

Col. Robert A. Bonifacio



Inducted October 24, 1994

President, Aviation Test Board
Fort Rucker, Alabama
February 1976 - March 1982

Retired Col. Robert A. Bonifacio is honored for exceptional contributions to operational testing during the period of February 1976 through March 1982.

Upon approval by the Department of Army for activation of a totally independent aviation operational test organization, Bonifacio was selected as the first Army Aviation Test Board President/Commander.

Unlike the other Training and Doctrine Command's Operational Test Boards, which were transferred intact from the Test and Evaluation Command, the Aviation Test Board was created from scratch.

Between his selection in February and the Board's activation on 1 July 1976, he successfully met the challenge of developing a Table of Distribution and Allowances, obtaining test and administrative facilities, and establishing procedures to implement new operational testing regulations.

During his tenure, he was directly responsible for the planning, execution, and reporting of 86 programmed user tests.

Major acquisition programs effectively supported with tests, studies, and evaluations included the UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter, Light Combat Helicopter (LCH), UH-60 Simulator, and virtually all of the Aircraft Survivability Equipment currently utilized on Army aircraft.

The Army's Longbow Apache and Comanche Helicopter programs' roots can be directly traced back to the Light Combat Helicopter test efforts.

Bonifacio recognized that there was a wealth of Army aviation noncommissioned officers (NCOs) with the capability of performing at test officers.

In 1979, Bonifacio initiated a program to recruit and train aviation NCOs as test officers. His personal efforts resulted in the successful planning and execution of an operational test by an NCO in 1980. A standard was set which has been carried on to present-day operational testing with NCOs conducting tests around the world.

The positive effects of Bonifacio's demand for thorough and innovative operational testing continue to impact Army aviation, and will influence the Army into the twenty-first century.