

# THE FORMATION SIGN

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## EGYPTIAN CAT



The origins of 15th Signal Regiment (Information Support) writes **Craig Atkinson** can be traced back to 3 GHQ Signals Middle East formed in Cairo in February of 1940. The regiment moved to the Canal Zone in 1947 and then in 1955 to Cyprus where it amalgamated with 29th Signal Regiment (Middle East Land Forces) on 30th September 1960. When EOKA terrorist activity ceased on the island 15th Signals Regiment disbanded on 31 March 1963 its squadrons becoming independent as 259 and 262 Signal Squadrons. On 22nd January 1965, 15th Signals Regiment was reformed in Aden from 254 and 255 Squadrons and 603 and 643 Signal Troops to support the troops arranging the handover from British rule, only to be disbanded again on 30th September 1967 after the transition; 254 and 255 Signal Squadrons were reformed. The third reformation of 15th Signals Regiment, formed by combining 225, 213 and 233 Signal Squadrons was on 1st February 1990 in Lisburn, Northern

Ireland. The regiment was disbanded May 2006 on the cessation of Operation Banner, during which time sixteen members of the Royal Corps of Signals lost their lives to terrorist action.



The current incarnation came about on 30th September 2011 in Blandford Forum, Dorset, from the Unified System Support Organisation (USSO) which existed from 1st April 2007 until September 2011, formed from a mixture of civilian and tri-service military personnel to provide in-depth technical expertise in Communications Information Systems. The now defunct USSO badge measures 50 x 60mm and came in white on black and black on olive, the latter Velcro backed.

Appropriately for its origins in Cairo the regimental sign of 15th Signal Regiment is an Egyptian 'Mau' Cat in red on a blue background. It is modelled, complete with earring, on a classic bronze piece from ancient Egypt. The original, dating back to the Saite period (about 600 BC), is held in the British Museum. The new unit TRF, measuring 45 x 55mm (currently only in black/olive), is worn on the left arm directly below and in line with the Union Flag with approx one cm between the two badges. The cat faces backwards reflecting 15th Signal Regiment's role as a support organisation rather than a combat arm. Craig would like to thank WO1 **Ross McNab**, RSM of 15 Signals for his help with this article.



[Interestingly subdued and red on blue cat badges have been around for some years – the Editor scanned these about six years ago. However **Marc Sherriff** contacted the regiment in 2004 and 2005 to be told that they had no knowledge of the badge and could not remember it being worn in the previous fifteen years.]