

AIR FORCE NUCLEAR WEAPONS CENTER



LINEAGE

Established as the Special Weapons Command (a Major Command), and activated, 1 Dec 1949
Redesignated Air Force Special Weapons Center (lost Major Command status), 1 Apr 1952
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1976
Redesignated Nuclear Weapons Center, 14 Feb 2006
Activated, 31 Mar 2006
Redesignated Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, 29 Feb 2008

STATIONS

Kirtland AFB, NM, 1 Dec 1949-1 Apr 1976
Kirtland AFB, NM, 31 Mar 2006

ASSIGNMENTS

Headquarters United States Air Force, 1 Dec 1949
Air Research and Development (later, Air Force Systems) Command, 1 Apr 1952-1 Apr 1976
Air Force Materiel Command, 31 Mar 2006

COMMANDERS

BG Howard G. Bunker, 1 Dec 1949
MG John S. Mills, 10 Oct 1950
MG William M. Canterbury, 25 Jun 1954
MG Charles M. McCorkle, 27 Jul 1959
MG John W. White, 2 Jul 1962
Col Ralph S. Garman, 1 Mar 1966
BG David V. Miller, 1 Jul 1967
Col James E. Paschall, 23 Jul 1969
Col Algernon G. Swan, 24 Jul 1970
MG Thomas W. Morgan, 17 Nov 1972
MG Maurice R. Reilly, 29 Aug 1975-1 Apr 1976

Col. Terrance A. Feehan July 2006-April 2008
Brig. Gen. Everett H. Thomas April 2008-Jan. 2011
Brig. Gen. Garrett Harencak Jan. 2011-Present

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

None

EMBLEM

Sable, a globe Azure, edged and grid lined Argent, charged with a nuclear device palewise point to chief Gules, fimbriated of the third, and encircled by three electrons and their orbits in an atomic pattern; all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "AIR FORCE NUCLEAR WEAPONS CENTER" in Blue letters. (Approved, 9 May 2006)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue represents the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The earth represents the Area of Responsibility (AOR) assigned to the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center (AFNWC). Both in a strategic and tactical sense, the AFNWC has a significant role in maintaining a viable nuclear deterrent force structure during times of peace and an overwhelming destructive forces in times of nuclear conflict. The AOR is not bound by any one border but extends to anywhere on earth as requirements dictate. The electrons circling the nucleus (represented by earth) represent the basic structure of the atom that is instrumental to the nuclear detonation. The nuclear device represents the numerous nuclear weapons systems that fall under the responsibility of the AFNWC. The AFNWC responsibilities span the total scope of a system's life - from concept to acquisition to sustainment to retirement. "Nuclear Weapons System" includes the nuclear weapon, delivery system (aircraft, cruise missile, ICBM, etc) and support equipment.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The Nuclear Weapons Center was originally established as a Major Command to direct specialized organizations dealing with atomic and other unconventional weapons. Because much of the work involved research and development, it lost its status as a Major Command and was absorbed by the Air Research and Development Command in Apr 1952, but continued to do research and development on special weapons until 1976.

The Air Force has consolidated all its functions for the design and maintenance of nuclear weapons at the new Nuclear Weapons Center at Kirtland AFB, N.M. The organization was activated March 31.

The NWC won't result in any new hires or spending. It merely brings various functions, previously spread out across USAF, into one centralized location.

The center will manage the Air Force's nuclear weapons systems to support the National Command Structure and will act as a parent organization for Kirtland, with two subordinate units: the 377th Air Base Wing and the 498th Armament Systems Wing. The 377th will be responsible for nuclear safety, expeditionary forces, and operating support. The 498th will be responsible for a broad range of support functions. 2006

Fission and Fusion: As part of the Air Force's organizational moves to bolster oversight of its nuclear weapons, the service formally relocated on Oct. 25 the 498th Munitions Maintenance Group, along with its new subordinate unit, the 19th Munitions Squadron, from Kirtland AFB, N.M., to Whiteman AFB, Mo. "Our nuclear arsenal is the ultimate backstop of our nation's strategic defense and these units ensure Whiteman is prepared and ready for this responsibility," said Gen. William Fraser, Air Combat Command boss. With the change, the 498th MUMG still retains command of the 898th Munitions Squadron and 708th Nuclear Sustainment Squadron at Kirtland. And the group remains subordinate to the 498th Nuclear Systems Wing at Kirtland, which reports directly to the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, also at the New Mexico base, where it oversees the sustainment of Air Force nuclear weapons and support equipment in the continental US.

On March 31, 2006, the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center was created and became the parent organization at Kirtland AFB. The 498th Armament Systems Wing was also created to be the maintenance arm of the AFNWC, while the 377th ABW remained the host support unit on base.

The Nuclear Weapons Center was established on March 31, 2006, and renamed to the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center on February 29, 2008. It is Air Force Materiel Command's center of expertise for nuclear weapon systems. The AFNWC is the single AFMC voice for integrating nuclear weapon systems requirements and nuclear weapon system resource management. The center is the primary unit servicing Kirtland AFB and its over 100 mission partners.

The mission of the AFNWC is to ensure safe, secure and reliable nuclear weapons are available to support the national command structure and Air Force war fighter.

The responsibilities of the AFNWC include acquisition, modernization and sustainment of nuclear system programs for both the Departments of Defense and Energy.

The center is composed of two wings: the 377th Air Base Wing and the 498th Armament Systems Wing, both at Kirtland AFB, N.M., and units in Germany, Oklahoma and Utah.

James Touts Benefits of Nuclear Reorganization -Marc V. Schanz Detailing recent changes to the Department of Defense's nuclear mission, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said the realignment of parts of USAF's nuclear mission under a dual-hatted major general will lead to greater sustainment efficiencies for the Air Force's nuclear systems. In a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies Tuesday evening, James said the plan to merge the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center at Kirtland AFB, N.M., and the Air Force Program Executive Office for Strategic Systems, also at Kirtland, will join together acquisition efforts and support management duties for USAF nuclear systems. Going forward, the Air Force will have "one senior leader accountable for the entirety of the weapons system ... the missile, the launch facilities, and the supporting equipment" for both support activities and acquisition. The 377th Air Base Wing, host of the AFNWC, will move from Air Force Materiel Command to Air Force Global Strike Command as part of the change, to streamline product support and modernization. The USAFNWC also will be reorganized into three directorates-two of which will focus on ICBMs and aircraft-delivered nuclear weapons and the third to focus on nuclear requirements and engaging with the rest of the nuclear enterprise and other agencies. 2014

Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 19 Sep 2010
Updated:

Sources
AFHRA

BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL

OF THE UNITED STATES

Disestablishment

The Air Force

Special Weapons Center

Department of Defense

The disestablishment of the Air Force Special Weapons Center, Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, should produce annual recurring savings of about \$5.9 million and result in one-time costs of about **\$3.1** million.

LCD-76-323

COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

B-17 008 3

The Honorable Joseph M. Montoya
United States Senate

Dear Senator Montoya:

On April 22, 1975, you asked us to report on the disestablishment of the Air Force Special Weapons Center. We reviewed the savings and costs related to the disestablishment.

As you requested, we did not present this report to the Department of Defense for official comment. We did, however, discuss our findings with representatives.

Department
Comptroller General
of the United States

DIGEST

CHAPTER

.1

2

INTRODUCTION

Reinforcement plan

Air Force reevaluation

History of the Air Force Special

Kirtland Air Force Base

Scope of review

Weapons Center

SAVINGS AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH

DISESTABLISHMENT

Estimated annual recurring savings

Estimated one-time costs

Estimated one-time cost avoidances

-A-B-REVIEWS

ADTC

AFCRL

AFSWC

GAO

Armament Development and Test Center

Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory

Air Force Special Weapons Center

General Accounting Office

Page

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COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S REPORT TO DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE
THE HONORABLE JOSEPH M. MONTOYA AIR FORCE SPECIAL WEAPONS
UNITED STATES SENATE CENTER

Department of Defense

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D- -I G- -E S- -T

On November 22, 1974, the Secretary of Defense announced the disestablishment of the Air Force Special Weapons Center, Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, **as** part of the Department of Defense's continuing effort to shift resources from support to combat functions and to realine activities in line with today's force levels. **(See p. 1.)**

GAO believes that the disestablishment will produce annual recurring **savings** of about \$5.9 million **and** will result in one-time costs of about \$3.1 million. **(See pp. 5 to 8,)**

Existing organizations will absorb most of the Center's functions. **(See pp. 1 and 2.)** Most of the savings will result from eliminating headquarters positions. **(See pp. 5 and 6.)**

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On November 22, 1974, the Secretary of Defense announced 111 base realignment actions to be completed by 1977. These actions are part of the Department of Defense's continuing effort to divert resources from support and overhead activities to combat capability and to realine activities in line

with today's force levels.

It is anticipated that the 111 realignments will eliminate headquarters and other positions involving approximately 11,500 military and 11,600 civilian personnel. The military personnel will be reassigned to combat support. The Department of Defense estimates that support costs will be reduced by over \$3.3 billion in the 10 years after these actions are completed.

Included in the announcement was the closure of the Air Force Special Weapons Center (AFSWC) at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, and other actions affecting AFSWC and Kirtland, including consolidating Air Force Systems Command flight-test aircraft and aircraft modification resources and relocating the environmental research functions of the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory (AFCRL), L. G. Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts, to Kirtland.

REALIGNMENT PLAN

The overall realignment plan provided that:

--The Commander of the Air Force Contract Management Division assume AFSWC's base operating support responsibilities for Kirtland.

--AFSWC's 6585th Test Group located at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, be assigned in place to the Armament Development and Test Center (ADTC). ADTC, which is responsible for research and development of all Air Force nonnuclear munitions, is headquartered at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

--ADTC assume the role and responsibilities of Deputy for Air Force, White Sands, Missile Range, New Mexico.

--AFSWC F-4 and T-38 test and test-support aircraft be assigned, with associated test projects, to

ADTC .

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--AFSWC test-support T-39, C-130, and C-135 aircraft, with associated test projects and all AFSWC modification resources, be assigned to the Aeronautical Systems Division located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The Aeronautical Systems Division plans and manages the acquisition of aeronautical systems, subsystems, and associated equipment.

--AFSWC's C-131B aircraft, serial number 53-7810i modified for airborne frequency monitoring, be assigned to the Air Force Flight Test Center at

Edwards Air Force Base, California. - 1/
closed and Kirtland's flight line and maintenance
operations be reduced to provide transient aircraft
turnaround capability only. Additional support for
aircraft required to operate from Kirtland in support
of specific test programs would be provided by the
responsible test organizations.

--AFSWC's 4905th Maintenance and Supply Group be

--The environmental research functions of AFCRL be
transferred to Kirtland as the Air Force Geophysics
Laboratory.

A- -I-R -FO_R-C-E- -R-E-E-V-A-LU ATION

In December 1974 the Secretary of the Air Force decided
that further study and examination of the realignment plan
was warranted. He commissioned agencies outside the Air
Force to evaluate the plan, to obtain an independent review.
On July 31, 1975, the Secretary announced his reaffirmation
of the decision to disestablish AFSWC but reversed the decision
to move the environmental research functions of AFCRL
from Hanscom to Kirtland. **As** a result, Kirtland is expected
to lose 1,620 positions (849 military and 771 civilian),
566 more than the 1,054 it was expected to lose if the environmental
research functions of AFCRL had been moved to
Kirtland.

HISTORY OF THE AIR FORCE

SPECIAL WEAPONS CENTER

AFSWC, a division of the Air Force Systems Command,
was established on April 1, 1952, and evolved from Air Force
-1/ The airborne frequency monitoring mission has since been
terminated and the aircraft has been removed from the Air
Force inventory.

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organizations at Kirtland dating back, to the early post-
World War II period. These organizations all had one
common purpose- - to provide the Air Force with the best
possible nuclear weapon capability.

AFSWC is the lead test center for special weapons and
support equipment testing, airborne missile testing, nuclear
testing air support, aerospace navigation and guidance **system**
testing, high-speed track testing, radar target scatter
testing, and terminal guidance subsystem testing. AFSWC also
operates the central inertial guidance test facility, the
Air Force Systems Command's high-speed test track, and the
radar target scatter sites; supports -the test and evaluation
of selected aircraft reconnaissance systems and missile ree

ntry vehicles; provides target drone support for testing selected weapon systems; provides Department of Defense directed representation and support to the White Sands Missile Range; and provides the management for test and evaluation systems development- acquisition as directed. AFSWC is also responsible for the general maintenance and housekeeping of Kirtland.

In November 1974 AFSWC's authorized projected personnel strength totaled 4,732--394 officers, 2,237 enlisted personnel, and 2,101 civilians. AFSWC's total obligation authority for fiscal year 1975 was about \$71.8 million.

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE

Kirtland, located near the southeast section of Albuquerque, New Mexico, began as an Army Air Corps training field in the late 1930s. In February 1946 Kirtland was placed under the Air Materiel Command and became the center for flight-test activities for the Manhattan Engineering District. Kirtland's role in testing and evaluating special weapons increased in 1947 when the Army Air Corps became the U.S. Air Force and the base was renamed Kirtland Air Force Base.

On **July 1, 1971**, Sandia Air Force Base was merged with Kirtland. Kirtland occupies nearly 50,000 acres and has 766 buildings with more than 5.5 million square feet of floor space. The Department of Defense investment in real estate, equipment, supplies, and aircraft is estimated to be about \$355 million. The Department of Defense employs about 13,000 military and civilian personnel at Kirtland. Kirtland's population totals more than 19,000--about 13,000 military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense and about 6,000 personnel of the Energy Research and Development Administration and its contractors.

3

We made our review primarily at Kirtland, Wright-Patterson, and Eglin Air Force Bases and at the Department of the Air Force, Washington, D.C. We discussed with Air Force officials the cost and savings resulting from disestablishing

AFSWC and examined records and documents supporting the Air Force's estimates.

The Employment Security Commission of New Mexico assisted' us in estimating the costs of unemployment compensation

for potentially qualifying AFSWC employees.

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SAVINGS AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH DISESTABLISHMENT

The Air Force estimated the disestablishment of AFSWC

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would result in annual recurring savings of about \$5.5 million, one-time costs of about \$4 million, and one-time cost avoidances of about \$3.5 million. We believe the Air Force underestimated annual recurring savings by about \$400,000 and overestimated one-time costs by about \$1 million.

We estimate that the disestablishment will produce annual recurring savings of about 55.9 million and will result in one-time costs of about \$3.1 million. We were unable to evaluate the accuracy of the major part of the Air Force's estimate for one-time cost avoidances.

The following sections compare the Air Force's estimates and our estimates for annual recurring savings and one-time costs.

GAO over

or

A--i-r - -F-o-r-c - e- G-A --O u-n_d_e-r (-)

(000 omitted)-~

Decreased annual costs:

Military personnel .costs

C i v i l i a n personnel costs

Vehicle operation and

Facilities operation and

maintenance

maintenance

Total estimated decrease

in recurring costs

Less increased annual costs:

C o n t r a c t services

Army staging operation

at Holloman

Total estimated increase

in recurring costs

E s t i m a t e d a n n u a l **recurring**

s a v i n g s

\$3,400

2,508

100

-- 341

6--, 3-4-9-

883

--883

\$-5,466

\$3,465

3,026

45

---259

6,795

883

---50

933

\$2,862

\$65

518

-55

--8-2

-446

-

--50

SO

\$-396

5

The Air Force estimated that the disestablishment would eliminate 582 positions--372 military and 210 civilian. The Air Force's calculation of the related savings was based on fiscal year 1974 cost data.

The differences between our estimates and the Air Force's estimates for personnel savings were the net result of two factors.

--Because our analysis was done after the Air Force's, we were able to use fiscal year 1975 data to determine savings.

--In its calculations the Air Force included savings for eliminating 37 contract positions (mess attendants and shuttle-bus services) unrelated to the disestablishment.

The Air Force overestimated reduced operations and maintenance costs by about \$55,000 for vehicles and \$82,000 for facilities, because its estimates included labor costs already claimed in its estimates for personnel savings.

The Army's Missile Electronic Warfare Airborne Group

will require an annual staging operation at Hoioman at a cost of \$50,000, as a result of the anticipated transfer from Kirtland to Wright-Patterson of the NKC-135A airborne electronic laboratory. The Air Force did not include this cost in its estimate.

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ESTIMATED ONE-TIME CO-S-T-S

GAO over

or

A-i-r Force GAO under (-) { 000 omitted)-

Severance pay \$ 561 \$ 241

Homeowners assistance 1,013 -a/ 1,013

Unemployment compensation - 88

New equipment to be purchased

by ADTC to support requirements

of former AFSWC missions - **30 0**

Relocation of military personnel 9 63 963

Relocation of civilian personnel 1,370 255

Facility preparation at Wright-

Patterson 1 2 1 41

Transfer of Army's Missile Elec-

-tronic Warfare Airborne Group to

Wright- Patterson and Holloman - 152

Cost to place buildings in care-

Transportation of equipment 21 21

9 - taker status --

\$ -320

88

-

300

-1,115

- - -

-80

1-5 2

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Total **\$-4,-0-4-9- \$-3,0-8 3 \$ -965**

-a/W e were unable to evaluate Air Force's estimate for this category. Cost cannot be determined with reasonable accuracy

until phasedown is completed.

The Air Force estimated that severance pay would be about \$561,000. We estimate it will be about \$241,000.

The difference is accounted for largely by the fact that the Air Force assumed those expected to receive severance pay to have an average of 15 years' eligible service, whereas our analysis showed them to have an average of 9 years' eligible service.

The Air Force did not include an estimate of the Government's liability for unemployment compensation as a **result of the closure. The AFSWC employees we estimated** would be eligible for unemployment compensation could be entitled to maximum benefits totaling about \$531,000. The State is entitled to full reimbursement by the Federal Government for unemployment benefits paid to former Federal employees. We estimate that the amount actually paid will be about \$88,000. This is based on the number who would receive unemployment compensation and the length of time they would receive it, as estimated by the Employment Security Commission of New Mexico.

7

ADTC officials have identified about \$300,000 in new equipment requirements needed to support the AFSWC missions ADTC is gaining. These requirements, which are subject to Air Force Systems Command approval, were not included in the Air Force's estimate.

Using projections based on historical data, the Air Force estimated that 217 civilian employees would relocate as a result of the disestablishment. On the basis of the highest possible estimates for permanent-change-of-station allowances (about \$6,313 for each civilian the Air Force estimated the cost would be about \$1,370,000. On the basis of information obtained from personnel officials and records at Kirtland, it appears that only 102 civilian employees will relocate, at an average cost of about \$2,500 for each employee. We estimate that civilian relocation costs will total about \$255,000,

The Air Force estimated one-time costs include about \$121,000 for preparing facilities at Wright-Patterson. We estimated such costs at \$41,000, or about \$80,000 less than the Air Force's estimate. The difference in the two estimates is attributable to two factors.

--The Air Force erroneously included \$97,300 not applicable to Wright-Patterson or AFSWC, These

costs are associated with the plan to transfer the environmental research functions of AFCRL from Hanscom to Kirtland, which plan the Secretary of the Air Force has canceled.

--Our estimate includes \$17,800 for facilities preparation largely accounted for by a revision to the Aeronautical Systems Division implementation plan.

En closing AFSWC, the Air Force plans to transfer the NKC-1358 airborne electronic warfare laboratory from Kirtland to Wright-Patterson, **As** a result, the Army's Missile Electronic Warfare Airborne Group at Kirtland expects to move the bulk of its operation to Wright-Patterson. The group estimates that its one-time cost of moving will be about \$152,000. The Air Force did not include this cost in its estimate.

We estimate, on the basis of information provided by the Civil Engineering Division of the 4900th Air Base Group at Kirtland, that the Air Force will incur a one-time cost of about \$9,000 to place the vacated buildings in caretaker status. The **Wie** Force did not include this cost in its estimate.

8

Redistribution of:

Equipment

Aircraft spare parts

Military construction and
operation and maintenance
projects to be canceled

Total estimated one-time
savings

\$2,344

342

The Air Force estimated that AFSWC had about \$4,688,000 worth of equipment, of which about 50 percent (\$2,344,000) could be redistributed for use by other organizations. We were unable to evaluate the validity of this estimate because the Air Force could not identify either the specific equipment that would be redistributed or the recipients.

The Air Force was able to identify the aircraft spare parts that would be redistributed and the recipients. **-However,** the Air Force's estimate of \$342,000 worth of spare parts **was** based on 1974 inventory values. By the end of fiscal year 1975, the inventory value of the spare parts had

decreased to about \$226,000.

We were able to validate the Air Force's estimate of \$852,000 for the canceled projects.

AIR FORCE SPECIAL WEAPONS CENTER



LINEAGE

Established as Special Weapons Command, 1 Dec 1949

Redesignated Air Force Special Weapons Center, 1 Apr 1952

Inactivated, 1 Apr 1976

STATIONS

Kirtland AFB, NM

ASSIGNMENTS

Air Research and Development Command, 1 Apr 1952

COMMANDERS

MG C. M. McCorkle, #1961

Col A. G. Swan, #1971

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

OPERATIONS

The Special Weapons Command was created to direct specialized organizations dealing with atomic and other unconventional weapons. Because much of the work involved research and development, the command was eventually absorbed by the Air Research and Development Command.

In Dec 1949, Kirtland AFB became headquarters for the newly created Special Weapons

Command. The nucleus of this organization was composed of pioneering Air Force agencies that had located here to determine future employment of special weapons.

The command became the Air Force Special Weapons Center on 1 Apr 1952, and was a unit of the Air Research and Development Command. During the 1950s, Center people and aircraft participated in atmospheric nuclear tests in Nevada and the far Pacific. The first Air Force scientific capabilities at the base were created during the mid 1950s. Biophysicists deliberately flew through nuclear clouds to determine radiation hazards. And engineers launched sounding rockets so physicists could study the effects of high-altitude nuclear explosions and the nature of the recently discovered Van Allen radiation belts around the Earth. During that period, air defense, weather and atomic test squadrons operated from Kirtland AFB, and people from both bases took part in the 12 nuclear test series conducted in Nevada and the Pacific. Special Weapons Center pilots flew through nuclear clouds to determine radiation hazards, and its engineers launched sounding rockets to study the effects of high altitude nuclear explosions and to investigate the upper atmosphere in preparation for future space missions.

Armed Forces Special Weapons Command also constructed two operational sites. One of these sites was known as Site Able, located in the foothills of the Manzano Mountains, just east of Sandia Base. On February 22, 1952, Site Able was renamed Manzano Base, and operated by the Air Force.

From the early years of Cold War, the need to test and evaluate supersonic aircraft technologies, associated munitions, and eventually space systems, required the Air Force to build specialized ground test facilities. As nuclear weapons and electronics became more a part of air power, two new locations for Test and Evaluation (T&E) were created. The Special Weapons Center (SWC) at Kirtland AFB, NM concentrated on the technologies supporting nuclear weapons development. Hanscom Field, MA concentrated on new levels of sophistication in electronics and avionics development. However, both locations were closed for testing in the late 1970s because the Air Force felt that limited R&D dollars were better spent on technology than on infrastructure.

One aspect of the testing environment involves the features a particular location might offer that could help or hinder testing of weapons such as supersonic aircraft technologies, associated munitions, and space systems. For example, the Special Weapons Center was established at Kirtland AFB, NM because of the concentration of technologies and industries supporting nuclear weapons development in the region.

In 1958 Special Weapons Center scientists began to simulate the effects of nuclear explosions in order to strengthen our missiles, missile sites and aircraft against possible enemy attack. It was in 1958 that a nuclear effects simulator was first constructed in an abandoned dining hall at Kirtland.

In 1958, efforts were underway between the United States and Soviet Union to agree on a moratorium for atmospheric nuclear testing. The anticipated limitations on determining weapons effects inspired efforts by the Special Weapons Center and Sandia Corporation to develop methods of simulating nuclear effects with non-nuclear techniques. In 1962, Kirtland AFB and Sandia personnel participated in Operation DOMINIC, a series of atmospheric and subsurface tests in the Pacific. They were the last such tests conducted before the existing Limited Nuclear Test Ban

Treaty was signed with the Soviet Union in late 1962, prohibiting testing in the atmosphere, in space and under water.

In the wake of the signing of the test ban treaty, in 1963 the Air Force Weapons Laboratory was created from the Research Directorate elements of the Special Weapons Center. The Special Weapons Center gave up much of its research and development work to the newly created Air Force Weapons Laboratory. The Center continued with its test and evaluation mission and as Kirtland's host organization. The Weapons Laboratory built facilities during the 1960s to simulate nuclear effects such as transient radiation, X-rays, and electromagnetic pulse.

The Special Weapons Center assumed management of Air Force Systems Command's test and evaluation facilities at Holloman AFB NM, during the summer of 1970. And, just one year later on 1 Jul 1971, Kirtland merged with Manzano and Sandia Base, its neighbors to the east, creating the sprawling military complex known as Kirtland AFB.

Early in 1974, the Air Force Test and Evaluation Center was organized at Kirtland AFB to direct and oversee operational testing of emerging aircraft and systems.

Because of budget restrictions and the need to save money, the Air Force Special Weapons Center was disestablished on 1 Apr 1976. In 1976 AFSWC was closed and OPR functions came to the AFWL. Special Weapons Center's responsibilities as Kirtland's "landlord" were also transferred to the Air Force Contract Management Division on the same day

COMMAND ACTIVATED 1 DEC 49 AT KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE NM.
COMMANDED BY BRIG GEN JOHN S. MILLS.

MISSION TO MAINTAIN TECHNICAL SUPERVISION OVER FACILITIES, PERSONNEL, AIRCRAFT, EQUIPMENT, AND INSTRUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR DEVELOPMENT TESTING OF ATOMIC WEAPONS AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS. MISSION EXPANDED IN DEC 51 TO INCLUDE SUPPORT OF NUCLEAR TESTS (INCLUDING FURNISHING OF AIRCRAFT AND CREWS) AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR OPERATIONAL SUITABILITY TESTING OF ATOMIC WEAPONS.

COMMAND PARTICIPATED IN RANGER OPERATION (FIRST OF SERIES OF NUCLEAR TESTS WITHIN CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES) AT NEVADA TEST SITE DURING JAN AND FEB 51.

The Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center reorganized on March 30 and is now broken into three execution directorates, including the existing ICBM Systems, and the newly formed Nuclear Technology and Interagency, and the Air Delivered Capabilities, according to a March 31 release. "Our mission is still to deliver nuclear capabilities and winning solutions that warfighters use daily to deter our enemies and assure our allies," said Maj.Gen. Sandra Finan, AFNWC commander. "Implementation of this [reorganization] will better align our organization to that mission." The new technology directorate will focus on the "unique aspects of nuclear weapons technology and

engagement with interagency partners in the nation's nuclear enterprise," states the release. Both the ICBM and Air Delivered Capabilities directorates directly relate to the Air Force's two legs of the nuclear triad. The ICBM Systems Directorate includes the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, Minuteman III, engineering, operations management, program control, and product support divisions. The Air Delivered Capabilities Directorate includes, engineering, strategic systems, nuclear weapons systems integration, outside continental United States support, nuclear weapons acquisition, and a cruise missile sustainment division.

2015



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Sources
AFHRA.

Air Force Magazine Almanacs. Air Force Association. Arlington, VA. Various years.