


Mr. Thomas R. Hammond

 A portrait of Mr. Thomas R. Hammond, an older man with short, light-colored hair, wearing a red polo shirt with thin white horizontal stripes. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a solid green color.	<p>Inducted September 12, 2012</p> <p>Test Officer Airborne Special Operations Test Directorate</p> <p>U.S. Army Operational Test Command Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 1985-2009</p> <p>USAOTC Tester of the Year, 1996 Fort Bragg Lifetime Achievement Award, 2004</p>
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Spending nearly half of his 52-year federal service career with the U.S. Army Operational Test Command, Thomas R. Hammond was unquestionably the most sought after and technically competent test officer in the Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate, according to peers, subordinates and supervisors alike. His extensive knowledge and experience were legendary and recognized throughout the Department of Defense, placing him in great demand for advice and counsel.

Born in Canton, Georgia, April 7, 1932, Hammond launched his military career by joining the U.S. Navy Seabees Reserves in 1949 but quickly changed course, joining the U.S. Army and completing jump school in 1951. Before retiring as a command sergeant major in 1977, Hammond served three tours in Vietnam, rotating his time between airborne and special forces, and earning awards and honors that include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal with three oak leaf clusters and the V Device, a Purple Heart, the Air Medal with V Device, the Combat Infantryman Badge with Star, and the Master Parachutist Badge.

It made perfectly good sense to Hammond to start a second career as a Department of the Army Civilian test officer for OTC in 1985: if he no longer parachuted into combat zones himself, he could make absolutely sure the soldiers who came after him had the best

parachutes and airborne equipment possible to carry out their mission. As a test officer, Hammond planned, executed, and reported on more than 46 operational tests, assessing new equipment for Low Velocity Airdrop, Low Altitude Parachute Extraction, Helicopter Sling Load, Internal Air Transport, Dual Row Airdrop, C-17 Semi-Prepared Runway Operations, C-17 operations with Increased Gross Weight, C-17 Formation Airdrops, Personnel Static Line airdrops, Military Free-Fall Parachute Operations and Containerized Delivery System Airdrops. The diverse spectrum of equipment tested by Hammond included the Flameless Ration Heater, Light-Tactical All-Terrain Vehicle, 613 Scraper, T-250 Bobcat with Bucket Loader, M1114 Utility Up-Armored Carrier, M119 Howitzer, XM1167 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) with Armor Package and Storage Rack Assembly, Marauder High-Mobility Truck, and the C-17 Globemaster III military transport aircraft.

Hammond was continuously recognized throughout his operational testing career as the guiding light in the successful fielding of the C-17. The principal who led the test effort for all phases of the multi-service operational test and evaluation, Hammond spent two years on temporary duty status at Edwards Air Force Base during the seven-year period required to complete the C-17 Multi-service Operational Test and Evaluation. He was recognized by the Department of Defense Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, the Under Secretary of the Air Force for Test and Evaluation, and the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force for the thorough quality and clarity of his work.

Hammond's positive attitude and team-building style enabled him to save more than \$2 million on the C-17 IOT&E, write reports that were easily understood, and set the standard for superior multi-service integrated testing. He tested every operationally critical aspect of the C-17, with his primary focus on the safety of the soldier, marine, or airman. His civilian service was recognized with the Meritorious Civilian Service Medal and the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service. Hammond was also the USAOTC Tester of the Year in 1996, and he was the first recipient of the Fort Bragg Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004.