Muroc 40s

TSOOP/RAK/EM/beh 6-1318

TSOOP4

7/6/45

Subject: Request for Assignment of Muroc Army Air Field.

To: Commanding General
Army Air Forces
Washington 25, D.-C.
Attn: AC/AS, W&S, Air Installations Division

1. The Muroc Flight Test Base was established in 1942, on the Muroc Bombing Range Reservation, adjacent to the Muroc Army Air Field, as a one-project installation for the development and experimental flight testing of the extremely secret jet-propelled airplane, performed by ATSC and the manufacturer. It was not intended for other usage at that time.

2. However, prior to completion of the secret project, several other similar experimental projects of a highly classified or secret nature were assigned to this base, since no other ATSC installation was available which could provide:

a. The desired isolation required for purposes of secrecy and security.

b. Suitable terrain for emergency landings, insuring minimum hazard to airplane and pilot.

c. Generally good weather conditions, permitting for accomplishing flight tests with minimum delay.

d. Ideal conditions for experimental flight testing of experimental aircraft.

3. The value of Muroc Flight Test Base to ATSC is evidenced in the success attained in maintaining complete security and secrecy during accomplishment of these first projects and further enhanced with the successful completion of each succeeding highly classified or secret project in which experimental flight testing was of importance.

4. Facilities at Muroc Flight Test Base have been gradually expanded, but are still deemed inadequate to properly discharge the increased number of assigned projects.

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5. The greatly increased responsibilities of ATSC in the field of aircraft engineering research and development and resultant increased workload at Muroc Flight Test Base now indicate that an additional larger installation be provided to accomplish the extremely large number of experimental and less highly classified projects which require flight testing.

6. The transfer of Muroc Army Air Field, also located on the Muroc Bombing Range Reservation, to ATSC appears to be the best and most logical solution in that:

a. It affords the same relative security, natural advantages, and excellent flight weather which make flight testing at Muroc Flight Test Base so desirable.

b. It is only 120 miles from the location of many important airplane manufacturing plants which makes it the logical point for development and testing to be conducted jointly by ATSC and these manufacturers.

c. Accelerated service tests completed at Muroc Flight Test Base may be conducted at Muroc Army Air Field with minimum effort and loss of time.

d. Classified projects involving airplanes such as the XB-35 and XB-36, which are too large for the facilities at Muroc Flight Test Base, could be carried out at Muroc Army Air Field.

e. Muroc Army Air Field also has excellent Ordnance facilities which could be used to great advantage by the Western District, ATSC.

7. The transfer of Muroc Army Air Field to ATSC would provide this command with the vitally needed additional facilities which include hangars of varying size and description, an excellent system of runways and taxiways, housing, administrative, and recreational facilities. No additional personnel authorizations will be required by reason of such transfer except the personnel authorizations necessary for the performance of required base services.

8. It is, therefore, requested that the immediate transfer of Muroc Army Air Field to ATSC be favorably considered for use as an experimental flight test installation in addition to Muroc Flight Test Base. It is further requested that the Commanding General, ATSC be advised of the decision at the earliest practicable date, since if the transfer of Muroc Army Air Field is not considered favorably, it will be necessary to construct additional facilities at Muroc Flight Test Base, such as hangars, to allow the highly important scheduled program for experimental aircraft projects to proceed without delay.

H. J. KNERR
Major General, U.S.A.
Commanding