

## 1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade <sup>(1)</sup>

Headquarters, 1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade  
1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade Signals Squadron

1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Tank Battalion  
2<sup>nd</sup> Czechoslovakian Tank Battalion  
*3<sup>rd</sup> Czechoslovakian Tank Battalion* <sup>(2)</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Motorised Infantry Battalion

Czechoslovakian Reconnaissance Squadron <sup>(2)</sup>

Czechoslovakian Field Artillery Regiment  
Czechoslovakian Anti-Tank Battery  
Czechoslovakian Light Anti-Aircraft Troop

Czechoslovakian Field Engineers Squadron

Czechoslovakian Motor Transport Company

Czechoslovakian Light Field Ambulance

1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade Provost Unit

Czechoslovakian Tank Delivery Squadron

1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade Workshops

1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade Ordnance Field Park

1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade Field Post Unit

1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade Welfare Section

Czechoslovakian District Court Martial  
Czechoslovakian Field Prosecutor

Attached

22<sup>nd</sup> Liaison Headquarters (3)

## NOTES:

1. A number of Czechoslovak military personnel escaped from their country when it was occupied by the Germans, and made their way to France. A 1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovak Division was formed under the command of the French Army. Elements of the division were evacuated from France to the United Kingdom and reconstituted as the 1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovak Mixed Brigade. The 1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade was officially formed on 1 September 1943. Some personnel from the 11<sup>th</sup> Czechoslovakian Infantry Battalion, which had served in the Middle East since 1940 were transferred to this formation. The brigade was commanded by Major General Alois LISKA, who had commanded an artillery regiment in the previous French division. The brigade landed in Normandy in August 1944 under command of the 21<sup>st</sup> Army Group. At this time, it was predominantly equipped with Cromwell tanks, bolstered by some Sherman Firefly tanks. At the beginning of October 1944, the brigade was ordered to Dunkirk to relieve Canadian troops who were besieging the garrison there. The garrison consisted of a variety of naval and army personnel, including the 226<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and elements of the 49<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 97<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 346<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and 711<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, plus the 26<sup>th</sup> and 1046<sup>th</sup> Fortress Battalions and 2,000 personnel of the Waffen SS Reinecke Group. The Brigade was supported by various British and Canadian units during the period of the siege of Dunkirk, and the Czechs undertook two large raids on 28 October and 5 November 1944. During the period of the siege, in early 1945 the brigade raised a third tank battalion by expanding the Reconnaissance Squadron, the infantry battalion was increased from two to three companies, and the artillery regiment from two to three battalions (batteries). The brigade remained at Dunkirk until the garrison eventually surrendered at 09.20 hours on 8 May 1945. The Czechs suffered 167 personnel killed, 461 wounded and 40 missing during the siege. The Germans had lost about 1,000 killed and 890 captured during the siege, with 354 officers and 10,884 men surrendering to the Czechs, together with 542 wounded and 141 sick personnel. Meanwhile, a contingent from the brigade had left to join the United States troops as they reached the Czech border on 1 May 1945. The brigade departed for its homeland after the cessation of hostilities, being incorporated into a Soviet style Tank Corps, however, with the communist coup in 1948, many former personnel had to leave Czechoslovakia. Major General LISKA came to the United Kingdom, dying in Putney, London on 7 February 1977 aged 81 years.
2. This unit was formed in late 1944 or early 1945 by the expansion of the Reconnaissance Squadron of the Brigade.
3. The British attached a Liaison Unit to the Czech Brigade throughout its existence to assist with training and operational effectiveness of the formation within the British Army. Colonel G. J. de W. MULLENS was the G.S.O. 1 in command of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Liaison Unit with effect from 5 May 1943, until the end of the war in Europe. He had a General Staff and Signals Branch of six officers, with the 'A' and 'Q' Branch having four officers. There were sixty-six other ranks in the unit.

## SOURCES:

1 Czechoslovakian Armoured Brigade: [http://www.geocities.ws/czechandslovakthings/WW2\\_CzSkB.htm](http://www.geocities.ws/czechandslovakthings/WW2_CzSkB.htm)