

the relevant unit having been located at Holloman since mid-1992. The 49th FW's 20th FS trained Luftwaffe F-4 crews until its disbandment on December 20, 2004, while the Tornados have been 'resident' since 1996. As of November 2006, there were 650 German military personnel and 25 Tornados assigned.

ARMY AIR



US Army testing also takes place out of Holloman, under the jurisdiction of Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) which oversees the activities of Developmental Test Command (DTC). The latter is in charge of the White Sands Missile Range.

The Office of Army Aviation, or Army Air as it is commonly referred to, currently operates a fleet of nine helicopters out of

below: **A JQH-58A+ Kiowa of Army Air with the White Sands Missile Range as a dramatic backdrop. The unit's Kiowas are slated for retirement fairly soon.**



above: **What is believed to be among the first air-to-air shots of helicopters operated by the US Army test outfit at Holloman, the Office of Army Aviation, better known as Army Air, in the shapes of a JUH-1H Iroquois and JQH-58A+ Kiowa.**

Holloman's North Base, comprising five JUH-1H Iroquois and four JQH-58A+ Kiowas, plus a single Beech JC-12D, all in support of the different aspects of developmental and operational testing conducted at the adjacent WSMR. Today, the majority of the unit's staff at Holloman are civilian contractors, most of them retired army pilots and engineers.

For their assignment at White Sands, the aircraft are designated with a 'J' prefix identifying them as test support assets. Thus, Army Air has the authority to make airframe and electrical modifications to support test and evaluation requirements. Apart from their distinctive red and white color schemes, the Army Air JUH-1Hs have extra antennae, racks, special mounts to attach external test loads and special power sources for test equipment. The JQH-58A+ Kiowas, having replaced the previous A and C models, all retained their original olive drab colors and are mainly used for range and safety sweeps, observation duties, underslung operations and transport of personnel around the range.

The helicopters are occasionally also used for test purposes, mainly when a smaller radar signature is required. The only fixed-wing aircraft of the unit, the unique JC-12D, is a converted RC-12D Guardrail with its ELINT and COMINT equipment removed. It has retained its bigger generators to give more power to the test equipment on board, while extra navigational and communication equipment has been incorporated.

Test missions undertaken by Army Air are diverse and typically include the flying of precise profiles. During these, the helicopter can be used as a platform to simulate a specific weapon system or just a part of the weapon itself, for instance the seeker head of a missile. For these so-called Captive Carry missions, the helicopters carry a non-live warhead on a special outside rigger, using an interface system for collecting data. The use of a

helicopter is ideal as it has the ability to 'stop' at any time during the test, allowing the profile to be modified in real time or to gather data on the missile's firing and control system, all without a live firing. Other duties include tracking and the search and recovery of live ordnance, drones and other items. Army Air flight crews also participate in local wildlife management programs and are periodically called in to respond to local search and rescue requirements, ranging from downed or missing aircraft to lost hikers.

The service life of the JUH-1 fleet has been extended through FY08. With an abundance of spare parts, Army Air will keep its Hueys in the air for some time to come. Regarding the JQH-58s, it seems that their career is nearing its end, as with other US Army Kiowas. The life of the JC-12 is practically indefinite.

'TEAM TARGET'

With technology changing at an increasingly rapid pace, systems often become obsolete before they are actually ready for operational use. To counter this, it was decided to create the 82nd Tactical Aerial Targets Squadron, providing information

