

NAVAL AIR DEVELOPMENT CENTER
WARMINSTER, PENNSYLVANIA

BRIEF HISTORY

The Naval Air Development Center (NADC) was established during World War II to meet the growing needs of a nation at war.

In 1944, the Navy acquired the Brewster Aeronautical Corporation with its one million square feet of production and administration space and an adjoining airfield and aircraft hangars. The plant was designated the Naval Aircraft Modification Unit (NAMU) and became part of the Naval Air Material Center, Philadelphia. This mission involved conversion and modification of Navy aircraft prior to delivery to combat units in the Fleet.

With the war's end, increased emphasis was placed on research and development activity. On August 1, 1947, NAMU was redesignated the Naval Air Development Station (NADS), an independent and self-sufficient activity. By August 1, 1949, the NADS expansion reached a significant point after several activities from other parts of the country had been transferred here. The Station was reorganized along functional lines to make it a more efficient research and development activity, and was designated the Naval Air Development Center.

The laboratories originally comprising NADC were the Pilotless Aircraft Development Laboratory, the Aeronautical Electronic and Electrical Laboratory, and the Aircraft Armament Laboratory. These laboratories functioned in the research and development of pilotless aircraft, electronic systems and components and aviation armament. The supporting activities included the Administration, Industrial Relations, Security, Medical, Public Works, Operations, Supply, and Fiscal Departments plus a Naval Air Station.

In July 1950, the Aeronautical Computer Laboratory was added, first as a small engineering team and later as a laboratory using what was at that time the world's largest analog computer, the TYPHOON.

The Aviation Medical Acceleration Laboratory became a part of the Center on June 17, 1952 when the world's largest human centrifuge was dedicated. It was here that the Project MERCURY astronauts received an important part of their training.

An important function arrived at the Center with the establishment of the Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Laboratory in 1958. Currently, the function is a command project.

In July 1963, the Naval Air Station was redesignated the Naval Air Facility.

On July 1, 1965, a reorganization combined and consolidated the existing laboratories into four functional departments (Aero Electronics Technology Department, Aero Mechanics Department, Aerospace Medical Research Department, and Air Warfare Research Department) and added a Systems Project Department. A major advance in management control was realized through implementation of a computerized Management Information System.

On July 1, 1967, three laboratories of the Naval Air Engineering Center, Philadelphia, became departments under the administrative control of NADC: Aero Materials Department, Aero Structures Department, Aerospace Crew Equipment Department.

The Systems Project Department and the Air Warfare research Department were disestablished on February 1, 1968 and the resources merged into a single department designated the Systems Analysis and Engineering Department.

On September 5, 1968, a Life Science and Bio-Equipment Group, comprised of portions of the Aerospace Medical Research Department and the Aerospace Crew Equipment Department, was established to develop and conduct research in human behavior and associated tangents.

More change came about on March 25, 1971. The Life Sciences and Bio-Equipment Group, the Aerospace Crew Equipment Department and the Aerospace Medical Research Department were consolidated into the Crew Systems Department.

On November 22, 1971, the Administration Department was reconstituted to include the Public Affairs Office, and an Engineering Support Division that included most of the shops of the Aero Mechanics, Aero Structures and Aero Electronic Technology Departments. It also included a Technical Publications and Presentations Division, an Administrative Services Division, and a Technical Information Division.

The Aero Material, Aero Structures, and Aero Mechanics Departments were consolidated into the Air Vehicle Technology Department on January 1, 1972.

The relocation of personnel from the Naval Strategic Systems Navigation Facility in Brooklyn, New York to NADC began on November 26, 1973. This group combined with the navigation tasks formerly assigned to the Air Vehicle Technology Department and the Aero Electronic Technology Department to form the Naval Navigation Laboratory.

The former Administration Department was abolished and the Technical Support Department was established. The new department consists of Administrative Services Division, the Environmental and Test Equipment Division, the Technical Information Division, the Technical Publications and Presentations Division, the Security Division, the Aircraft Installation Design Division, and the Engineering Shops Division.

The Computer Services Department, formerly a part of Systems Analysis and Engineering Department, was established on May 11, 1973 to provide general computing services required to support the Center and its technical programs.