

Formation of No 1 AIDU at RAF Ruislip after Air Ministry decides that the RAF would be better supported by its own specialist aeronautical information Unit rather than the topographic-oriented Army Unit at Bushey Park.

No 2 AIDU formed in Singapore.

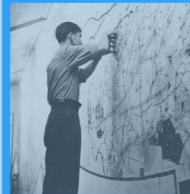
Multi-coloured drawings produced by AIDU.

AIDU relocates from RAF Ruislip to RAF Northolt under Transport Command.

All printing undertaken at the Army base at Bushey Park. Apparent that a separate trade group was required due to de-mobilisation.



Demise of National Service and the draughtsmen trades - D'man AI trade renamed The Air Cartography Trade. Long standing serviceman Derrick Fowler made Chief Tech and ran recruitment and Training.



First European ATC chart produced. First En Route Chart (ERC) produced and printed at Feltham.

First En Route Charts (ERCs) produced with assistance from Derrick Fowler. Drawn onto enamelled zinc.

Stripping film technique developed and became the 'big' breakthrough in manual chart production.

Unit established into static state, creation of Editorial Flight and the creation of the School of Air Cartography. Trade consisted of 29 personnel.

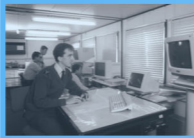
Production and Dispatch Flight manned mainly by Photographic Trade.

Helicopter Landing Charts and Minor Aerodromes Book introduced.

Plan put in place to take an Aeronautical Information Publication and using the written word, create a map. Remains the basis of AIDU's latest production system.



ERCs produced on computer for the first time. More powerful computers becoming available.



WO Derrick Fowler retires from RAF. Phototypesetting equipment replaced with modern design enc. 7 inch floppy drive. No WYSIWYG screen available.

New Laserscan digitising equipment installed at Eastcote to produce smaller digital graphics inc. A5 Terminal Approach Procedures. 2 year data capture took place on Lites2.

WRAF Typists replaced with Air Cartos amending documents.



Lites 2 system introduced producing colour topography.

4 personnel sent to St Louis, USA, to learn about a system called Smartster, later to become known as the Digital Aeronautical Flight Information System (DAFIS). This was a complete system that would contain all the AI data for the whole world.

First spot printing of Helicopter Landing Booklet, fully digitised in Auto Carto. First colour Helicopter books producing clearer, sharper images.

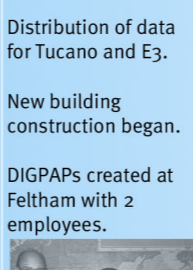
GRAPHIS set up at AIDU, to become the basis for a graphical image to be produced by DAFIS.

All products exc. large charts produced on computers.

MPC Laarbruch closed.



MPC Honington closed.



Distribution of data for Tucano and E3.

New building construction began.

DIGPAPS created at Feltham with 2 employees.

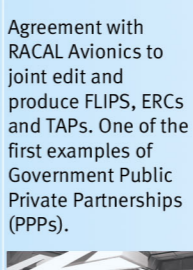
Tristar, VC-10, C-130J FMS data CDs issued.

Fowler Building officially opened. Wg Cdr Barber new OC.

14 months replacing manual ERCs with digital data. 55 ERCs captured digitally.

AIDU prints ERCs for first time. Full FLIP production undertaken at AIDU from conception to production.

Second ROLAND 700 purchased.



Agreement with RACAL Avionics to joint edit and produce FLIPS, ERCs and TAPs. One of the first examples of Government Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).

Production of TAP Booklets in colour on DocuTech Printers.

DIGPAPS requirement growing - Jag, GR4, C130J, Harrier.

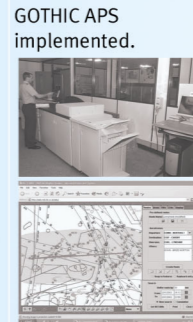
Obtained IIP Accreditation (1999). 138 personnel make up AIDU.

Transfer of Photography trade to Air Carto in Production Flight.

Production of TAP Booklets in colour on DocuTech Printers.

DIGPAPS requirement growing - Jag, GR4, C130J, Harrier.

NOTAM Display System (NDS) went live on internet to enable aircrew to perform filtered searches of NOTAM.



DIGPAPS supply data to the Nimrod FMS.

Second generation digital production system implemented for ERCs.

Third ROLAND 700 printing press purchased.



GOTHIC APS fully live in supporting FMS.

DIGPAPS FMS implement replacement cutover process using VB.

DIGPAPS take delivery of replacement map prep system for C130J.

ROLAND colour pilot system installed.

GOTHIC APS fully live in supporting FMS.

DIGPAPS relocate to purpose built Annex.

AIDU receive accreditation for digital FMS processes against ED76.

ADOBE Illustrator replaces Lites2 in Terminal Charts. TAPs first product to be produced.

SOAC relocated to RMS.

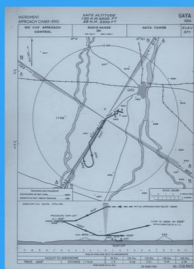
1953 1955 1957 1959 1961 1962 1965 1969 1970 1974 1975 1979 1980 1981 1982 1984 1985 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

Northolt handed back to the RAF, established as RAF Northolt once again.



New trade established called Draughtsman AI (D'man AI).

Trade Training School established. Printing of most products transferred from Bushey Park to Military Survey at Feltham.



Derrick Fowler approached to consider computerisation of large, ERCs.

First use of computers and the beginning of automated cartography in the RAF.

FLIPS established as standard products inc. ERCs, Terminal Approach Procedures (TAPs) and Area Charts. WRAF typists employed to type up other documents.

Introduction of Phototypesetting System to produce documents. Was a huge breakthrough in technology. First time a computerised system could be used to store text files.

Low Flying Cell established at Rheindahlen producing charts for NATO. Post est. at RAF Bruggen.

First pieces of AutoCarto equipment installed to produce En Route Charts automatically.

New equipment housed at Eastcote in Portakabins and the Automated Cartography (Auto Carto) section was established.

Derrick Fowler certain that smaller graphics could be produced by computers too.

New postings established in Germany. Mission Planning Cells (MPCs) at Bruggen and Laarbruch established.

MPCs est. at RAF Marham and RAF Honington. Total of 69 Air Cartographers. (1982)



All the coastlines of the areas for which ERCs were produced were fully digitised.

New section created called Allied Publication ATC (APATC-1). SNCO Cartographers filled some Editorial Roles.



Eastcote located at RAF Northolt and Auto Carto Building created next to existing site South Side.

Minor Aerodromes Book digitised and produced in B&W.



Digitised TAPs were updated to include colour.

Plates produced by Production Flight, one for each colour. The TAPs became the first real product the Unit had produced in multi colour, setting new standards for the Unit.

Data produced for Tristar FMS using DAFIS.



LFC Rheindahlen closed and relocated to AIDU.

Plans for new building North Side drawn up.

Unit relocated to new building North Side. Last of the MPCs closed in 1997.

Development of digital production which allowed programs to interrogate the AIDU AI Database and from this enable a graphic to be drawn.

Practice of printing at Feltham ceased (1996).

DIGPAPS moved to AIDU from Feltham.

New ROLAND 700 printer installed. Every machine in Print & Finishing replaced. All computer controlled.

Unit split into 3 flights - A, B and C. APATC1, AIB, Database and Minor Graphics. Production and Dispatch and Compilation, DIGPAPS, Large Charts.

Introduction of DocuTech printing for FLIPS. Mil AIP produced for first time. Mil AIP distributed on CD.

Unit products adhere to the AIRAC date and cycle.

AIDU website launched. 3 new TAP books produced. UK N, Central and S.

ISO 9000 Quality MS introduced.

ETAPs produced for Jaguar.

Relocation of STC Printing facility to AIDU and printing of BBMF book, the largest production undertaken by AIDU of 40,000 copies.

First full colour process printing undertaken.

Also produced DRJ, APR and Aviate for first time.

NDS live on all intranet websites and continued development.

AIDU workforce consists of 145 people.

End to end digital organisation. RACAL becomes EAG through a series of mergers and co-production of FLIPS continues.

AIDU 50th Anniversary.

GOTHIC APS installed and DAFIF data imported. 30,000 errors detected in the data sent out prior to GOthic APS.



DIGPAPS implement AMPA system using new hardware & software.

GOTHIC APS used for DAFIF production of AIDU AOC.

CAP DEV section est.

DVOF fully automated using GOthic technology.

DIGPAPS implement AMPA system using new hardware & software.

GOTHIC APS used for DAFIF production of AIDU AOC.

CAP DEV section est.

DVOF fully automated using GOthic technology.

NATS awarded contract to convert RAF APATC procedures to PANSOPS criteria. (2008)

GOTHIC amalgamated with DIGPAPS.

MILFLIP established to deliver all standard products digitally via internet.

HLS books produced on Illustrator.

