

46 TEST GROUP



MISSION

The Test Group's mission is to operate world-class test facilities for high speed sled track testing, navigation and guidance system testing, radar signature measurements, weapon systems flight testing, and Air Force Liaison for all AF programs tested at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR).

The 46 Test Group consists of 90 military, 239 civilians, and 161 contractor personnel with two-thirds of these being scientists, engineers, and technicians. The present day facility investments are estimated at \$614 million. They include three AT-38B aircraft and a C-12J aircraft. Annual budget averages about \$50 million with about 50% earned through test programs and the remaining 50% is direct budget authority that comes through Air Force Materiel Command to pay salaries and "keep the doors open for business."

LINEAGE

6585 Test Group activated, 1 Aug 1970
Redesignated 46 Test Group, 1 Oct 1992
Inactivated, 2012

STATIONS

Holloman AFB, NM, 1 Aug 1970

ASSIGNMENTS

Air Force Special Weapons Center, 1 Aug 1970
Armament Development and Test Center (later, Armament Division), 1 Oct 1975

3246 Test Wing, 1 Jan 1984
46 Test Wing, 1 Oct 1992

WEAPON SYSTEMS

None, 1970-1990
AT-38, 1991
C-12, 1997

COMMANDERS

Col Earl M. Thompson, 1 Aug 1970
Col Orville J. Kvamme, 30 Jun 1975
Col Lemuel D. Horton, 1 Jul 1977
Col James S. Thompson, 20 Sep 1978
Col Robert E. Haney, 1 Oct 1980
Col Lawrence J. Thomson, 14 May 1982
Col John B. McDonald, 20 Jun 1984
Col Roger C. Head, 25 Jul 1986
Col Ronald C. Hoover, 5 Jun 1989
Col Carl A. Lyday, 19 Aug 1991
Col Thomas U. Mead, 22 Jul 1994
Col David J. Eichhorn, 31 Jul 1996
Col Eric H. Hoganson, 16 Jul 1998
Col William N. Higgenbotham, Jul 2000
Col Joseph E. Zeis, 1 Aug 2002
Col Donald S. Watrous, 23 Jun 2004
Col David A. Harris, 16 Jun 2006

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Jan-31 Dec 1972
1 Jan 1984-31 Dec 1985
1 Jan-31 Dec 1987
[1 Oct]-31 Dec 1992
1 Jan-31 Dec 1993
1 Jan-31 Dec 1994
1 Jan-31 Dec 1995
1 Jan-31 Dec 1997

1 Jan 1998-31 Dec 1999
1 Jan-31 Dec 2000
1 Jan-31 Dec 2001
1 Jan 2000-31 Dec 2002
1 Jan-31 Dec 2003
1 Jan-31 Dec 2004
1 Jan-31 Dec 2005
1 Jan-31 Dec 2006

EMBLEM



46 Test Group emblem: Azure, a bend inverted Or, all within a diminished bordure Yellow. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "46 TEST GROUP" in Blue letters. Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The inverted bend within the field suggests a cloud formation and represents the sky, the area where the unit's missions are conducted.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The basic capabilities of the 6585th Test Group have existed since the 1950s when the facilities were part of the Air Force Systems Command's Air Force Missile Development Center (AFMDC). On August 1, 1970, per Air Force Systems Command Special Order G-94, the AFMDC was deactivated and the Tactical Air Command assumed host responsibilities for Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. Associate units and programs transferred to other locations within Air Force Systems Command. The deactivation resulted in the loss of more than 450 military and 570 civilian positions. The Test & Evaluation activities that remained were the Central Inertial Guidance Test Facility (CIGTF), the High Speed Test Track, the Radar Target Scatter Facility

(RATSCAT), and the Target Drone Facility. These organizations were combined to form the nucleus of a Holloman AFB tenant organization, the 6585th Test Group, with the Air Force Special Weapons Center (AFSWC) at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, designated as the headquarters for the Test Group.

In 1975, AFSWC was disestablished, and the 6585th Test Group at Holloman became part of the Armament Development and Test Center (ADTC) at Eglin AFB, FL. They were later renamed the Armament Division (AD). From October 1, 1993 to the present, under the objective wing reorganization, the Air Division at Eglin AFB became the Air Armament Center (AAC), and the 3246 Test Wing, the 6585th Test Group's parent organization, was designated the 46 Test Wing and the 46 Test Group respectively.

Officials at Holloman AFB, N.M., inactivated the 46 Test Group, and activated the 96th Test Group during a base ceremony. The name change on Oct. 1 is part of Air Force Material Command's overall efficiency reshuffle. The group, which oversees Air Force testing at White Sands Missile Range, now reports to the 96th Test Wing at Eglin AFB, Fla. The wing stood up in July via the consolidation of Eglin's 46 TW and 96th Air Base Wing; it falls under the Air Force Test Center at Edwards AFB, Calif. "When the new 96th Test Wing was activated, it was apparent that our tenant unit here would follow the new parent organization name change," said Col. Charles Webb, 96th TG commander. The Holloman mission includes flight testing weapons, evaluating navigation and guidance systems, and assessing radar cross sections. 2012

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency, U.S. Air Force, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.