to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe; his own deputy was the Chief of Air Defense.
- b. The Chief of the Operations Staff was automatically Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff. The office of the Quartermaster General was subordinate to the Operations Staff Chief, as were all the General Staff branches.

The Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff was responsible to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, in all matters having to do with operations and in connection with all orders and instructions of operational nature issued to the troops. The General Staff Chief was required to keep the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, informed of operational activities at all times. After submission of his reports to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, he was required to inform the State Secretary of general developments. In all matters, other than operational, the Chief of the General Staff submitted his reports to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, through the State Secretary, as the latter's representative. In the event that the Chief of the General Staff and the State Secretary should be of differing opinion on any subject, they discussed the matter together with the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

The Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff determined the appointment of officers to the General Staff itself as well as to other key positions reserved for General Staff officers. The General Staff Chief also had a voice in the selection of officers for attaché positions and was permitted to express any objections or reservations he might have; his reservations were passed on to the



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Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, by the Chief of the Luftwaffe

Personnel Office. The General Staff, in close coordination with

the Central Branch, was responsible for technical supervision of the air attachés.

5. The Luftwaffe Commission was established on 1 February 1939. It was its primary responsibility to evaluate organizational effectiveness in all fields of Luftwaffe activity and to present any recommendations it might find necessary.

The President of the Luftwaffe Commission was directly responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

6. The office of the Chief of Flight Safety, expanded to include the section in charge of air accident investigation, was another of the newly-created agencies. It came into being as a result of the need to remove the air accident section from Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 5 and to transfer it (since the ultimate action involved was nearly always disciplinary in nature) to the supervision of the Air Fleet Commands (Luftflottenkommandos). In addition, Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 5 was becoming more and more deeply involved with the day-by-day administration and maintenance of the troops, and was quite willing to pass on air accident investigations to another agency<sup>114</sup>.

The Chief of Flight Safety was directly responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

7. The Luftwaffe General Staff was reduced in size and restricted to those missions directly connected with the operational command function. The following agencies, theretofore subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff, were removed from his authority and reassigned as indicated:

- a. Branch 4 (reassigned as Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch to

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114 - Based on information given by General Fink, Retired (former Chief of Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 5).

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- the newly-established office of the Chief of Training)
- b. the Air Landing and Parachute Forces Staff (reassigned to the office of the Chief of Training as Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 11)
  - c. the Military History Branch (reassigned to the Air War Academy<sup>115</sup>)
  - d. the office of the Chief of Signal Communications (the Chief of Signal Communications was simultaneously made Chief of Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 7 and made directly responsible to the State Secretary and Inspector General, Luftwaffe)

The only connection left between the Chief of the General Staff and the Chief of Signal Communications was in the form of a single liaison officer assigned to Branch 1 of the General Staff.

- e. the office of the Chief of Medical Affairs (reassigned to the office of the Chief of Training as Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 14)

After completion of the reorganization, the following agencies were still subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff:

- a. Chief Group
- b. Branch 1 (Operations)
  - Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces)
  - Branch 3 (Tactical Training)

These three branches formed the so-called Operations Staff.
- c. Office of the Quartermaster General, comprising the following:
  - Branch 2 (Organization)
  - Branch 4 (Supply and Logistics) (formerly Quartermaster General, Branch I)
  - Branch 6 (Armament Activities) (formerly Quartermaster General, Branch II)

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115 - Based on "Establishment and Development of the Luftwaffe Military History Branch", Microfilm roll No. 15.

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d. (outside the Reichs Air Ministry)

Air War Academy and Advanced Luftwaffe School (technical supervision only<sup>116</sup>)

Figure 7a presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the General Staff during 1939.

8. Internal Changes in the General Staff.

- a. the Topography Group, previously directly subordinate to the Chief of the Operations Staff, was made a part of Branch I. Group III (Tactical and Technological Requirements) was rechristened Group I and made directly responsible to the Chief of the General Staff.

Figure 7b presents a graphic summary of the organization<sup>al</sup>/structure of Branch I during 1939.

- b. Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces) was augmented by the following agencies, which were taken over from the Central Branch during the summer of 1939:

Group VI (Press Affairs, Censorship)

Group VII (Administration of Foreign and German Air Attaches)

Figure 7c presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of Branch 5 during 1939.

- c. Branch 3 (Training), after relinquishing its supervision of organized school training to the Chief of Training, was restricted to the directing

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116 - It is reasonable to assume that the two commanders, by reason of their rank (which was far higher than that of the new General Staff Chief), were personally responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

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of tactical training.

d. Branch 2 (Organization) gave up its role in determining the organization of the Reichs Air Ministry to the Central Branch.

e. The former Organization and Training Staffs were abolished.

Figure 7d presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Luftwaffe Military History Branch during 1939<sup>117</sup>.

9. The office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Supply and Procurement was officially established on 1 February 1939. The following agencies were made subordinate to the newly-created office:

- a. All those staff sections concerned with special projects.
- b. The Technical Office
- c. The Supply Office (formerly under the command of the Chief of Air Defense)
- d. The Industrial Economics Group, made up of elements of the Technical Office and the Administration Office.

Under the new organizational plan, the Chief of Luftwaffe Supply and Procurement was in charge of all aspects of materiel armament.

The Chief of Luftwaffe Supply and Procurement was simultaneously the Chief of the Technical Office.

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117 - Based on "Establishment and Development of the Luftwaffe Military History Branch", Microfilm roll No. 15.

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Figure 7e presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Supply and Procurement during 1939<sup>118</sup>.

10. Effective 1 February 1939, the following agencies were made subordinate to the Chief of Air Defense:

- a. the General Air Office
- b. the Administration Office
- c. the Personnel Office (formerly under the immediate supervision of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe)

As a result of this change-over, the Chief of Air Defense took charge of all Luftwaffe personnel administration. As far as officer appointments and promotions were concerned, however, the Chief of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office was directly responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

Figure 7f presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office during 1939<sup>119</sup>.

11. Effective 1 February 1939, the office of the Chief of Training was created to take the place of the former Inspector General, Luftwaffe (which title was taken over by the State Secretary of Aviation). The newly-created office was composed of the following:

- a. Training Branch
- b. Training Directives and Instructional Aids Branch
- c. Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch (formerly Branch 4, Luftwaffe General Staff). Although subordinate to the office of the Chief of Training, this branch operated

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118 - Based on notes and reports kept by General Hertel, Engineer Corps, Retired.

119 - Based on information provided by Colonel Koester, Retired.

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in accordance with instructions issued by Branch 2, Office of the Quartermaster General

d. Aerial Photography Branch (formerly assigned to Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1)

e. The Luftwaffe Inspectors were subordinate to the Chief of Training

12. Luftwaffe Inspectorates

a. See 13, below, in regard to the reorganization of Luftwaffe Inspectorates No. 1 (reconnaissance forces) and No. 8 (naval air forces) in connection with the position and authority granted to the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Navy

b. As of 1 April 1939, the following Luftwaffe Inspectorates were in existence:

- 1) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1 (reconnaissance forces)
- 2) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 2 (bomber and dive-bomber forces)
- 3) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 3 (single-engine, twin-engine, and ground support forces)
- 4) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 5 (flight safety and equipment)
- 5) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6 (motor vehicles)
- 6) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 7 (signal communications)
- 7) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 8 (naval air forces)
- 8) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 9 (pilot schools)
- 9) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 10 (Luftwaffe education and training)  
(at the same time, Command Headquarters, Air War Academies)
- 10) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 11 (air landing and parachute forces)
- 11) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 12 (navigation, instrument flight, and meteorology)

12) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 13 (civil air defense) (formerly under the office of the Chief of Air Defense)

13) Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 14 (medical affairs) (formerly called office of the Chief of Medical Affairs)

c. The Inspectors had the right to inspect the activities of the troop units and of the schools.

d. Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6, Motor Vehicles, was subjected to reorganization on 9 June 1939<sup>120</sup>. In accordance with his newly-assigned duties, the Chief of Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6 had the following responsibilities:

1) those responsibilities specified by the general order concerning Luftwaffe Inspectorate<sup>s</sup>, dated 1 February 1939<sup>121</sup>:

a) maintenance and supervision of Luftwaffe motor vehicle schools

b) maintenance and supervision of motor vehicle courses

c) maintenance and supervision of motor vehicle training at all Luftwaffe echelons

2) over-all responsibility for all questions pertaining to motor vehicle transport within the Luftwaffe

3) over-all responsibility for driving as a sport within the Luftwaffe, including representation of the Luftwaffe in the event of differences of opinion with other Wehrmacht branches.

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120 - Directive issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Central Branch, No 1330/39, Classified, dated 9 June 1939.

121 - Based on an excerpt from the directive cited in Footnote 120.

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4) the following agencies are directly subordinate to the Chief,

Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6:

- a) the Luftwaffe Motor Vehicle Equipment Inspector (Kraftfahrgeraeteinspizient der Luftwaffe)
- b) the Luftwaffe Group (Gruppe Luftwaffe), assigned to the Commander in Chief, Army, as Inspectorate No. 6

The Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6 consisted of the following subdivisions<sup>122</sup>:

Staff I: Motorization

General questions dealing with motorization

Advisory function in connection with organization (exclusive of supply)

Tactical questions in connection with motor vehicle services

Supervision of motor vehicle spare-parts depots (by order of the Quartermaster General)

Estimation of motor vehicle requirements and establishment of the reserve personnel contingent needed in the event of mobilization (together with the Quartermaster General and the Luftwaffe Personnel Office)

Review of over-all Luftwaffe strength authorization tables in order to establish requirements for motor vehicle equipment and personnel

Staff II: Internal Administration

Personnel matters (in connection with personnel assigned to Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6)

Counter-intelligence

Group III: Motor Vehicle Operation Training

Training of drivers and maintenance personnel at troop level

131-a

Supervision of training schedules, courses, and administration of Driver Training Schools (Kraftfahrerschulen)

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122 - The following is a brief summary of the duty and position rosters set up for the Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6, based on the Directive issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Central Branch, No. 1330/39, Classified, dated 9 June 1939.

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Development of Training directives and instructional aids

Supervision of the activities of Luftwaffe driving sport  
enthusiasts

Administration and further training of civilian technicians  
assigned to the Luftwaffe motor vehicle services

Supervision of motor vehicle supply depots

Staff IV: Administration

Procurement of special clothing needed by motor vehicle  
personnel

All matters connected with accidents, liability, and in-  
surance

Personnel administration in connection with civilian clerical  
workers and laborers employed by the Luftwaffe motor  
vehicle services (in conjunction with the Chief of Air  
Defense)

Staff V: Motor Vehicle Technology

Establishment of the technological guidelines for Luftwaffe  
motorization

Establishment of guidelines for the development, classifi-  
cation, and utilization of motor vehicles and motor  
vehicle equipment (in compliance with general instructions  
issued by the Army High Command and the General in  
charge of Motor Vehicle Services (Generalbevollmaechtig-  
ter fuer das Kraftfahrtwesen))

Supervision and evaluation of experimental work in progress  
in the field of motor vehicle technology

Training of motor vehicle engineers (Kraftfahringenieure)

132-a

The Luftwaffe Group, Army High Command, Inspectorate No. 6, was subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and was merely attached to the Army High Command, Inspectorate No. 6. The Luftwaffe Group served as a liaison agency between the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and

the Ordnance Branch of the Army Tank, Cavalry, and Motorized Elements (Waffenabteilung der Panzertruppe, Kavallerie, und Heeresmotorisierung) (Inspectorate No. 6) and the General in Charge of Motor Vehicle Services, insofar as all matters pertaining to Luftwaffe motorization were concerned.

The Luftwaffe Group was responsible<sup>123</sup> for keeping all interested agencies of the Office of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and of the Army High Command, Inspectorate No. 6, fully informed of the organizational and operational planning carried out in connection with motor vehicle services, in order to assure a certain degree of uniformity in the measures taken by the two Wehrmacht branches.

Figure 7g presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6 during 1939.

13. The Luftwaffe Generals, offices of the Commander in Chief, Army, and Commander in Chief, Navy (Generale der Luftwaffe beim Oberbefehlshaber des Heeres und Oberbefehlshaber der Marine)<sup>124</sup>.

- a. The position of the Luftwaffe General assigned to the Commander in Chief, Army, and the Inspectorate for Aerial Reconnaissance Forces (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1) (with the exception of the Aerial Photography Branch, which was made directly subordinate to the Chief of Training) were combined to form the post of Luftwaffe General, office of the Commander in Chief, Army, and Commander of the Army Air Forces (Befehlshaber der Heeresfliegerverbände). The Luftwaffe General was at the same time Inspector of the Army Air Forces (Inspekteur der Heeresflieger).

123 - A detailed list of responsibilities is contained in Directive No. 1330/39, issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Central Branch, Classified, dated 9 June 1939 (Order No. 19 for the reorganization of the Ministry).

133-a

124 - Based on the report entitled "Organization" (Organisation), on Microfilm roll 16, which contains reference to instruction issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Quartermaster General, Branch 2, No. 790/39, Classified, dated 8 March 1939, and also on information furnished the author by Generals Drum and Lohmann, both Retired.

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In his capacity as Chief, Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1, the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army, was subordinate to the Chief of Training. His authority to inspect the troops applied only to the Army Air Forces and to the aerial reconnaissance schools. Inspection authority in connection with the long-range reconnaissance units (subordinate to the air fleet commands having jurisdiction over the area in which they were stationed) was the prerogative of the Inspector of the Bomber Forces (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 2).

Figure 7h presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the office of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army, and Commander, Army Air Forces, during 1939.

- b. The post of the Luftwaffe General assigned to the Commander in Chief, Navy, and the Commander, Naval Air Forces (General der Luftwaffe beim Oberbefehlshaber der Kriegsmarine und Befehlshaber der Marinefliegerverbände), at the same time Inspector of the Naval Air Forces was newly created in conjunction with the Inspectorate for Naval Air Forces (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 8).

In his capacity as chief of Inspectorate No. 8, the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Navy, was directly subordinate to the Chief of Training. He had inspection authority only in connection with the Naval Air Forces and with the Naval Pilot Training Schools (Fliegerschulen See).

14. The Central Branch, taking over responsibility for the organizational structure of the Reichs Air Ministry (with the exception of the office of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, which remained the responsibility of Branch 2, Luftwaffe General Staff) and relinquishing its authority over the Press Group and Attaché Group to Branch 5, Luftwaffe General Staff, consisted

of the following<sup>125</sup>:

- a. Judge Advocate Branch
- b. Organization Group
- c. Ministry Office Chief
- d. Headquarters Commandant, Reichs Air Ministry
- e. Central Archives (Zentralbuecherei)

Figure 7i presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Central Branch during 1939.

15. On 1 July 1939, Branch 2 of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office was re-organized into the Luftwaffe Defense Office Group (Luftwaffenwehrantsgruppe) and placed under the direct supervision of the Chief of Air Defense. The Luftwaffe Defense Office Group consisted of the following<sup>126</sup>:

a. Branch 1

- 1) general personnel matters at troop level
- 2) administration of the music corps
- 3) supervision of the aptitude testing program
- 4) supervision of branch schools
- 5) administration of troop welfare

b. Branch 2

- 1) supervision of the replacement program for non-commissioned officer and enlisted personnel
- 2) supervision of the replacement program for secondary flying personnel (including replacement personnel and civilian personnel assigned to the flying forces)
- 3) personnel matters in connection with officer and officer candidate personnel (together with the Luftwaffe Personnel Office)

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125 - Based on German Aviation - Volume for 1939.



135-a

126 - Based on the duty and position roster for the Luftwaffe Defense Office

Group issued in the directive from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Central Branch, No. 1730/39, Classified, dated 28 July 1939.

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## Section 13 - Status of Developments in 1939.

1. During the period 1 February through 1 April 1939, the organization of the Luftwaffe top-level command apparatus was altered slightly (the basic organizational principles theretofore valid were retained) in order to adapt its operations to the recent establishment of the Reichs Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (Reichsprotectorat Boehmen und Maehren).

The command organization of the Army and Navy Air Forces was changed as follows:

- a. Those aerial reconnaissance units destined for assignment to the Army in the event of mobilization were detached from the air divisions and assigned to the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army.
- b. The Luftwaffe Naval Command (Luftwaffenkommando See) was abolished and the naval air units, formerly under the command of the Commander, Naval Air Forces (Fuehrer der Seeluftstreitkraefte), were made subordinate to the newly created office of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Navy.
- c. After the reorganization had taken effect, the following elements existed:
  - 1) five air fleet commands (east, north, west, southeast, and East Prussia)
  - 2) ten air district commands
  - 3) position of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army, and Commander, Army Air Forces
  - 4) position of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Navy, and Commander, Naval Air Forces

- 5) seven air division commands
- 6) position of the Commander, Naval Air Forces
- 7) Luftwaffe Training Division Command
- 8) Command Headquarters, Air Defense Zone West, and office of the Senior Commander, Fortifications Antiaircraft Artillery (Hoeherer Kommandeur der Festungsflakartillerie)

Figure 7k presents a graphic summary of the organization of Luftwaffe command apparatus during 1939.

2. The following changes were effected in the organization of the training installations:

- a. Reorganization of the Flight School and Replacement Battalion Commands into Senior Flight Training Commands (Hoehere Fliegerausbildungskommandos)
- b. Assignment of the signal communications schools (Luftnachrichtenschulen) to the newly created office of the Senior Commander, Signal Communications Schools (Hoeherer Kommandeur der Luftnachrichtenschulen)

The school commands were subordinate to their local air district commands as far as troop services were concerned; however, they received their instructions in regard to training directly from the office of the Reichs Air Minister, Chief of Training.

3. The Luftwaffe took part in the invasion of Bohemia and Moravia on 15 and 16 March 1939 and of the Memel Land on 23 March 1939.

4. The Luftwaffe had attained the following peacetime strength:

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- a. 3 reconnaissance wing staffs (as of 1 August 1938)<sup>127</sup>
- b. 14 reconnaissance group staffs
- c. 30 close-range reconnaissance squadrons
- d. 23 long-range reconnaissance squadrons
- e. 5 single-engine fighter wing staffs (as of 15 August 1939)<sup>128</sup>
- f. 16 single-engine fighter groups
- g. 1 twin-engine fighter wing staff (as of 15 August 1939)<sup>128</sup>
- h. 10 twin-engine fighter groups
- i. 14 bomber wing staffs (as of 1 June 1939)<sup>129</sup>
- j. 30 bomber groups
- k. 1 dive-bomber wing staff
- l. 9 dive-bomber groups
- m. 1 close-support aircraft group
- n. 5 coastal patrol group staffs
- o. 8 all-purpose squadrons
- p. 6 reconnaissance squadrons (Sea)
- q. 2 carrier-based squadrons
- r. 2 ship-based squadrons
- s. 22 antiaircraft artillery regiment staffs (as of 1 August 1939)<sup>130</sup>
- t. 44 heavy (mixed) antiaircraft artillery battalions
- u. 14 permanent antiaircraft artillery battalions
- v. 14 light antiaircraft artillery battalions
- w. 5 fortifications antiaircraft artillery battalions
- x. 16 antiaircraft artillery searchlight battalions
- y. 1 antiaircraft artillery training battalion

127 - The figures pertaining to the aerial reconnaissance units are based on a study by General Drum, Retired.

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128 - The figures pertaining to single-engine and twin-engine fighter forces are based on a study by General Grabmann, Retired, "The Development of the Single-Engine and Twin-Engine Fighter Forces", dated 15 December 1955.

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129 - The figures given for the bomber, dive-bomber, and coastal patrol forces are based on a report issued by the Quartermaster General, Branch 2, No. 900/39, Classified.

130 - The figures pertaining to the antiaircraft artillery are based on information provided by General von Arthelm, Retired

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## CHAPTER III

## COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY

## Section 1 - The Organization of the Reichs Air Ministry

1. A characteristic of the organizational set-up of the Reichs Air Ministry was its organic unification of the highest Luftwaffe command agency with the highest administrative agency responsible for commercial aviation and civil air defense.

In a manner of speaking, this unification had taken place as early as during the Reichswehr period, when the Reichs Ministry of Defense and the Reichs Traffic Ministry not only worked closely together but even pooled their budgets for aeronautical research, technical development, aircraft and engine testing, and the study of aircraft manufacturing processes. Furthermore, inasmuch as even the very first steps taken towards the creation of a small flying force (originally planned as a possible reinforcement of the Reichswehr) were at least temporarily dependent to some degree on commercial aviation and its potentialities, it was inevitable that the top-level agencies responsible for military aviation should be closely connected with those charged with supervision of the activities of Germany's commercial air organizations. Thus, from the historical point of view, the consolidation of military and commercial aeronautical activity in 1933 did not represent the first step in a new direction, but rather the official organizational confirmation of a situation which had long existed unofficially.

In the Reichs Ministry of Defense, on the other hand, Army and Navy leaders cooperated closely in the establishment of a new German air force, particularly in respect to technological research and development, quite apart from the fact that neither was willing to forego its claim to a separately organized tactical air force such as had been the case during World War I. The air force leaders in the Reichs Ministry of Defense, on the other hand, influenced by World War I planning in terms of a separate air force as well as by the example set by other nations, were strongly in favor of the establishment of an independent air arm, which was to have tactical as well as strategic functions. This, of course, presupposed that all questions concerning military aviation could and would be centralized in a single new office - still to be created - of the Reichs Ministry of Defense. This, in turn, was a thought which was bound to encounter resistance on the part of the Army and Navy - particularly the Army.

In the meantime, the office of the Reichs Commissioner of Aviation, Germany's highest-ranking aeronautical agency, was established under Goering. The consolidation of all aeronautical affairs under one authority served to open up new perspectives in the field of military aviation. Specifically, it showed up the traditional division of military aviation into Army and Navy aviation as completely out-of-date and forced Army and Navy representatives to give up - albeit reluctantly -



their adamantine agitation against a consolidation of all those agencies in the Reichs Ministry of Defense which were concerned with the affairs of military aviation. But before this consolidation could be completed, Goering - as his first official act - arrogated the supervision of all aeronautical developmental activity to his own office, thus uniting the administration of developmental research for both commercial and military aviation under one agency. Shortly thereafter, in 1933, all the rest of the Reichs Ministry of Defense agencies concerned with military aviation were transferred to the newly-created Reichs Air Ministry. This mass transfer served to epitomize a developmental trend which had begun in the post-war years (1920) as a necessary evil and which had been given its organizational blessing by the authoritarian regime of 1933.

2. The Organizational Development of the Reichs Air Ministry (see Figure 8).

Apart from the temporary period of transition during the summer of 1933, the over-all organizational development of the Reichs Air Ministry can be divided into three stages. Each one of these stages reflects not only the continuing growth of the Luftwaffe but also the political atmosphere in which it took place.

a. I October 1933 - 31 March 1935

This period, representing the first of the three stages, was characterized by the following:

- 1) the need for absolute secrecy, dictated by the considerations of Germany's foreign policy, and bringing with it the countless restrictions and obstructions which

made it so difficult for the Reichs Ministry of Defense to put to practical use the organizational and developmental principles which it had worked out.

- 2) the need for establishing the principles necessary for the founding and further development of a completely new Wehrmacht branch.
- 3) the need for the newly-created Reichs Air Ministry to adapt itself to some degree to the policies set by the Army and Navy (not only for reasons of foreign policy, but also for purely practical reasons)
- 4) the exploitation of commercial aviation (particularly in respect to pilot training) for military purposes; such exploitation was based not only on the fact that commercial aviation represented the best available source of experience and information, but also on its suitability as a camouflage activity.
- 5) Goering's instructions to build up a "trial fleet" as soon as possible, regardless of the cost involved.

By 1 April 1934, the Reichs Air Ministry had attained the organizational set-up on which all subsequent reorganizations were to be based.

The primary characteristic of this organizational set-up was the importance accorded the Air Command Office within the Reichs Air Ministry. Within the framework of the missions assigned to it, the Air Command Office was permitted to make certain demands upon the other Ministry offices or was empowered to prescribe the conditions under which they were to contribute to the growth of the Luftwaffe. Of particular significance in this respect were the tactical and technological requirements which the Air Command Office

issued to the Technical Office in connection with the development of aircraft, weapons, ammunition, and aircraft equipment. The Air Command Office was also responsible for establishing personnel and materiel requirements for the expansion and <sup>m</sup>aintenance of the Luftwaffe and for determining the type and scope of the required armaments (in this connection, the reader is also referred to Section 2 of this chapter, The Organization of the Luftwaffe General Staff).

The Technical Office, working in accordance with the requirements established by the Air Command Office, was responsible for supervising aeronautical research, for issuing research and development guidelines to the aircraft and armament industries, for supervising the technological testing of newly-developed equipment, and for handling the procurement of armament items.

Corresponding to its missions, as described above, the Technical Office was divided into the Research, Development, and Procurement Branches.

Its organizational structure was characterized by a more or less horizontal form, in which all developmental matters, on the one hand, and all procurement matters, on the other, were handled by different but parallel branches. This organizational form, inherited from the Army, was changed later on.

The Administration Office was in charge of budgetary and financial matters, payroll administration, logistics (food and clothing, and billeting), and construction. In the beginning, until they were taken over by the

Luftwaffe Personnel Office, all matters pertaining to the personnel administration of civilian officials, clerical personnel, and laborers were also the responsibility of the Administration Office.

The organization and expansion of the Luftwaffe ground services (establishment of airfield commands, advanced airports, etc.) were subject to instructions issued by the Air Command Office.

The Luftwaffe Personnel Office was responsible for filling officer positions in accordance with the strength authorization tables issued by the Air Command Office and for the establishment of a personnel reserve capable of meeting the requirements connected with military planning for the immediate future. The Personnel Office was also in charge of all aspects of personnel administration and welfare, with the exception of those pertaining to civilian officials and other civilian personnel, which (in accordance with the example set by the Army) were handled by the Administration Office.

The General Air Office, the only purely civilian office, was responsible for the over-all administration of aviation activity within the German Reich. This included the supervision of fields of endeavor which - like the Reichs Meteorological Service, for example - served both commercial and military air activity. Moreover, the General Air Office had charge of aerial photography for both commercial and military purposes.

The Central Branch was created to take care of all the miscellaneous administrative duties which became necessary with the establishment of the Reichs Air Ministry and with the subsequent expansion of the Luftwaffe.

In the beginning, the Central Branch even had charge of medical affairs within the Luftwaffe. Later on, its duties were largely restricted to the internal administration of the Reichs Air Ministry.

The Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools, which had existed in similar form as the Flight School Command under the Air Defense Office of the Reichs Ministry of Defense, was responsible for directing the training of the flying and aerotechnical personnel in accordance with instructions received from the Air Command Office.

The Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools had charge of the Luftwaffe courses carried on at the civilian pilot schools (the latter were utilized for military purposes prior to the establishment of official Luftwaffe training installations), as well as those sponsored by the Luftwaffe ordnance schools (land and sea).

The office of the Chief of Procurement and Supply was established to deal with all questions concerning supply (including organizational, technical, and administrative aspects). Organizationally, the office of the Chief of Procurement and Supply was not a part of the Reichs Air Ministry; however, it operated in accordance with instructions received directly from the Air Command Office.

In view of the scope of its mission, namely the establishment of a completely new Wehrmacht branch (the Luftwaffe) and that with the least possible delay, the original organization of the Reichs Air Ministry was remarkably modest.

On the one hand, as we have seen, the need for secrecy, imposed by

the exigencies of Germany's foreign policy, created a number of difficulties; on the other hand, the Hitler regime (in which Reichs Air Minister Goering held a leading position), by virtue of its dictatorial powers, was able to overcome almost all setbacks of a personnel, financial, or economic nature and thus did much to speed up the expansion of the Luftwaffe.

b. 1 April 1935 - 31 January 1938

This period, representing the second developmental stage, was characterized by the following:

- 1) intensification of both horizontal and vertical expansion after Germany had regained her military sovereignty.
- 2) a gradual decrease in the degree of Luftwaffe dependence upon and adherence to Army and Navy procedures, which culminated in the final establishment of the Luftwaffe as a fully independent third Wehrmacht branch.
- 3) an increase in the importance assigned to the problems of command, training, and troop welfare.
- 4) the growing emphasis on tactical operational planning and on preparations for mobilization, occasioned by Hitler's increasing activity in the field of foreign relations.
- 5) the 1937 crisis of top-level organization within the Reichs Air Ministry.
- 6) the first plans (coming at the end of this period) for a thoroughgoing reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry, as well as of the entire Luftwaffe command apparatus.

1935:

Little or no change was made in the organization of the offices of the Reichs Air Ministry .

The antiaircraft artillery forces were made a part of the Luftwaffe.

In recognition of the need for a more specialized administration for the various special flying forces, the Reichs Air Ministry set up its first inspectorates (see also Section 4, Organization of the Luftwaffe Inspectorates).

The build-up of the inspectorate staffs and the expansion of the command apparatus both encountered serious difficulty because of the shortage of qualified staff and technical personnel.

The Advanced Luftwaffe School and the Air War Academy were founded in order to assure a continuing source of General Staff officers, and the Air Technical Academy was established for the training of Luftwaffe engineer personnel. The significance attributed to these academies as training institutions for future Luftwaffe staff and technical leaders was clearly emphasized by their immediate subordination to the Chief of the Air Command Office.

1936:

The deliberate speed-up in training in the schools and also in the units themselves resulted in such an increase in flying accidents

that special remedial measures became necessary (establishment of the Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Aircraft Equipment).

The Luftwaffe General Staff was officially established as far as its personnel make-up was concerned; its chief was the Chief of the Air Command Office.

On the basis of the experience gained so far, the Luftwaffe supply set-up was subjected to reorganization (see Section 3, Organization of Special Areas of Activity within the Reichs Air Ministry).

#### 1937-

The inspectorate system was expanded further.

The Air Command Office, by dint of additional organizational changes, was gradually being groomed to take over as the Luftwaffe General Staff (in this connection, the reader is referred to Section 2, The Organization of the Luftwaffe General Staff).

The office of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army (previously to become effective only in the event of mobilization) was given full status in the peacetime organizational plan. This step, of course, served to establish a more or less permanent top-level apparatus under which the Luftwaffe units attached to the Army could be brought into action immediately in the event of mobilization. It did not, however, assure uniform operational command of these units during peacetime.

A similar organizational move proved to be unnecessary for the naval air units, inasmuch as the latter already had a uniform operational command headquarters in the form of the Command Headquarters, VIth Air Area Command, which had been detailed to work closely with the Navy.



c. 1 February 1938 - Beginning of World War II, is characterized by the following:

- 1) the reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry
  - a) changes in the top-level command organization
  - b) the transition in the Reichs Air Ministry from horizontal to vertical organization (i.e. the organizational merging of several offices)
- 2) the coordination of all existing Luftwaffe inspectorates
- 3) the necessity, occasioned by certain political developments, of making a definite organizational distinction between the Luftwaffe forces needed for free Luftwaffe operations on the one hand, and geographically bound air defense activities on the other
- 4) the desire to adapt the peacetime organization to the one envisioned in the event of mobilization.

1938:

The top-level command organization within the Reichs Air Ministry was reorganized as follows:

The Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the State Secretary of Aviation, and the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff represented a single top-level command entity, in which the General Staff played the role of the operational staff of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. This triumvirate, accepted as a compromise solution after 1937's unproductive haggling, was admittedly nothing more than an attempt to remedy the

dualism of leadership which had hitherto existed between the State Secretary of Aviation and the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff. It could not, of course, combat successfully the problems posed by the existing top-level command organization of the Reichs Air Ministry (in this connection, the reader is referred to conclusions expressed in "The Problem of the Top-Level Organizational Set-Up").

Quite apart from personal wishes, political influence, and the need to consider casually expressed preferences, any plans for a reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry were also guided by the following objective points of view:

- 1) Apart from the General Staff, which was automatically an integral part of the top-level command apparatus, the Reichs Air Ministry consisted of six offices (including the Central Branch), whose chiefs were directly subordinate to the State Secretary of Aviation in his capacity as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. In addition, the State Secretary was responsible for the activity of two Luftwaffe Inspectorates (the extremely large inspectorates for antiaircraft artillery and air defense and for flight safety and equipment), while the remaining seven inspectorates were subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff.

This concentration of agencies representing very different fields of endeavor under one single head (in this case, the State Secretary) was highly impractical for a predominantly military ministry, which was continually faced with the need for

making new and far-reaching decisions and which therefore needed to be highly flexible. It was this need for flexibility which motivated the decision to combine a number of offices under intermediate command agencies.

- 2) The idea of bringing together under one top-level agency all the various offices concerned with materiel armament, and under another all those dealing with personnel recruitment and administration, was both obvious and logical.
- 3) A reorganization of the inspectorate system was clearly indicated, primarily to relieve the General Staff Chief (whose tasks of preparing for war and planning for the Luftwaffe's participation were becoming more and more time-consuming) of the burden of day-by-day supervision of the work of the inspectorates, but also to assure their subordination to a uniform authority.

On the basis of these considerations, the following organizational changes were made:

- 1) The office of the Chief of Air Defense was created and three of the six existing offices (i.e. six counting the Central Branch) - the General Air Office, the Administration Office, and the Supply Office - were made subordinate to it.

This organizational step clearly reveals the desire to create a kind of administrative ministry of war. On the other hand, it fell short of realizing the ~~stated~~ goal of coordinating materiel armament activity for the following reason:

the Technical Office, as the most important link in the chain, was not included.

The subordination of the Supply Office and the General Air Office to the Chief of Air Defense seems appropriate, especially since the Supply Office, apart from its close concern with technological matters, was far more an integral part of the command function at General Staff level (due to the significance of its missions for the conduct of operations) than an administrative entity in a war ministry.

On the whole, this change was not a particularly logical one, and it is obvious that certain personal wishes were given fullest consideration (Udet was then Chief of the Technical Office).

- 2) The office of Inspector General, Luftwaffe, was established and all Luftwaffe inspectorates made subordinate to it. Provisions were made for coordination of their work through the Luftwaffe General Staff in matters of vital importance to the conduct of operations.
- 3) The Technical Office was reorganized internally. Previously, development and procurement had been handled by two separate branches; under the new system, a number of branches were set up to represent various categories of equipment, and each of these branches was responsible for the development as well as

the procurement of its particular equipment. This measure represented an attempt to expedite operations by uniting all the steps pertaining to any one piece of equipment under a single responsible agency.

After completion of this vertical reorganization, the State Secretary of Aviation, who had previously had eight independent agencies under his command (five offices, the Central Branch, and two inspectorates), had only five (the office of the Chief of Air Defense, the Technical Office, the Personnel Office, the office of the Inspector General, and the Central Branch).

Viewed in its entirety, the top-level organizational structure of the Reichs Air Ministry in the spring of 1938 reflects the striving of Luftwaffe leaders to prepare their command apparatus for Germany's possible involvement in war - a possibility which was becoming more and more likely with the growing tension of her political position. This motivation finds expression in the newly defined closeness of the General Staff and the office of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, with the General Staff serving as the latter's "operations staff", and in the obvious attempt to relieve the General Staff of all work not directly connected with the preparation and planning of military operations.

The command organization in the field was also modified to permit increased emphasis on tactical operations, and the mobilization preparedness of the troops was raised.

The Air Area Commands (theretofore responsible for all aspects of operation) were replaced by the Luftwaffe Group Commands with their subordinate Air District Commands. The Luftwaffe Group Commands were the instruments of operational command, while the Air District Commands - implementing instructions received from the former - were responsible for civil air defense, ground organization activity, and supply operations. In order to raise the degree of operational readiness among the troops, the separation of flying forces and ground organization forces, due to take effect only in the event of mobilization, was carefully prepared so that it could be carried out quickly and smoothly.

1939:

During 1939 the burden of leadership within the Reichs Air Ministry was concentrated more and more on the State Secretary, until - for all practical purposes - the General Staff Chief was almost entirely subordinate to him (except, of course, in matters exclusively concerned with military operations). Moreover, the State Secretary arrogated to himself the office of the Inspector General, Luftwaffe<sup>131</sup> (without the inspectorates). Thus he was

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131 - The official appointment of the State Secretary to the simultaneous post of Inspector General of the Luftwaffe was merely formal confirmation of a state of affairs long in existence. Feldmarschall Milch, Retired, states that he had been Inspector General to all intents and purposes since 1937, as the "equivalent" of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. (Based on information furnished by Professor Richard Suchenwirth in a letter dated 9 September 1955. Milch's statement was made in answer to a number of questions put to him by Professor Suchenwirth at the request of the author.)

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no longer simply the State Secretary of Aviation in the original sense, but rather the incumbent of a position which permitted him to command and to inspect and criticize at the same time. Under these altered circumstances, of course, the organizational unity of top-level command as proclaimed in 1938 (i.e. Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, State Secretary, and General Staff Chief) was pointless. (In this connection, the reader is referred to "The Problem of the Top-Level Organizational Set-Up").

The reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry along vertical lines, which had begun in 1938 with the establishment of the office of the Chief of Air Defense, was continued. The Technical Office, the Supply Office, and the newly-created Department of Industrial Economy were combined to form the office of the Chief of Supply and Procurement, Luftwaffe. However, inasmuch as the Chief of Supply and Procurement was simultaneously Chief of the Technical Office with its many branches, this combination created a work-load which could hardly be mastered by a single individual.

After the Supply Office had been transferred to the office of the Chief of Supply and Procurement, the General Air Office and the Administration Office - as well as the Personnel Office - remained under the office of the Chief of Air Defense.

This newest reorganization succeeded far better than the one of 1938 in bringing together all the agencies concerned with material armament activity on the one hand (under the Chief of Supply and Procurement), and all those dealing with personnel recruitment and administration on the other (under the Chief of Air Defense).

The Luftwaffe inspectorates, their number having increased in the meantime, were made subordinate to the Chief of Training (Chef des Ausbildungswesens), who had succeeded to the post of the former Inspector General and who was in charge of all formal training within the Luftwaffe. The General Staff confined itself to the planning and supervision of tactical training.

Following the tendency to modify the Luftwaffe's peacetime organizational structure to conform to that envisioned in the event of mobilization, the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army, was immediately granted the rank of Commander, Army Air Forces.

Similarly, the naval air forces were made subordinate to the Air Commander, office of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Navy, and Commander, Naval Air Forces. At the same time, the old Luftwaffe Command, Sea, was abolished.

The two Luftwaffe General posts were somewhat unusual in that they were Ministry positions and field command positions at the same time.



The creation of the Luftwaffe Commission (Luftwaffenkommission) had no particular significance. It owed its existence not to any actual need, but to personnel considerations, i.e. the necessity of utilizing the newly jobless Chief of Air Defense.

In summary, it is clear that the reorganization carried through in the spring of 1939 was designed even more deliberately than that of 1938 to assure that the Reichs Air Ministry would be ready in the event of war. The General Staff, as the operations staff of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was still spared all work not directly concerned with military preparations. All in all, one might say that the reorganization of 1939 divided the Reichs Air Ministry into three large sections, the Office of the Chief of Supply and Procurement (technological developments and materiel armament activity), the office of the Chief of Air Defense (personnel recruitment and administration, general administration, commercial aviation), and the office of the Chief of Training together with the Luftwaffe inspectorates.

The reorganization of the chain of command headed by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, begun during 1938 and continued in 1939, was also one of the measures carefully planned to insure Luftwaffe preparedness in the face of the growing tension occasioned by Germany's foreign policies.

Section 2 - Organization of the Luftwaffe General Staff.

1. Fundamentally, the organizational structure of the Luftwaffe General Staff was determined by its missions and by its status as the instrument of command utilized by the commander in chief of a Wehrmacht branch. Within this given framework, the Luftwaffe General Staff developed out of the Air Command Office in accordance with the number and quality of personnel available, the experience it gathered as it went along, and the needs imposed by Germany's political position, which grew more critical each year. It is obvious, of course, that the personal views of the various General Staff chiefs in connection with organization and assignment of duties also exercised a certain influence on its development.

Thus, the various organizational changes, the assumption of new missions, and the rejection of certain missions hitherto carried out all reflect not only the overall political and military situation, but also (to a certain extent at least) the personal attitudes and approaches of the individual General Staff chiefs. From this standpoint, the development of the General Staff can be divided into three separate periods, namely its development under the following:

- a. Wever and Kesselring
- b. Stumpff
- c. Jeschonnek

2. The Organizational Development of the General Staff from the Air Command Office (see Figure 8a).

a. Under Wever and Kesselring (1 October 1933 - 31 May 1937), this development was characterized by the following:

- 1) the position of leadership held by the Air Command Office within the framework of the horizontal organization of all the Ministry offices under the State Secretary of Aviation in his capacity as permanent deputy of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe
- 2) the horizontal organization of the Air Command Office itself, with all of its branch chiefs directly subordinate to the Office Chief
- 3) the friction between the Chief of the Air Command Office and the State Secretary, which became more and more apparent as the Air Command Office gained in importance as the command instrument of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. (In this connection the reader is also referred to "The Problem of the Top-Level Organizational Set-Up").

1934:

During the period from 15 May 1933, when the Air Defense Office of the Reichs Ministry of War was assigned to the Reichs Air Ministry (on 1 September 1933 it physically moved to its new location) to 1934, the Air Defense Office developed into the Air Command Office. Its first Chief was Colonel Wever, former Chief of the Training Branch in the Troop Office (Ausbildungsabteilung, Truppenamt) of the Reichs Ministry of War.

Conforming to the organization of the Troop Office (General Staff) of the Reichs Ministry of War, the Air Command Office was originally divided into the following three branches:

- 1) Operations
- 2) Organization
- 3) Training

These three branches, which had already existed in similar form - if in much smaller scope - in the Air Defense Office, formed the general-staff-nucleus of the Air Command Office.

The Operations Branch, in addition to dealing with questions pertaining to operational and tactical matters, was also responsible for establishing the technological-tactical requirements passed on to the Technical Office in regard to the development of aircraft, weapons, instruments, ammunition, etc.

In addition, in the beginning Branch I of the Air Command Office was also assigned responsibility for the collation and evaluation of information pertaining to foreign air forces (previously handled by the Air Defense Office) and for the administration of supply and logistics (quartermaster activities), an area of endeavor which became significant with the official establishment and organization of training schools and flying units.

The Organization Branch, which had borne the lion's share of work and responsibility during the early developmental stages, continued to be responsible for the organization of the Reichs Air Ministry and, as a matter of fact,

of the Luftwaffe as a whole (with the exception of the antiaircraft artillery forces). This included a certain degree of responsibility for both personnel administration and materiel armament activity, in that the Organization Branch was in charge of preparing and submitting to the various responsible offices certain estimates, plans, and instructions pertaining to mobilization planning and to the organization and administration of the Luftwaffe ground organization forces.

The Training Branch, Air Command Office, was responsible for the preparation and issuance of guidelines and directives pertaining to training among the troops as well as in the various schools (this activity was closely coordinated with the work of the Luftwaffe inspectorates). Later on, this phase of its activity was extended to cover the training of Luftwaffe officer candidates and even General Staff officers. (Basic military training, as well as the training of officer candidates, remained in the hands of the Army and Navy until 1934).

In addition to the branches discussed above, the Air Command Office was comprised of the following technical service branches:

- 1) Signal Communications Branch
- 2) Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch
- 3) Supply Branch
- 4) Civil Air Defense Branch

The Signal Communications Branch, of course, was responsible for the establishment and operation of the communications network

required by the exigencies of modern, highly mobile air warfare methods. In addition, it exercised<sup>s</sup> technical supervision over all questions concerned with the expansion of the communications network or with the growth of the signal communications forces.

The area of endeavor assigned to the Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch was in reality a highly specialized aspect of organization; originally, it had been handled directly by the Organization Branch.

The Supply Branch was charged with the detailed estimation of armament requirements on the basis of figures furnished by the Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch in connection with the planned activation of units. These figures served as an indication to the Technical Office of the equipment to be procured and to the Supply Office of the equipment needed for initial issue and for subsequent supply.

The Civil Air Defense Branch continued to carry out the missions heretofore assigned; the only difference was that they were now accomplished at the direction of the Chief of the Air Command Office.

The following were characteristic of the organizational set-up of the Air Command Office during 1934:

- 1) the subdivision of its command functions (Branches I, II, and III) into general-staff-like areas rather than into areas reflecting the various technical fields involved
- 2) the incorporation of the technical services (signal communications, strength and equipment authorization, supply, and civil air defense) into the

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Air Command Office and, consequently, their close coordination with the branches concerned with operational planning in the particular fields.

The organizational structure adhered to during 1934 had certain advantages in that it obviated a lengthy chain of command (clearly advantageous for the Luftwaffe's early expansion era) and assured that the technical service branches would have ready access to the thinking, planning, and working methods of the top-level command echelon (particularly important in view of their later detachment from the Air Command Office, or rather Luftwaffe General Staff).

1935:

The stage of Luftwaffe expansion so far attained and that counted upon in view of Germany's achievement of military sovereignty resulted in increased emphasis on the command organization and on questions of troop administration. The continued training of officers for the Luftwaffe General Staff, for example, was a field which obviously required further study. In an attempt to meet the demands created by Germany's new situation, certain organizational measures were carried out which did not require any fundamental change in the organization

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of the Air Command Office:

- 1) Within the Operations Branch the Staffs for Target Evaluation and Technological-Tactical Requirements were expanded into groups.
- 2) The Quartermaster Group and the Foreign Air Forces Group were detached from the Operations Branch and made independent branches.
- 3) The concept "operations staff" was more clearly defined to include the following:
  - a) Operations Branch
  - b) Quartermaster Branch
  - c) Foreign Air Forces Group
  - d) Signal Communications Branch

The operational staff had no official chief to begin with, but was supervised by the Chief of the Operations Branch, who was entrusted with the coordination of all command functions. Even so, the branches comprising the Operations Staff remained directly subordinate to the Chief of the Air Command Office.

- 4) Responsibility for troop administration and administration of the various weapons systems belonging to the Luftwaffe was transferred to



the newly created Luftwaffe inspectorates, including the Inspectorate for Motor Vehicle Services.

The fact that the inspectorates were subordinate to the Chief of the Air Command Office was an additional guarantee of the closeness existing between the command organization and the troops.

Medical affairs were also detached from the Central Branch and made subordinate to the Chief of the Air Command Office.

- 5) The agencies responsible for civil air defense activity, on the other hand, were transferred from the Air Command Office to the Inspectorate for Anti-aircraft Artillery Forces, which was the only inspectorate not subordinate to the Chief of the Air Command Office.

- 6) The academies established to handle the training of General Staff officers were also placed under the command of the Chief of the Air Command Office.

Supervision of General Staff training was the responsibility of the Training Branch, Air Command Office. The Chief of the Training Branch was also in charge of the newly established Research Group for the History of Aerial Warfare, Reichs Air Ministry (Forschungsgruppe des Reichsluftfahrtministeriums fuer Luftkriegsgeschichte).

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The organizational structure of the Air Command Office during 1935 was characterized by the close organizational connection between the inspectorates and the Luftwaffe General Staff.

The Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery Forces and Civil Air Defense was the only one which was not subordinate to the Chief of the Air Command Office; instead it was directly responsible to the State Secretary for Aviation. As a matter of fact, this particular inspectorate always occupied a rather special position in the Reichs Air Ministry, justified in the beginning by the over-all situation, but quite unwarranted later on. On the whole, this must be counted as an error in organization, resulting in too strong an emphasis on offensive air warfare at the expense of strategically-conducted defensive air activity. It is difficult to determine cause and effect in this particular instance; it is hard to say whether the relatively independent status of the Luftwaffe Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense was the result of its own organizational maneuvering or the result of the predominantly offensive thinking of the General Staff. (In this connection, the reader is referred to Section 4, Organization of the Luftwaffe Inspectorates).

1936:

Generalleutnant Kesselring succeeded Generalleutnant Wever, who was fatally injured when his aircraft crashed in June, 1936, as Chief of the Air Command Office.

1936 marked the official delineation of the General Staff as far as its personnel aspect was concerned. The Chief of the Air Command Office was automatically Chief of the General Staff.

The reorganization of the supply function resulted in the removal of the Supply Branch from the Air Command Office. (In this connection, the reader is referred to Section 3, Organization of Special Areas of Activity within the Reichs Air Ministry).

Questions pertaining to military preparedness and the conduct of military operations became more and more important as the crisis (Czechoslovakia) approached.

b. Under Stumpff (1 June 1937 - 31 January 1939), the organizational development of the Luftwaffe General Staff out of the Air Command Office was characterized by the following:

- 1) the equalization of the position of the General Staff Chief with that of the State Secretary
- 2) the organization of the Air Command Office into the Luftwaffe General Staff
- 3) the growing friction between the State Secretary and the General Staff Chief and the resulting dualism of leadership
- 4) the modification of the General Staff from a predominantly horizontal organizational form to a more vertical one
- 5) the reorganization of the top-level command as a whole
- 6) the introduction of the military measures required by Germany's increasingly precarious situation in international politics (Austria, the Sudeten-Land crisis, and - in the not quite so immediate future - Poland).

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- 7) the capitulation of the General Staff Chief in the face of the State Secretary's struggle to regain his position of power.

1937:

The Air Command Office was officially transformed into the General Staff of the Luftwaffe. A fundamental reorganization was unnecessary, inasmuch as the Air Command Office, from the standpoints of its missions and of its personnel composition, was - to all intents and purposes - already the Luftwaffe General Staff.

The organizational structure of the Luftwaffe General Staff was as follows:

1) Operations Staff

- a) Branch 1 (Operations)
- b) Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces)
- c) Branch 6 (Quartermaster)
- d) Branch 7 (Signal Communications)

2) Organization Staff

- a) Branch 2 (Organization)
- b) Branch 4 (Strength and Equipment Authorization)

3) Training Branch

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As a result of this more vertical organizational form, there were only three staff chiefs directly subordinate to the General Staff Chief, as contrasted with eight or nine under the previous organizational form. The resultant reduction in the workload of the General Staff Chief was largely due to the consolidation of four previously separate branches under the Chief of the Operations Staff. (Prior to 1937, the Operations Staff did not exist as an officially defined entity, nor did it have a chief of its own; the chiefs of the various branches comprising it were independently responsible to the Chief of the General Staff).

1938:

The General Staff Chief voluntarily subordinated himself to the authority of the State Secretary for Aviation. Although his position was officially that of a member of the "command council" (Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, State Secretary, and General Staff Chief), with the General Staff serving as the operations staff of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, it was clear that the General Staff Chief had been demoted to the position he had held in 1936.

In view of the danger inherent in Hitler's activity in the field of foreign policy (Czechoslovakia and - ultimately -

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Poland), matters connected with the tactical employment of forces, armament, and supply became increasingly important. As a result, the following measures were taken:

- 1) the Luftwaffe Operations Staff was restricted to purely operational missions by the removal of the Quartermaster and Signal Communications Branches. This left the following agencies directly subordinate to the Operations Staff:
  - a) Branch 1 (Operations)
  - b) Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces)
  - c) Topography Group
- 2) the importance of Quartermaster Branch activities was emphasized by the reorganization of the former Branch 6 into the office of the Quartermaster General
- 3) apart from the changes described above, the General Staff was made up of the following:
  - a) Organization Staff (no changes)
    - aa) Branch 2 (Organization)
    - bb) Branch 4 (Strength and Equipment Authorization)
  - b) Training Staff (newly established)
    - aa) Branch 3 (Training)
    - bb) Branch 6 (Military History)
  - cc) Air Landing and Parachute Forces Staff, which was in charge of all aspects

(tactics, organization, training) of this relatively new activity.

The office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications and the office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Medical Affairs remained directly subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff.

In conjunction with the reorganization of the inspectorate system, on the other hand, the inspectorates were removed from the immediate jurisdiction of the Chief of the General Staff. In order to preserve the close connection between command and troops, however, the inspectorates - albeit their relative independence - were given the status of "agencies directly subordinate to the General Staff" in all matters important to the command function (evaluation of experience, etc.).

c. Under Jeschonnek (1 February 1939 until the beginning of the war), the organizational development of the Luftwaffe General Staff was characterized by the following:

- 1) the continued subordination of the General Staff Chief (except in matters pertaining exclusively to the conduct of military operations) to the State Secretary for Aviation in the latter's capacity as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe
- 2) the attempt to reorganize the missions of the General Staff (by relieving it of all tasks not directly connected with the preparation for and conduct of military operations) in order to assure that it would be ready to take over immediately in the event of war,

a possibility which could no longer be ignored in the face of Hitler's avowed intention of "solving" the problems represented by Czechoslovakia and Poland at all costs

- 3) the principle of the blitzkrieg, or short-term war, which was avidly championed by Germany's political leaders and which had been taken over without question by the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff (his relative youth and consequent lack of experience may be viewed as extenuating circumstances)

1939:

In accordance with the General Staff Chief's theory (this was not new with Jeschonnek, but had been brought forward before), that the General Staff ought to be kept as small as possible, it was reorganized once more in line with the following principles<sup>132</sup>:

- 1) that there was no need for an organizationally distinct Chief of the Operations Staff
- 2) that supervision of the training carried out in the Luftwaffe schools was not a proper concern of the General Staff
- 3) that the General Staff should be freed of all those tasks which could not be described as of immediate importance in the event of a short-term war

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132 - Based on information provided by General Schmid, Retired (former Chief of Branch 5 and honorary General Staff observer in the Ministry Office. According to Schmid's statement, the memorandum prepared by Jeschonnek in 1938 (while he was still Chief of Branch 1) and addressed to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, already contained the principles detailed below.

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- 4) that the General Staff should be divided into two main organizational elements.

In keeping with these principles, the General Staff was divided as follows:

- 1) Operations Staff (headed by the Chief of the General Staff), consisting of:
  - a) Branch 1 (Operations)
  - b) Branch 3 (Tactical Training)
  - c) Branch 5 (Foreign Nations) (Fremde Staaten)
- 2) Office of the Quartermaster General, consisting of:
  - a) Branch 2 (Planning, Organization, Mobilization)
  - b) Branch 4 (Logistics and Supply)
  - c) Branch 6 (Armament).

The Quartermaster General had the right of direct access to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

The following agencies were detached from the General Staff, i.e. their activities transferred outside the sphere of General Staff responsibility:

- 1) Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch
- 2) Military History Branch
- 3) Air Landing and Parachute Forces Staff
- 4) Office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications
- 5) Office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Medical Group

- 6) Branch 2 was relieved of responsibility for the internal organization of the Reichs Air Ministry (with the exception of those elements directly subordinate to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe)
- 7) Branch 5 (Foreign Nations) was assigned the additional responsibility of supervising press relations and keeping track of the activities of the air attaches, German and foreign.

3. Figures 8b and 8c present a graphic summary of the development of the Operations Branch and of Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces) within the Air Command Office and - later - the General Staff.

Those two branches, as the agencies within the General Staff which were best able to provide information relative to the conduct of strategic air warfare, were, of course, destined to work particularly closely with one another.

4. Summary:

On the whole, the organizational development of the Luftwaffe General Staff reflects its clear recognition of the necessity of adapting itself to changing conditions as reflected in the missions assigned to it. From this point of view, we must admit that the General Staff did adhere to the principle that organization must be a means to an end rather than an end in itself and that it must remain as flexible and as capable of immediate alterations as the command apparatus it serves.

Section 3 - Organization of Special Areas of Activity within the Reichs Air  
Ministry.

1. This section is concerned with two types of activity, as follows:
  - a. Those which were of immediate significance to the preparation for and conduct of war, and thus were handled directly by the Luftwaffe General Staff, and
  - b. those which were of indirect significance to the preparation for and conduct of war and, at the same time, technical in nature; the organization of the agencies concerned, as well as their chain of command was subject to frequent change throughout their history.
2. Organizational Development of the Training Function in the Reichs Air Ministry (see Figure 8d)

Over-all supervision (issuance of directives, guidelines, and instructions) was the responsibility of the General Staff, while the Luftwaffe inspectorates (through the administrative headquarters of the various schools) were in charge of the more detailed guidance of training in their own particular branches.

The organizational development of those agencies primarily concerned with training matters (with the exception of signal communications training, for which see 3, below) was as follows:

- a. 1934
  - 1) the Training Branch, Air Command Office, was in charge of the following:
    - a) preparation of training guidelines
    - b) training at troop level
    - c) issuance of guidelines pertaining to training at the Luftwaffe schools.

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- 2) the Inspectorate for Flight Schools was responsible for providing over-all supervision and for inspecting the training schools.

## b. 1935/36

- 1) With the establishment of the first technical branch inspectorates in 1935, responsibility for specialized training at troop level and at the ordnance schools was transferred to the newly-created agencies
- 2) the Flight School Command, physically located outside the Reichs Air Ministry, assumed responsibility for the supervision of pilot and aerotechnical training as successor to the Inspectorate for Flight Schools
- 3) the over-all preparation and publication of training regulations and training guidelines remained the responsibility of the Training Branch, Air Command Office.

## c. 1937

- 1) When the Luftwaffe General Staff was officially created in 1937, the Training Branch, Air Command Office, automatically became the Training Branch, Luftwaffe General Staff
- 2) during 1937 the following offices existed (or came into being) in the field of training:
  - a) the ordnance inspectorates (Waffeninspektionen)
  - b) the Inspectorate for Pilot Training Schools; the Flight School Command was abolished and the schools decentralized under their individual command headquarters
  - c) Command Headquarters, Air Warfare Schools
- 3) fundamentally, the administration of training activity continued as before.

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## d. 1938

- 1) all the Luftwaffe inspectorates, including the Command Headquarters, Air Warfare Schools, were united under the supervision of the newly-appointed Inspector General, Luftwaffe
- 2) the administration of training activity went on substantially as before.

## e. 1939

- 1) a basic change was made in the assignment of responsibility for training activity
  - a) Branch 3, Luftwaffe General Staff, was restricted to supervision of tactical training
  - b) the over-all administration of training in the Luftwaffe schools was assumed by the Training Branch of the newly-established office of the Chief of Training, which was also placed in command of all the Luftwaffe inspectorates
- 2) the withdrawal of the General Staff from the field of training at the school level was in keeping with the theories of its Chief, Jeschonnek, who was convinced that the General Staff - particularly in view of the strong possibility of military involvement in the near future - must be relieved of all tasks which did not contribute directly to the preparations for or conduct of war.

3. Organizational Development of the Signal Communications Function within the Reichs Air Ministry (see Figure 8e)

a. The newly-created agency for signal communications affairs covered the following functions:

- 1) guidance of the commitment of operational signal communications personnel
- 2) handling of technological and operational questions
- 3) advisory function in all questions concerning the development of the signal communications forces (in concurrence with the Organization Branch)
- 4) supervision of training
  - a) advisory function as concerned the development of training directives (closely coordinated with the Training Branch, Luftwaffe General Staff)
  - b) supervision of training within the framework of the Luftwaffe signal communications courses and courses at the Luftwaffe schools.

b. Since the various activities within the field of signal communications were so closely interwoven, their administration was concentrated under a single command agency.

1) 1934 - 1935

On 1 April 1935, the Chief of the Signal Communications Branch, Air Command Office, assumed the concurrent responsibilities of an Inspector for Signal Communications (Inspekteur des Nachrichtenverbindungswesen). All formal training in the field of Luftwaffe signal communications (specialized signal courses, Luftwaffe Signal Communications Schools, etc.) was placed under his direct supervision.

2) 1937:

The tactical aspects of signal communications activity were organizationally emphasized by transforming the Signal Communications Branch into Branch 7 of the Luftwaffe General Staff, thus making it a part of the Operations Staff. This had one unfortunate result - the Operations Staff was burdened with administrative responsibility for all signal communications activity.

3) 1938:

Within the framework of the reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry, the field of signal communications was assigned a special position. Branch 7 of the General Staff became a separate and independent agency, the Office of the Chief of Signal Communications.

The Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications maintained close and continual contact with the Operations Staff through a liaison officer detached thereto.

In his simultaneous capacity as Inspector for Signal Communications (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 7), the Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications (like all the other Inspectors) was subordinate to the newly created Inspector General, Luftwaffe.

4) 1939 (the Jeschonnek period):

The Office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications was taken out of the sphere of General Staff responsibility and made directly

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subordinate to the State Secretary for Aviation and Inspector General, Luftwaffe.

Liaison with the Operations Branch of the Luftwaffe General Staff was maintained as before.

In his capacity as Inspector for the Signal Communications Forces (Inspekteur der Luftnachrichtentruppe) (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 7), the Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications was responsible to the Chief of Training (as successor to the Inspector General, Luftwaffe).

Signal communications schools were placed under the administration of a newly-created office, that of the Senior Commander, Luftwaffe Signal Communications Schools (Hoeherer Kommandeur der Luftnachrichtenschulen), which received its instructions from the office of the Chief of Training.



4. Organizational Development of the Supply Function in the Reichs Air Ministry (see Figure 8f).

a. The supply function was divided into the following over-all areas of activity:

1) staff functions (Quartermaster)

a) over-all organizational planning

b) determination of areas of concentration on the basis of the over-all situation

c) allocation of supply services on the basis of operational needs

d) publication of Quartermaster directives and instructions

2) operational functions

a) preparation of supply requirement estimates on the basis of organizational planning and strength and equipment authorization figures

b) requisitioning and allocation of aircraft, aircraft instruments and equipment, weapons, motor vehicles, etc. to units and schools

c) original issue and continuing supply of equipment to field troops, or rather to the local supply agencies responsible

d) furnishing of aviation and motor vehicle fuels for Luftwaffe ground organization units and for local supply agencies

e) supervision of supply storage and of maintenance and repair activity

b. The organizational development of the agencies concerned with supply was the following:

1) 1934:

a) the Quartermaster Group, Operations Branch, Air Command Office, was responsible for the staff functions enumerated above (i.e. for the over-all administration of supply and logistics)

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- b) the Supply Branch, Air Command Office, was in charge of determining supply requirements and of requisitioning supplies
- c) the Chief of Procurement and Supply, Luftwaffe, was in charge of the actual supply issue, as well as of all other purely operational functions

2) 1955:

The Quartermaster Group was expanded into the Quartermaster Branch, Air Command Office.

3) 1936:

- a) The over-all administration of supply and logistics remained the responsibility of the newly rechristened Quartermaster Branch, Air Command Office
- b) all operational functions were united under the Supply Office, which had been newly organized by combining the Office of the Chief of Procurement and Supply and Branch 5 of the Air Command Office
- c) the Supply Office received its instructions from the Air Command Office.

4) 1937:

With the creation of the Luftwaffe General Staff, the Quartermaster Branch, Air Command Office, automatically became Branch 6 of the Luftwaffe General Staff.

5) 1938:

- a) In keeping with the growing importance of the supply function, Branch 6, Luftwaffe General Staff, was reorganized into the Office of the Quartermaster General
- b) the Supply Office was assigned to the newly-created Office of the Chief of Air Defense (where it emphatically did not belong, see page 153)

6) 1939 (the Jeschonnek period):

- a) During this last stage of development, the Office of the Quartermaster General was given over-all responsibility not only for supply and logistics (Branch 4, Luftwaffe General Staff), but also for organization (Branch 2, Luftwaffe General Staff), and for the handling of the armament requirements established by operational command (Branch 6, Luftwaffe General Staff).
- b) the Supply Office was made subordinate to the Chief of Supply and Procurement, Luftwaffe. This represented a consolidation of all agencies concerned with materiel armament.

5. The Organizational Development of the Military History Branch of the Luftwaffe (see Figure 8g).

a. Research and the interpretation of available materials was clearly a function of the General Staff; just as clearly, it was not a function which was immediately connected with the preparation for and the conduct of operations.

1) 1935 - 1937:

The Military History Branch of the Luftwaffe, created out of the Research Group for the History of Aerial Warfare (Forschungsgruppe des Reichsluftfahrtministeriums fuer Luftkriegsgeschichte), was physically located outside the Reichs Air Ministry but immediately subordinate to the Training Branch, Air Command Office.

2) 1938:

The Military History Branch was incorporated into the Luftwaffe General Staff as Branch 6.

3) 1939 (the Jeschonnek period):

The Military History Branch was removed from the General Staff (which was being restricted, more and more, to those missions having an immediate connection with the conduct of military operations) and assigned to the Air War Academy. Contact with the General Staff was maintained through liaison officers.

6. The Organizational Development of Aerial Photography Activity in the Reichs Air Ministry (see Figure 8h).

a. The administration of all aerial photography, whether for military or for commercial purposes, lay with a single, central agency.

Because of its close connection with tactical and strategic aerial reconnaissance, military aerial photography possessed a high degree of importance for the conduct of operations. Its over-all missions were the following:

- 1) cooperation in the preparation of employment guidelines and training directives (together with the Training Branch, Luftwaffe General Staff)
- 2) preparation of training directives for the Luftwaffe aerial photography schools
- 3) technical supervision of the aerial photography stations
- 4) technical and operational supervision of all aerial photography activity

b. The organizational development of that office within the Reichs Air Ministry with responsibility for all aerial photography activity was as follows:

1) 1934:

The Aerial Photography Branch, General Air Office, was set up as a temporary organizational solution for the early period of development.

2) 1935 - 1938:

In logical consequence of its primary purpose, the Aerial Photography Branch was made a part of the Inspectorate for Air Reconnaissance and Aerial Photography, when the latter was created in 1935.

3) 1939:

The Aerial Photography Branch was detached from Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1 and made directly responsible to the Chief of Training. This measure was taken in connection with the breakdown of reconnaissance inspection activity into the Inspectorate for Army Air Forces (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1) and the Inspectorate for Bomber Forces (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 2). It was the latter which was given the additional responsibility for inspecting the aerial reconnaissance forces.

7. Organizational Development of Medical Affairs Administration in the Reichs Air Ministry (see Figure 8i).

- a. Medical affairs is a specialized field of activity which, from the point of view of command, is logically a matter of logistics; thus, in a sense, it may be viewed as belonging to the Quartermaster Staff.
- b. The organizational development of those agencies concerned with medical affairs within the Reichs Air Ministry was as follows:

1) 1934:

The Medical Group was established as a part of the Central Branch. This was a temporary organizational measure designed to relieve the Air Command Office during the early developmental period.

2) 1935 - 1936:

During this period the Medical Branch was set up in the Air Command Office.

3) 1937:

The Medical Branch, Air Command Office, was reorganized into the Inspectorate for Medical Affairs and made subordinate to the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff.

4) 1938:

The Inspectorate for Medical Affairs was transformed into the Office of the Chief of Medical Affairs; the newly established office remained subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff.

5) 1939:(the Jeschonnek period)

The Office of the Chief of Medical Affairs was taken out of the sphere of General Staff responsibility and redesignated the Inspectorate for Medical Affairs (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 14). The newly recreated Inspectorate, like all its counterparts, was made subordinate to the Chief of Training.

8. Organizational Development of Civil Air Defense Activity within the Reichs Air Ministry (see Figure 8k).

a. Civil air defense activity, as an aspect of air defense as a whole, was of importance to the conduct of operations. Its administration in the Reichs Air Ministry consisted in the preparation and issuance of guidelines and directives for implementation by the appropriate civilian agencies.

b. The organizational development of those agencies concerned with civil air defense in the Reichs Air Ministry was as follows:

1) 1934:

The Civil Air Defense Branch was established as a part of the Air Command Office.

2) 1935 - 1937:

Effective 1 April 1935, when the antiaircraft artillery forces were made a part of the Luftwaffe, the Civil Air Defense Branch was removed from the Air Command Office and combined with the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery Forces to form the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense.

3) 1938:

When the Reichs Air Ministry was reorganized in 1938, antiaircraft artillery and civil air defense again became separate entities. The Civil Air Defense Branch was converted into the Office of the Chief of the Civil Air Defense Branch, subordinate to the Chief of the General Air Office.

4) 1939:

The Office of the Chief of the Civil Air Defense Branch was removed from its position of subordination to



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the Chief of the General Air Office, and reorganized into the Inspectorate for Civil Air Defense (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 13).

Like all the other Luftwaffe Inspectorates, Inspectorate No. 13 was made subordinate to the Chief of Training.

Section 4 - Organization of the Luftwaffe Inspectorates.

1. The Luftwaffe Inspectorates represented the top-level technical supervisory agencies for their particular weapons systems, training fields, or specialized activities.

The Inspectors had full authority to inspect the activities of the troops, schools, or administrative offices. As a general rule, the Inspectorates had no direct command authority (unless an Inspectorate was specifically granted such authority by special order), carrying out their business with troops, schools, etc. through the command agencies to which <sup>The latter</sup> ~~they~~ were assigned or attached.

As far as operational command was concerned, the Inspectorates had a primarily advisory function, acting as specialized clearing-houses for the collation and evaluation of the experience gained at troop level.

The Ordnance Inspectorates were in charge of the further development of their particular weapons systems in the fields of tactics and equipment, as well as of the training carried on at the ordnance schools.

The Special Inspectorates were in charge of specific, closely circumscribed fields of activity, such as pilot training, the training of officer candidates, flight safety and equipment, motor vehicle services, medical affairs, etc.

2. The Organizational development of the inspectorate system in the Reichs Air Ministry was as follows (see Figure 81):

a. 1934:

The Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools had sole responsibility for all training (pilot training, aerotechnical training, and training<sup>in</sup> the operation and maintenance of aircraft equipment). It supervised the activity of the training squads assigned to the commercial flight schools and to the aerotechnical courses.

The Chief of Staff, Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools, was at the same time Commander of the Luftwaffe Ordnance Schools.

b. 1935:

- 1) The Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools was converted into Headquarters Command, Pilot Schools, outside the Reichs Air Ministry. All flight schools, ordnance schools, and aerotechnical schools were placed under the new agency.
- 2) The first Ordnance Inspectorates (Nos. 1, 2, and 3) and the Inspectorate for Vehicle Transport (No. 6) were set up.
- 3) The Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery was transferred from the Reichs Ministry of War to the Reichs Air Ministry, where it was combined with the Civil Air Defense Branch to form the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense.

This Inspectorate had rather a special position in the Reichs Air Ministry as compared with the other Ordnance Inspectorates. Its missions was not restricted merely to supervision of the tactical and technological development of the antiaircraft artillery forces, but also included the handling of matters more properly assigned to a General Staff. It was only gradually that the Luftwaffe Operational<sup>S</sup> Staff was able to assume responsibility for these.

The highly centralized administrative position occupied by the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense, clearly an instance of irrational organization, was a temporary stop-gap measure designed to avoid an overburdening of the Air Command Office (already fully occupied with the top-priority preparations for the expansion of the flying forces) and to obviate the necessity of reorganizing the antiaircraft artillery forces (which had been centrally administered by the Army) just as they were being taken over by the Luftwaffe. Moreover, the fact that the Inspector himself was an acknowledged expert in the field of antiaircraft artillery made it seem advisable to leave him in complete charge of all activity (in this connection, see Section 5, below, Organization from the Standpoint of the Concepts of Offensive and Defensive Air Operations).

- 4) As far as the naval air forces and the signal communications forces were concerned, no special Inspectorates were set up for them; instead, inspection authority was assigned to already existing agencies.

c. 1936:

The Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Aircraft Equipment was established.

d. 1937:

- 1) The Inspectorate for Naval Air Forces was created, and the Inspectorate for Medical Affairs was formed from the Medical Branch, Air Command Office.
- 2) The Flight School Command was abolished and the Inspectorate for Pilot Training Schools set up in its place. In conjunction with this organizational change, the flight schools and ordnance schools were assigned to the Flight School and Pilot Replacement Battalion Commands, which in turn were subordinate to the Air Area Commands.
- 3) The Command Headquarters, Air Warfare Schools was set up outside the Reichs Air Ministry.

e. 1938:

- 1) The Inspectorate for Signal Communications (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 7) and the Inspectorate for Luftwaffe Education and Training were created; the latter was at the same time the Command Headquarters, Air Warfare Schools (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 10).
- 2) It was decided that the Luftwaffe Inspectorates should be numbered consecutively.

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3) The Civil Air Defense Branch was separated from the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 4) and made into an independent agency, the office of the Chief of the Civil Air Defense Branch.

4) The Inspectorate for Medical Affairs was reorganized into the office of the Chief of Medical Affairs, Luftwaffe.

f. 1939:

1) Two additional Luftwaffe Inspectorates were established, as follows:

a) the Inspectorate for Air Landing and Parachute Forces (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 11)

b) the Inspectorate for Navigation, Instrument Flight and Meteorology (Inspectorate No. 12)

2) The following agencies were again subjected to reorganization, reverting to their former status as Inspectorates:

a) the office of the Chief of the Civil Air Defense Branch, which became the Inspectorate for Civil Air Defense (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 13)

b) the office of the Chief of Medical Affairs, which became the Inspectorate for Medical Affairs (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 14)

3) The following alterations in the existing chain of command were carried out:

a) the flight schools were made subordinate to the Senior Flight Training Command (Hoeheres Fliegerausbildungskommando); they had previously been subordinate to the Flight School and Pilot Replacement Battalion Command.

b) the antiaircraft artillery schools were organizationally assigned to the Air District Commands having jurisdiction over the areas in which they were located

195-a

c) the signal communications schools were made subordinate to the  
Senior Command, Signal Communications Schools.

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g. The following chains of command existed during the period covered by Luftwaffe development:

1) 1934 - 1937:

a) The State Secretary for Aviation was in charge of the following:

Inspectorate for Flight Schools and Flight School Command

Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery

Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Aircraft Equipment

b) The Chief of the Air Command Office (i.e. General Staff) of the Luftwaffe was in charge of the following:

the Ordnance Inspectorates (Luftwaffe Inspectorates No. 1, 2, and 3)

Inspectorate for Vehicle Transport

Inspectorate for Flight Schools, from 1937 on

Inspectorate for Medical Affairs

c) The Chief of the Personnel Office was placed in charge of the Command Headquarters, Air Warfare Schools.

2) 1938:

a) All Luftwaffe Inspectorates (No. 1 through No. 10) were made subordinate to the Inspector General, Luftwaffe, in a move designed to ensure a certain degree of uniformity in their administration.

b) As "subordinate agencies" the Luftwaffe Inspectorates were responsible to the Chief of the General Staff for certain areas of endeavor, such as the evaluation and exploitation of experience gained.



c) The Chief of the General Air Office was given responsibility for the office of the Chief of the Civil Air Defense Branch.

d) The Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff was placed in charge of the office of the Chief of Medical Branch (just as the previous Inspectorate for Medical Affairs had been subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff).

3) 1939:

All the Luftwaffe Inspectorates were made subordinate to the Chief of Training, who took over the duties theretofore assigned to the Inspector General, Luftwaffe. The new chain of command made it quite clear, of course, that the Inspectorates were to devote the majority of their attention to training in the future.

Insofar as details are concerned, the views of the leading personalities in the Reichs Air Ministry differed sharply in respect to the efficacy of this organizational form.

Section 5 - Organization from the Standpoint of the Concepts of Offensive and Defensive Air Operations.

1. The concepts of offensive and defensive aerial warfare were largely concerned with the field of strategy.

a. The instruments of offensive aerial warfare were the following:

- 1) bomber units
- 2) dive-bomber units
- 3) twin-engine fighter units

b. The instruments of defensive aerial warfare were the following:

- 1) single-engine fighter units
- 2) antiaircraft artillery units
- 3) civil air defense agencies

2. Figure 8m presents a graphic summary of the provisions made for handling these two aspects of aerial warfare in the Reichs Air Ministry. Within the Ministry, the following agencies had charge of the instruments of warfare detailed above:

a. Operational command of the units designed for offensive aerial warfare

lay - and had always lain - exclusively in the hands of the Air Command Office (i.e. Luftwaffe General Staff).

b. Operational command of those forces designed primarily for air defense missions was assigned as follows:

- 1) single-engine fighter units - Air Command Office (i.e. Luftwaffe General Staff)
- 2) antiaircraft artillery units
  - a) a part of the Army until 1935
  - b) 1935 - 1937, under the command of the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense, which in turn was directly subordinate to the State Secretary
  - c) from 1938 on, under the command of the Luftwaffe General Staff

## 3) civil air defense agencies

a) 1934, under the command of the Air Command Office

b) 1935 - 1937, assigned to the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft

Artillery and Civil Air Defense

c) 1938, under the command of the Chief of Civil Air Defense

d) 1939, under the command of the Inspectorate for Civil Air Defense

(Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 13), which in turn was directly subordinate to the Chief of Training

3. Thus, while operational planning for all forces concerned with offensive aerial warfare and for at least a part of the forces concerned with defensive aerial warfare (the single-engine fighter units) was the responsibility of a single agency, the Luftwaffe General Staff, such planning for the majority of the air defense forces was handled by a number of different agencies, depending upon the period in question.

In short, this organizational scheme did not carry out the principle in effect at higher echelons, i.e. organization in terms of the concepts of offensive and defensive aerial warfare, but was rather a reflection of the traditional organizational barriers separating flying forces, antiaircraft artillery, and civil air defense from one another. The thinking behind it, influenced far more by the conventional organizational distinctions between the various weapons systems than by the concepts of global air strategy, was furthered by the following factors:

- a. The dominant position accorded the flying forces within the Luftwaffe, a natural consequence of the prevailing theory of "short-term" wars in which the role of the Luftwaffe forces would be primarily offensive in nature.

The emphasis placed on offensive aerial warfare was, in a sense, an admission of the fact that air defense was relegated to the status of a last resort.

b. The special status of the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery, which, from 1935 through 1937, was the only Ordnance Inspectorate which was subordinate not to the Chief of the General Staff, but to the State Secretary for Aviation, and the only one responsible for operational planning for its particular field. Cooperation between the General Staff and the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery during this period may be assumed to have been exceedingly close, but certainly only insofar as concerned the employment of antiaircraft artillery forces as an offensive weapon. Their commitment in air defense in joint operations with the fighter forces was of no concern to the General Staff, inasmuch as operational planning for the single-engine fighter forces lay in the hands of the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery.

c. The continual changes in the chain of command of the civil air defense agencies, which - as in the case of the antiaircraft artillery forces - automatically focussed attention on the organizational separation of weapons systems.

4. It was not until the Reichs Air Ministry was reorganized in 1938 that a change was made in the over-all command structure. Once the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery was made subordinate to the Inspector General, Luftwaffe, thus emphasizing the primary importance of the inspection function, the task of operational planning for the

antiaircraft artillery forces quite naturally gravitated to the Luftwaffe General Staff. Civil Air Defense, on the other hand, under the aegis of the Chief of Civil Air Defense, was separated from the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and - strangely enough - made subordinate to the Chief of the General Air Office.

As a result of the reorganization, organizational planning for the antiaircraft artillery forces at least was entrusted to the General Staff. As far as planning in the over-all sector of air defense operations was concerned, however, it was guided largely by compartmentalized thinking in terms of separate single-engine fighter, antiaircraft artillery, and civil air defense forces.

This continued to be the case throughout 1939, in part as a result of the new General Staff Chief's (Jeschonnek's) enthusiastic adherence to the theory of blitz warfare, and in part due to the extremely inappropriate assignment of the civil air defense field to the office of the Chief of Training.

It was not until sometime during the war that recognition was given to the importance of unified leadership of air defense activities, and this in the form of an Air Defense Staff (Arbeitsstab Luftschutz), established as a part of the Operations Staff.

5. In summary, it can be said that the difference in the degree of importance assigned to the concepts of offensive aerial warfare on the one hand and defensive aerial warfare on the other was due to the influence of the following factors:

- a. the emphasis on offensive at the expense of defensive aerial warfare (strategic air warfare is meant in both instances), and

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the resultant failure to coordinate the two concepts as far as coordination was concerned

- b. the unfortunate penchant of Luftwaffe leaders to defer to personal influence and to give unwarranted consideration to the wishes and opinions of highly-placed personalities and of individual experts (Inspector of Anti-aircraft Artillery and Chief of Civil Air Defense, for example).

## CONCLUSION

## The Problem of the Top-Level Organizational Set-Up

1. The underlying principle of any organization<sup>nal</sup> set-up designed to serve as a means to an operational end must be a clear delineation of the responsibilities of each individual concerned.

It is from this standpoint that we shall now examine the problem of top-level command organization in the Reichs Air Ministry.

2. The three main missions of the Reichs Air Ministry were operational command, armament, and training. These may be defined as follows:

## a. Operational Command

- 1) organizational planning for the expansion of the Luftwaffe
- 2) establishment of operational readiness in the Luftwaffe
- 3) preparation for aerial warfare, offensive as well as defensive
- 4) (during wartime) conduct of military operations

## b. Armament - establishment of an adequate reserve, personnel as well as materiel

- 1) training of flying personnel, as well as training in the operation and maintenance of aircraft equipment and training in the anti-aircraft artillery field (the other branches of training are omitted here, since they are insignificant as far as the present study is concerned)
- 2) the concept "training" includes both formal school training and tactical training (including the

training maneuvers carried out by the troops). Tactical training, however, belonged within the purview of operational command (establishment of operational readiness).

In keeping with the traditional principles governing the organization of a military ministry, the Chief of the General Staff, together with the General Staff, was responsible for operational command and its various phases throughout the history of the Luftwaffe.

The other two missions were handled as follows:

- a. materiel armament - Chief of the Technical Office at first; later on the Chief of Luftwaffe Procurement and Supply.
- b. personnel armament - Chief of the Personnel Office at first; later on the Chief of Air Defense
- c. training - the Luftwaffe Inspectorates

The concept of command and the legitimate concerns of command are, by their very nature, all-encompassing; as such, they sometimes overlap into the fields of armament and training. The Chief of the General Staff did not fail to emphasize the validity of such a viewpoint, in the form of directives and instructions to the agencies subordinate to him, and, by taking advantage of certain other means (the right to establish supply and armament requirements, the issuance of operational guidelines, etc.), to the agencies not under his command.

On the other hand, the concept of the permanent deputyship (to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe) exercised by the State Secretary of Aviation was also fairly all-encompassing.

Needless to say, the problem of delineating these two functions, each in itself all-encompassing,



sharply enough to eliminate all potential sources of friction, was nearly impossible. As a result, any and all attempts to solve the problem by organizational means were bound to be equally unsatisfactory to both parties.

3. The most critical sources of friction existing between the Chief of the General Staff and the State Secretary were the following (Figure 9 presents a graphic summary of the chain of command pertaining to those agencies concerned with operational command, armament, and training within the Reichs Air Ministry):

a. 1934:

The sources of friction did not become apparent during this first year of development for the following reasons:

- 1) any requests which the Chief of the Air Command Office (General Wever), in his capacity as supervisor of the operational command function, had to make of the agencies concerned with armament and training were handled automatically within the framework of a direct and unlimited subordination of all office chiefs under the State Secretary, who - as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe - directed the activity of the Ministry in accordance with the general instructions of the Minister and, thus, to all intents and purposes was the Minister.
- 2) the State Secretary gave his unequivocal support to the prerogative of the Chief of the Air Command Office to exercise<sup>s</sup> the function of operational command
- 3) the other office chiefs automatically accepted the position of the Chief of the Air Command Office as that of a senior officer

(primus inter pares), even in the absence of specific written instructions.

b. 1935:

Of doubtful organizational wisdom was the failure to make the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery subordinate to the Chief of the Air Command Office. Inasmuch as the Inspector for Antiaircraft Artillery was responsible for operational planning for the antiaircraft artillery and civil air defense forces, he usurped a significant part of the duties logically assigned to the Chief of the Air Command Office.

c. 1936:

On the whole, the organizational set-up remained unchanged, but tactical questions (preparation of combat directives, etc.) began to play a more important role among the various aspects of operational command. These circumstances pointed inevitably to a close and, above all, direct contact between the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and the Chief of the Air Command Office in the latter's tacitly recognized capacity (there are no official directives which specifically confirm such capacity) as the primary advisor of his Commander in Chief in all questions pertaining to the preparation and conduct of military military operations. The fact that the State Secretary (who had not enjoyed the benefits of General Staff training), in his capacity as

permanent representative of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, continually felt called upon to intervene (and that not always tactfully, see page 83), made a source of friction and conflict equally inevitable.

As soon as it became apparent that the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, had no intention of acceding to his demand for a clear and definite delineation of responsibilities, the Chief of the Air Command Office, General Kesselring, resigned.

d. 1937:

The status of the State Secretary as permanent deputy of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was abolished. As a result the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff remained in positions of equal authority, which meant that the Reichs Air Ministry, still clearly under the control of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was split into two approximately equal camps. In accordance with the missions officially assigned to him, the Chief of the General Staff was authorized to give certain orders concerning tactical and technological requirements to the State Secretary.

The State Secretary was understandably opposed to this solution and made every effort to regain his previous position, in which he was superior to the Chief of the General Staff. The friction existing between the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff finally led to a state of affairs which can only be described as a dualism in command. General Stumpff, Chief of the General Staff, finally wearied of the struggle and

voluntarily accepted a position of subordination to the State Secretary. He justified his action as the only way in which some measure of unity in command might be restored.

e. 1938:

The unity achieved by the reorganization of 1938 was illusory. To be sure, armament and training were appropriately included under a sort of command trinity, but this "threefold cabinet" (see Figure 9) was not a valid solution as far as organization was concerned, since it failed to establish a clear delineation of the responsibilities of the State Secretary and those of the Chief of the Air Command Office. Instead, it was based on a psychological fallacy, namely that the State Secretary and the Chief of the General were the best of friends and thus willing and eager to cooperate.

Carefully examined, the solution of 1938 proved to be exactly the same as that of 1936, and even in 1936 it had permitted the intervention of the State Secretary, as the permanent representative of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, in the affairs of the Chief of the General Staff, as primary advisor to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, in all matters pertaining to the preparation for and conduct of aerial warfare.

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Under these circumstances it was clear that the reorganization of 1938 could not be other than unacceptable to the Chief of the General Staff; he resigned his position in protest.

f. 1939:

The solution, agreed upon in 1939, to all intents and purposes, was no different than the one in effect during 1935 and 1936. The clause contained in the directive dated 1 February 1939 ("In case they should be unable to reach an agreement, the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff will present their views to me (i.e. the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe) for final decision.") was nothing new, but merely the official confirmation of something which had been going on since 1935. It did not go to the heart of the matter.

4. In Summary.

Careful examination of the various forms of top-level organization employed during the period 1934 through 1939 reveals that there were three basic ones:

- a. complete subordination of the Chief of the Air Command Office (Chief of General Staff), as in 1934
- b. parallel positions for the Chief of the General Staff and the State Secretary, as in 1937, and
- c. the hybrid solutions tried out during 1938 and 1939.

The organizational forms in effect during 1934 and 1935 were not conducive to friction and conflict because the

State Secretary, coming from the field of exclusively commercial aviation, had too little military training and too little experience in military affairs to feel himself qualified to interfere in operational command.

The organizational form in effect during 1937 assumed, and indeed demanded, extremely close cooperation between the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff, particularly in view of the fact that the career of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe (Goering) had not fitted him to face the problems arising in the fields of operational command and organizational planning with a sound background of military experience (that experience which he had<sup>had</sup> been gained in an entirely different field) and military training (he had had practically nothing in the way of General Staff training or experience at troop level).

The close coordination of the activities of the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff demanded by the organizational set-up of 1937 never came to pass. (The reasons why this was so are irrelevant for the purposes of the present study; we merely wish to establish the fact as such).

The solutions of 1938 and 1939 were clearly hybrid solutions.

The fact that the organizational set-up of 1939 did last somewhat longer was actually an optical illusion. For the growing political tension and the increasing inevitability of war placed the relationship of the Chief of the General Staff (General

Jeschonnek) and the State Secretary on an entirely different basis - with or without benefit of official directive. This new relationship was somewhat similar to that established by the set-up of 1937.

5. The Heart of the Matter.

It lay in the nature of things that the concepts "operational command" and "permanent representative of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe" were bound to overlap during the day-to-day administration of Ministry activity, and that the responsibilities of the Chief of the General Staff and the State Secretary were bound to come into conflict. Every attempt to establish a clear delineation of powers between the two was doomed to failure, if only because of the impossibility of defining the limits of operational command. This difficulty, of course, could have been obviated if the two protagonists had been inclined to compromise, but on the other hand psychological factors such as this can hardly be utilized as organizational bases.

Inasmuch as the Chief of the General Staff, together with the General Staff, was a sine qua non as far as the over-all military organization was concerned, the status of the State Secretary as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was inevitably open to question. The situation became even more complicated in 1939, when the State Secretary, in addition to acting as permanent deputy to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was at the same time Inspector General

of the Luftwaffe, thus uniting in a single person the functions of over-all supervision and over-all control. In a manner of speaking, he was both supervisor and supervised at one and the same time. Under these circumstances, of course, the much-vaunted unity of top-level organization allegedly inherent in the set-up of 1938 was quite pointless.

6. Possible Solutions.

In evaluating the appropriateness of the following suggestions, the following factors must be taken into consideration:

- a. the position of the State Secretary within the Reichs Air Ministry
- b. the problem of permanent representation of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe
- c. the relationship of the General Staff to the other agencies of the Ministry, in its capacity as the command agency for armament and training.

The status of the State Secretary in the Reichs Air Ministry was largely the result of Party politics to begin with. In view of the fact that both the military aspects of Ministry activity as well as the administration of commercial aviation were placed under the control of the State Secretary, however, his authority was practically all-encompassing.

Objectively examined, there was no real need to place the military activity of the Reichs Air Ministry under the State Secretary (and neither in the Army nor in the Navy was this the case). Not even the incorporation of the affairs of commercial aviation in the Reichs Air Ministry was sufficient reason for the establishment of the position of State Secretary of Aviation.



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For those aspects of commercial aviation which could be considered to be of nationwide importance were already under the control of the General Air Office (headed by a civilian official in the rank of Ministry Director), and thus already subjected to sufficient authority. The thought of placing a State Secretary above this civilian official was clearly an instance of over-organization.

It is true that the original plans for the Reichs Ministry of Defense did include the position of a State Secretary, but - quite apart from the fact that this original plan was never carried out - the position was viewed as a political, and not as a military position.

Permanent representation of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was - quite objectively - necessary, insofar as Goering was clearly overburdened with his other offices and was thus unable to devote himself to the duties required of a Commander in Chief of a Wehrmacht Branch.

The question was who was best able to act as permanent deputy. There were two possible answers:

- a. an officer with training and experience in military affairs (the Reichs Air Ministry was, after all, primarily a military organization), or

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b. an interim solution in which the Chief of the General Staff took over the job as deputy of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and delegated his own responsibilities to the Chief of the Operations Staff. If this had been done, it is quite possible that the vexing problem of the definition of the concept "operations<sup>al</sup>/command" might never have arisen

c. the position of the General Staff as the actual instrument of command (inherent in its previous training as well as in its official function) in matters of armament and training was in reality a foregone conclusion in view of the situation. The following solutions were possible:

- 1) the complete subordination of armament (Technical Office and, possibly, Personnel Office) and training (the Luftwaffe Inspectorates) under the Chief of the General Staff.
  - a) advantages: clear delineation of responsibilities; immediate effectiveness of armament and training requirements
  - b) disadvantage: overburdening of the General Staff with a plethora of technological questions (the General Staff was there to lead and not to answer technical questions)
- 2) the normal division of responsibilities in a ministry system, i.e. the General Staff on the one<sup>e</sup> hand and

armament and training (under a special department-chief) on the other. To all intents and purposes, this was the set-up which was in effect during 1937 and which was introduced again in 1944. Under this system the Chief of the General Staff had the right to make certain demands of the "Minister of War". In case of an irreconcilable difference of opinion, the final decision was made by the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. This, of course, presupposed that the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, possessed the ability and experience deemed adequate for one in his post.

- a) advantage: a clear delineation of individual responsibilities
- b) disadvantages: the complexity of the system, the danger of decreased prestige for the orders issued by the General Staff, the friction engendered by the opposing positions of the Chief of the General Staff and the State Secretary, and the over-all reduction in the degree of effectiveness ultimately achieved.

#### 7. Summary.

Were the concepts of offensive and defensive aerial warfare (see 1, above) given adequate consideration in the organization of the Reichs Air Ministry?

As far as the top-level organizational form is concerned, our answer must be 'no'.

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This is surely substantiated by the fact that two General Staff Chiefs resigned within a period of two and one-half years in protest against organizational measures.

Our question must be answered in the affirmative as regards the organization of the General Staff itself, as well as that of the rest of the Reichs Air Ministry, an organizational form which was clearly adapted to the task at hand (in connection with increasing political tension).

The lesson to be learned from the foregoing is this: an organizational form must be flexible at all times; its flexibility and adaptability must not be jeopardized by adherence to any particular goal; the over-all goal, and with it the validity of organizational form, cannot be determined in advance, but must be based on the development of events.

S/ Bruno Maass

Generalleutnant, Retired

Glossary of Technical Terms  
(from GAF Extra Study #20)

Adjutant	Adjutantur
Administration Branch	Verwaltungsabteilung
Administrative Office	Verwaltungsamt
Advanced Luftwaffe School	Hoehere Luftwaffenschule
Advanced Ordnance School	Waffenmeisterschule
Aerial Photography	Luftbildwesen
Aerial Photography School	Bildschule
Aerial Reconnaissance Group	Aufklaerungsgruppe
Aerial Reconnaissance Training Staff	Aufklaerungslehrstab
Air Accident Investigations Office	Unfalluntersuchungsstelle
Air and Vehicle Traffic Branch	Abteilung fuer Luft-und Kraftfahrwesen
Air Archives	Luftarchiv
Air Command Office	Luftkommandoamt
Air Commander Staff	Koluftstab
Air Control Committee	Luftfahrtgarantiekomitee
Air Control Service	Luftaufsicht
Air Defense Branch	Luftschutzabteilung
Air Defense Staff	Arbeitsstab Luftschutz
Air District Command	Luftgaukommando
Air Division Command	Kommando einer Fliegerdivision
Air Fleet Command	Luftflottenkommando
Air Landing and Parachute Forces	Luftlande- und Fallschirmtruppen
Air Ordnance Inspector	Fliegerwaffeninspektor
Air Sovereignty Branch	Abteilung Lufthoheit
Air Supply Office	Fliegerbestaendeverwaltung
Air Technical Academy	Lufttechnische Akademie
Air Traffic	Luftverkehr
Air Traffic Control Branch	Abteilung Luftverkehr
Air Traffic Observation Station	Luftaufsichtswache
Air War Academy	Luftkriegsakademie
Airport Control Group	Flughafenleitung
Antiaircraft Artillery	Fahrtruppe (Flak)
Army Inspectorate for Medical Affairs	Heeressanitaetsinspektion
Army Inspectorate for Signal Communications	Heeresnachrichteninspektion
Army Ordnance Office	Heereswaffenamt
Army Tactical Training Staff	Lehrstab fuer Heerestaktik
Army Tank, Cavalry and Motorized Elements	Waffenabteilung der Panzertruppe, Kavallerie und Heeresmotorisierung
Army War Academy	Kriegsschule des Heeres
Attaché Group	Attachégruppe
Aviation Branch	Abteilung Luftwaffe

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Central Aerial Photography Office	Hauptbildstelle
Central Archives	Zentralbuecherei
Central Branch	Zentralabteilung
Central Film Office	Hauptfilmstelle
Chief Group	Chefgruppe
Chief of Air Defense	Chef der Luftwehr
Chief of Flight Safety	Chef fuer Flugsicherheit
Chief of Medical Branch	Chef des Sanitaetswesens
Chief of Procurement and Supply, Luftwaffe	Luftzeugmeister
Chief of the Signal Communications Office	Chef des Wehrmachtnachrichtenwesens
Civil Air Defense Branch	Abteilung ziviler Luftschutz
Coastal Weather Observation Station	Deutsche Seewarte
Command Headquarters, Air Warfare Schools	Kommando der Luftkriegsschulen
Commander, 1st Air Division	Kommandeur der 1. Fliegerdivision
Commander, Army Air Forces	Kommandeur der Heeresflieger
Commander, Naval Air Forces	Kommandeur der Seeluftstreitkraefte
Commander of the Luftwaffe Ordnance Schools	Kommandeur der Fliegerwaffenschulen
Commercial Flying School	Deutsche Lufthansa
Commission for Air Peace	Luftfriedenskommission
Conference Report	Vortragsnotiz
Construction	Bauwesen
Defense Branch	Abwehrgruppe
Department	Amtsgruppe
Development	Entwicklung
Development Branch	Abteilung Entwicklung
Divisional Chief	Resortchef
Driver Training School	Kraftfahrerschule
Experimental Aeronautical Institute	Deutsche Versuchsanstalt fuer Luftfahrt
Flight Safety	Flugsicherung
Flight Safety Training Program	Lehrgaenge fuer Flugsicherung
Flight School and Pilot Replacement Battalion Command	Kommando der Fliegerschulen und Fliegerersatzabteilungen
Flight School Command	Kommando der Fliegerschulen
Foreign Air Forces	Fremde Luftmaechte
Foreign Office	Auswaertiges Amt

General Air Office	Allgemeines Luftamt
General Army Office	Allgemeines Heeresamt
General in charge of Motor Vehicle Services	Generalbevollmaechtigter des Kraftfahrtwesens
German Association of Sport Fliers	Deutscher Luftsportverband
German Aviation - Volume for x	Die Deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch x
Ground Organization	Bodenorganisation
Ground Organization and Flight Safety Branch	Abteilung Bodenorganisation und Flugsicherung
Group	Gruppe
Headquarters Command, Pilot Schools	Kommando der Fliegerschulen
History of the German General Staff	Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabs
Industrial Economics Group	Amtsgruppe Industriegewirtschaft
Inspector	Inspekteur
Inspector for Antiaircraft Artillery	Inspekteur der Flakartillerie
Inspector for Naval Air Forces	Inspekteur der Seeflieger
Inspector for Signal Communications	Inspekteur des Nachrichtenverbindungswesens
Inspector for the Signal Communications Forces	Inspekteur der Luftnachrichtentruppen
Inspector General	Generalinspekteur
Inspector of the Army Air Forces	Inspekteur der Heeresflieger
Inspectorate for Aircraft Equipment	Fliegergeraeteinspektion
Inspectorate for Air Reconnaissance and Aerial Photography	Inspektion der Aufklaerungsflieger und des Luftbildwesens
Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery	Inspektion der Flakartillerie
Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense	Inspektion der Flakartillerie und des zivilen Luftschutzes
Inspectorate for Bomber Forces	Inspektion der Kampfflieger
Inspectorate for Fighter and Dive-Bomber Forces	Inspektion der Jagd- und Sturzkampfflieger
Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Aircraft Equipment	Inspektion fuer Flugsicherheit und Geraet
Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools	Inspektion der Fliegerschulen
Inspectorate for Luftwaffe Education and Training	Inspektion des Luftwaffen Erziehungs- und Bildungswesens
Inspectorate for Medical Affairs	Inspektion des Sanitaetswesens
Inspectorate for Naval Air Forces	Inspektion der Seeflieger
Inspectorate for Pilot Training Schools	Inspektion der Flugzeugfuehrerschulen
Inspectorate for Vehicle Transport	Inspektion des Kraftfahrtwesens
International Allied Air Traffic Control Commission	Interalliierte Luftfahrtkontrollkommission

Judge Advocate Group	Gruppe Rechtswesen
Luftwaffe Association	Luftwaffenbund
Luftwaffe Commission	Luftwaffenkommission
Luftwaffe Defense Office Group	Luftwaffenwehramtsgruppe
Luftwaffe General, Office of the Commander in Chief, Army	General der Luftwaffe beim Ober- befehlshaber des Heeres
Luftwaffe General, Office of the Commander in Chief, Navy	General der Luftwaffe beim Ober- befehlshaber der Marine
Luftwaffe Group Command	Luftwaffengruppenkommando
Luftwaffe Groups	Gruppe Luftwaffe
Luftwaffe Inspectorates	Luftwaffen Inspektionen
Luftwaffe Motor Vehicle Equipment Inspector	Kraftfahrgeraeteinspizient der Luft- waffe
Luftwaffe Naval Command	Luftwaffenkommando, See
Luftwaffe Ordnance School	Fliegerwaffenschule
Luftwaffe Supply Office	Nachschubamt der Luftwaffe
Luftwaffe Training Division	Luftwaffen Lehrdivision
Luftwaffe Training Division Command	Kommando der Luftwaffen Lehrdivision
Medical Branch	Abteilung Sanitaetswesen
Medical Group	Gruppe Sanitaetswesen
Meteorological Branch	Abteilung Wetterdienst
Meteorological Service	Wetterdienst
Military History Branch	Kriegswissenschaftliche Abteilung
Military History Research Group	Kriegsgeschichtliche Forschungs- gruppe
Military Medical Academy, Luftwaffe	Militaeraerztliche Akademie der Luftwaffe
Ministry Office	Ministeramt
Ministry Office Chief	Ministerialbuerodirektor
National Socialist Air Corps	Nationalsozialistisches Fliegerkorps
Navigation, Instrument Flight, Meteorology	Navigation, Blindflug und Wetter
Office	Amt
Operations Branch	Fliegerfuehrungsabteilung
Operations Staff	Fuehrungsstab
Ordnance Inspectorate	Waffeninspektion
Organization Branch	Fliegerorganisationsabteilung



Personnel Branch	Personalabteilung
Personnel Office	Personalamt
Physical Plant	Liegenschaften
Political Affairs Group	Gruppe Politik
President of the Reichs	Reichspraesident
Press Group	Pressegruppe
Procurement	Beschaffung
Procurement Branch	Abteilung Beschaffung
Procurement and Supply Groups	Luftzeuggruppen
Quartermaster Branch	Oberquartiermeister
Reichs Air Defense Association	Reichsluftschutzbund
Reichs Air Ministry	Reichsluftfahrtministerium
Reichs Air Office	Reichsluftamt
Reichs Air Traffic Control School	Reichsschule fuer Luftaufsicht
Reichs Aviation Administration	Reichsluftfahrtverwaltung
Reichs Commissioner for Aircraft Construction	Reichskommissar fuer den Luftfahrzeugbau
Reichs Commissioner of Aviation	Reichskommissar fuer die Luftfahrt
Reichs Meteorological Service	Reichswetterdienst
Reichs Ministry of Defense	Reichswehrministerium
Reichs Ministry of Economics	Reichswirtschaftsministerium
Reichs Ministry of the Interior	Reichsministerium des Innern
Reichs Office of Meteorological Services	Reichsamt fuer Wetterdienst
Reichs Postal Service	Reichspostamt
Reichsprotectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	Reichsprotectorat Boehmen und Maehren
Reichs Traffic Ministry	Reichsverkehrsministerium
Research	Forschung
Research Branch	Abteilung Forschung
Research Group for the History of Air Warfare, Reichs Air Ministry	Forschungsgruppe des Reichsluftfahrtministeriums fuer Luftkriegsgeschichte
Secretarial Branch	Persoenliches Sekretariat
Secretary of Staff	Buerodirektor
Senior Antiaircraft Artillery Commander	Hoeherer Kommandeur der Flakartillerie
Senior Command, Luftwaffe Signal Communications Schools	Hoeherer Kommandeur der Luftnachrichtenschulen
Senior Command, Luftwaffe Training Troops	Hoeheres Kommando der Luftwaffenlehrtruppen
Senior Commander, Fortifications Antiaircraft Artillery	Hoeherer Kommandeur der Festungsflakartillerie
Senior Commander of Luftwaffe Training Troops	Hoeherer Kommandeur der Luftwaffenlehrtruppen

Senior Flight Training Command	Hoeheres Fliegerausbildungskommando
Senior Pilot Commander	Hoeherer Fliegerkommandeur
Signal Communications Branch	Abteilung Nachrichtenverbindungs- wesen
Staff	Referat
Staff for Army Tactics	Referat fuer Heerestaktik
Staff Group	Referat beim Stabe
State Secretary	Staatssekretaer
Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch	Staerke- und Ausruestungsnachweisung
Supervisor of Industrial Personnel	Beauftragter fuer Industriepersonal
Supervisory Air Offices	Gehobene Luftaemter
Supply Branch	Nachschubabteilung
Survey of the Functions and Organization of Aerial Photography within the Luftwaffe	Ueberblick ueber die gesamte Taetig- keit und Organisation des gesamten Bildwesens in der Luftwaffe
Target Evaluation Staff	Referat fuer Zielbearbeitung
Technical Equipment Group	Gruppe Technik und Geraete
Technical Office	Technisches Amt
Technical School Branch	Abteilung Technische Schulen
Technical Schools Command	Kommando der technischen Schulen
Technological-Tactical Requirements Staff	Referat fuer taktisch-technische Forderungen
Topography Group	Gruppe Kartenwesen
Training Branch, Troop Office	Ausbildungsabteilung Truppenamt
Training Staff	Ausbildungsstab
Training Group	Gruppe Ausbildung
Unit rosters	Liste der Einheiten
Wehrmacht High Command	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht
Wehrmacht Operations Branch	Wehrmachtfuehrungsstab