



FACT SHEET

USAF Fact Sheet

ASC PAM 2002-192

Air Force Plant 42



Production Flight Test Installation Birthplace of Aerospace Systems

- Air Force Plant 42 is a government-owned, contractor operated facility consisting of eight separate production sites sharing a common runway complex, consisting of two 12,000 foot runways on 5,800 acres of property. It is one of eight Air Force Industrial Plants located throughout the United States.



AFP 42

- Combined with its proximity to the concentration of aerospace industry in Los Angeles and the high-speed corridors of the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards Air Force Base, the installation is uniquely situated to fully support our newest and most advanced commercial and military aerospace systems.

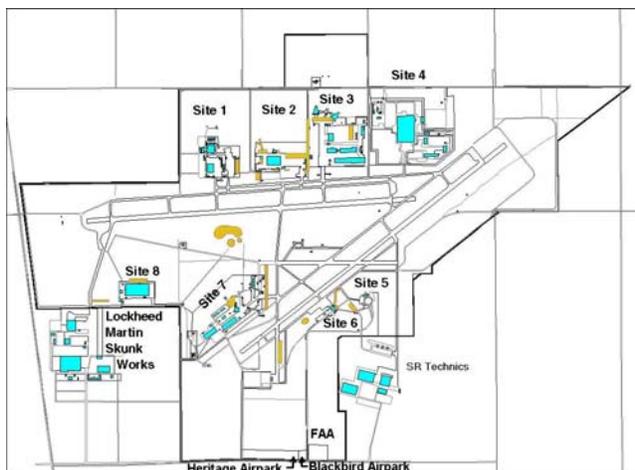
- Although it is one of eight, it is unique for several reasons. First, it is the only plant that has more than one major aircraft corporation located at the site. AF Plant 42 is home to Boeing, Lockheed-Martin, and Northrop-Grumman. Second, AF Plant 42 is the only plant where the Air Force owns, maintains and operates the runway and common use facilities. And third, AF Plant 42 is the only plant with an AF installation commander and unit assigned.

- Air Force Plant 42 traces its beginning to 1935, when an airstrip was used as a bivouac site for squadrons, such as the famous 95th Pursuit Squadron from March Field. In 1940, the Works Progress Administration built a concrete runway, used thereafter as an emergency landing strip and for B-25 support training during World War II. In 1944, America's first Jet Fighter Group, the 412th FG, operated Bell P-59 "Airacomet" and Lockheed XP-80 "Shooting Stars" out of what is AF Plant 42's maintenance hanger, Bldg. 531. This building is now eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. At the end of World War II, the site was declared excess and sold to Los Angeles County.

- The concept of what is now AF Plant 42 originated with a tasking to the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce to find a solution to problems associated with conducting development, production and testing of jet aircraft within the heavily-populated areas of metropolitan Los Angeles. In 1951, the Air Force urged Congress to purchase the entire site, then referred to as Palmdale Airport. By 1953, a master plan was developed for the site to be officially named: Air Force Plant 42. The installation was assigned to the Air Materiel Command, WPAFB, OH in 1961 and became officially known by its present name as the Production Flight Test Installation, Air Force Plant 42, Palmdale, Calif.

- The mission of AF Plant 42 as stated in the 1953 master plan has remained virtually unchanged. It read: the mission of AF Plant 42 is to provide and maintain facilities for: (1) mating and final assembly of jet powered, high performance aircraft; (2) production engineering and flight test programs; (3) Air Force acceptance flight test of high performance jet aircraft

- The wisdom & vision of those decisions almost 50 years ago are evident by the following fact: AF Plant 42 has produced, flown and modified an array of notable aircraft, which have contributed in profound ways to American military history. As a testament, three aerospace companies that currently operate at AF Plant 42 have garnered eight Collier Trophies – the Nobel Prize of aerospace – for "great achievement in aeronautics and astronautics in America. These aircraft include the F-100, F-104, A-11 (SR-71), B-1, Space Shuttle, F-117, B-2 and U2.



Occupying 5,800 acres between the cities of Palmdale and Lancaster, Plant 42 is divided into several separate "sites", most of which are occupied by contractor operations. The "common" area includes two 12,000 ft. runways and other facilities. Adjacent facilities include the Lockheed Martin Skunk Works and the SR Technics commercial aircraft repair facility. In addition, the plant hosts commercial flights from the Palmdale air terminal.

-

1) 1953, North American (Boeing),	F-100	(Sites 1& 2)
2) 1958, Lockheed,	F-104	(Site 7)
3) 1963, Lockheed,	SR-71	(Site 2)
4) 1976, Rockwell (Boeing),	B-1	(Site 3)
5) 1981, Rockwell (Boeing),	Space Shuttle	(Site 1)
6) 1989, Lockheed,	F-117	(Site 7)
7) 1991, Northrop,	B-2	(Sites 3 & 4)
8) 1998, Lockheed,	U-2S	(Site 2)

This record of excellence will continue with current and future aerospace systems associated with AF Plant 42.

- In 1989, the City of Los Angeles (Department of Airports) and the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF/MII) entered into a Joint Use Agreement allowing domestic commercial air service from AF Plant 42. Fifty operations per day are allowed (1 operation = 1 arrival or departure), with provisions for a maximum of 400 operations per day.

- Air Force Plant 42 is a major part of the economic community of the Antelope Valley. In July 1999, AF Plant 42 had approximately 8,500 employees working in and around the airfield complex. Although the plant is a major contributor to employment, its employment statistics vary tremendously to correspond to the beginning and ending of major aircraft production runs. For example in January of 1988 employment was close to 12,000. Four years later in January of 1992 employment was at a low of approximately 7,000. The economic impact is not only felt in the area of employment but also in payroll now totaling almost one half billion dollars which is spent in the local community and local contracts of almost \$34 million, which also vary according to production schedules.