



Armstrong Flight Research Center



The main administrative and hangar complex at NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center adjoins Rogers Dry Lake on Edwards Air Force Base, California. (NASA)

The Armstrong Flight Research Center, NASA's premier installation for atmospheric flight research, is chartered to research, develop, verify and transfer advanced aeronautics, space and related technologies and conduct atmospheric Earth and space science flight operations. The center is named in honor of Neil A. Armstrong, a former research test pilot at the center and the first man to step on the moon during the historic Apollo 11 mission in 1969.

NASA Armstrong's history dates back to late 1946, when 13 engineers and technicians from the NACA's Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory came to Muroc Army Air Base (now Edwards Air Force Base) in Southern California's high desert

to prepare for the first supersonic research flights by the X-1 rocket plane in a joint NACA, Army Air Forces and Bell Aircraft research program. NASA Armstrong is a tenant organization at Edwards and is located adjacent to Rogers Dry Lake, at 44 square miles is the largest dry lakebed in the world. The center flies a variety of specialized research and support aircraft within a 20,700-square mile restricted airspace test range.

In addition to the main campus at Edwards, Armstrong bases several Earth science aircraft and the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) at our satellite facility, Building 703 in nearby Palmdale, California.

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One of NASA Armstrong's two high-altitude ER-2 Earth Resources aircraft is parked on the ramp in front of the Armstrong Flight Research Center Aircraft Operations building 703 in Palmdale, California following a night mission. (NASA)

The center is associated with many important technological milestones in aviation and space access – supersonic and hypersonic flight, digital fly-by-wire control systems, supercritical and forward-swept wings, and the space shuttles. NASA Armstrong was also where the Apollo program's Lunar Landing Research Vehicle, the famed X-15 rocket plane, and the wingless lifting bodies were tested during the 1960s and 70s. Armstrong continues to conduct research and provide support for NASA's efforts in aeronautics technologies, human spaceflight, space exploration and Earth and space science.

Along with research and support aircraft, Armstrong assets include a high-temperature and loads calibration

laboratory; aircraft flight instrumentation capability; a flow visualization facility to study airflow patterns; a data analysis facility to process flight research data; and remotely piloted unmanned aircraft flight research expertise. Armstrong's Research Aircraft Integration Facility simultaneously checks aircraft flight controls, avionics, electronics and other systems and houses Armstrong's flight research aircraft simulators. The only facility of its type in NASA, the facility is designed to accelerate and enhance systems integration and preflight checks on research aircraft.

NASA Armstrong employs more than 1,150 government and contractor personnel at its two campuses at Edwards Air Force Base and Palmdale, California.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

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