

## French Fortress Units 1940

During peacetime France had 32 fortress battalions and eight Rhine Machine Gun Battalions. This supported the theoretical organization of eight brigades, each with four battalions and a machine gun battalion. Each of the 24 fortified sectors (secteurs fortifiés) were the equivalent of a division and together they manned the Maginot Line.

After 16 March 1940 five sectors were converted into Fortress Infantry Divisions (*Division d'Infanterie de Forteresse - DIF*): the 101e through the 105e DIF. They were then organized into the Army Fortress Corps (*Corps d'armée de Forteresse - CAF*).

A fortified sector generally contained 2-3 fortress regiments, an engineer battalion and the equivalent of two regiments of "position" artillery.

Example : Thionville fortified sector

- 167e RIF (Fortress Infantry Regiment) (with 3 Battalions)
- 168e RIF (with 3 Bn)
- 169e RIF (with 2 Bn)
- III/460e Pionniers
- 70e Régiment d'artillerie mixte de fortresse  
(Mixed Fortress Artillery Regiment)  
(2 75mm Groups & 1 Group of short 155mm guns)
- 151e Régiment d'artillerie de position  
(Position Artillery Regiment)  
(2 Groups of 155mm L77)
- 3 100.5mm Batteries (former German guns)
- 1st & 2nd Companies/203e Bataillon de sapeurs/mineurs  
(Sapper/Miner Battalion)

The following fortified sectors existed in 1940 (SF - Secteur Fortifié - fortified sector & SD - Secteur Defensif - Defensive Sector)

SF - Fortified Sector  
SD - Defensive Sector

Non regroupés en 1940 :

Sector Name	Location	General
SF de l'escaut	Valenciennes	Echard
SF de Maubeuge	Ferme de Wargnories	Béjard
SF de Montmedy	Stenay	Burtaire
SD de Lille	Lille	Bertschi
SD des Flandres	Hazebrouck	Barthelemy
SD des Ardennes	Rimogne	Rocca
SF du Jura	Besançon	Huet
SD du Rhône	Annecy	Michal
SF de Savoie	Chambery	Col. Marteau
SF du Dauphiné	L'Argentière	Cyvoct
SF des Alpes maritimes	Nice st Pons	Magnien
Secteur du littoral	Toulon	Adjoint au prefet maritime
SF de la corse	Bastia	General superieur de la Corse

Region Fortifiée de Metz

Sector Name	Location	General	Effective strength
SD de Marville	attached to SF de Crusne	later Montmedy	on 2/16/40

SF de la Crusne	Crusnes	Durand	18,610 men
SF de Thionville	Fort d'illange	Cousse	23,355 men
SF de Boulay	Chat. Chelaincourt	Besse	17,365 men
SF de Faulquemont	Chat. d'helfedange	Baudoin	19,495 men

Region Fortifiée de la Lauter

SD de la Sarre	Helimer	Boucher	17,600 men
SF de Rohrbach	Dehlingen	Boitignou	17,425 men
SF des Vosges	Bitche	Vieillard	15,775 men
SF de Haguenau	Haguenau	Gillier	22,670 men

Region fortifiée de Belfort

SF du bas Rhin	Strasbourg	Pichon	15,985 men
SF de Colmar	Colmar	Goradin	10,600 men
SF de Mulhouse	Altkirch	Chaligne	4,635 men
SD d'Altkirch	Altkirch	Colonel Gard	7,625 men
Defense de Belfort	Belfort	?	3,465 men
SD de Montbelliard	Montbelliard	de Bizemont	2,835 men

Fortress Units

In 1940 five Army Fortress Corps were created as well as five fortress divisions

CAF - Fortress Corps

DIF - Fortress Infantry Division

- 41e CAF, 1/16/40 , raised as party of the SD des ardennes
- 42e CAF, 3/18/40, raised as party of the SF de la crusnes
- 43e CAF, raised as party of the SF des Vosges
- 44e CAF, raised for the defense of Belfort
- 45e CAF, raised as party of the SF du Jura
  
- 101e DIF, 3/16/40, From the SF de Maubeuge, Assigned to the 1st Army
- 102e DIF, 1/16/40, From the SD des ardennes, Assigned to the 9th Army
- 103e DIF, 3/5/40 , From the SF du Bas Rhin 226e RIF, 237e RIF
- 104e DIF, 1/17/40, From the SF de Colmar 242e RIF
- 105e DIF, 3/16/40, From the SF de Mulhouse 371e RIF