



## David Nils Larson

NASA Pilot

David Nils Larson is a research test pilot at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center in Edwards, California. He is NASA's lead pilot for the X-59 aircraft, and is assigned to Armstrong's F/A-18, F-15, T-34 research and mission support aircraft, and DC-8 airborne science aircraft. Larson also serves as senior advisor for NASA aeronautical flight research. In this role, he is a strategic advisor to program directors for agency mission directorates concerning aeronautics flight research planning, execution, aircraft airworthiness, and risk management for future flight research projects.

The X-59 experimental aircraft will demonstrate the ability to fly faster than the speed of sound while reducing the loudness and intensity of the sonic boom that typically occurs at such speeds. In support of this effort, Larson has flown numerous supersonic research flights for NASA's Commercial Supersonic Technology project. This included supersonic flights in California, Florida, and Texas, preparing NASA for community overflights of the X-59.

### Experience

Prior to joining NASA in 2007, Larson was on active duty with the U.S. Air Force. He has accumulated more than 7,000 hours of military and civilian flight experience in more than 100 fixed- and rotary-winged aircraft.

During his time in the Air Force, Larson served as a first assignment instructor pilot in T-37 trainers; an operational U-2 pilot; a test pilot flying the F-15, T-38C, and RU-38; a test pilot instructor on exchange at the U.S. Navy Test Pilot School teaching systems and fixed-wing flight test in the F/A-18, T-2, U-6A, and X-26; and as commander of the U-2 flight test detachment and depot in Palmdale, California. He finished his Air Force career as the deputy group commander for the 412th Operations Group at Edwards Air Force Base. He retired from active duty in 2007 with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Larson previously served as NASA Armstrong's flight crew branch chief, also known as chief pilot, and was responsible for supervision of the pilots, navigators, UAV operators, and flight engineers who flew a variety of specialized aeronautical research, operational science, and mission support aircraft. Prior to that he served as deputy chief of the flight crew. He has worked on numerous supersonic projects and the Mars Science Laboratory landing radar tests in the F/A-18, the F-16 Automatic Collision Avoidance Technology program, various high speed propulsion projects in the F-15, Intelligent Flight Control projects on the F/A-18 and NF-15B, and numerous airborne science missions flown on the ER-2 and DC-8 airborne science aircraft.

### Education

Larson earned a Bachelor of Science in aeronautical engineering in 1986 from the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He is a fellow and former president of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and a graduate of U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School Class 95A, "The Spin Doctors."