

NEW MEXICO WING

Wing Delivers Test Samples To State Labs

Since April, the New Mexico Wing has transported more than 28,000 COVID-19 test samples for the state's Department of Health, assisting the New Mexico National Guard in a Federal Emergency Management Agency-funded mission. The wing's aircrews have totaled more than 400 flight hours, and ground teams have driven nearly 4,700 miles transporting samples to and from airports as well as from city to city, with more than 140 wing members contributing more than five work-years of volunteer service.

The flights have transported samples from 11 cities throughout New Mexico to labs in Albuquerque. In addition, some flights carried new test kits or personal protective equipment (PPE) to cities where they were needed. The New Mexico team responded even when tasks arose on short notice.

“COVID-19 testing requires prompt results, and New Mexico’s Civil Air Patrol has made that possible for thousands in our state,” said Kathy Kunkel, Department of Health cabinet

secretary. “The emergency services they’ve provided have been significant in our state’s efforts to test for slowing the spread of this virus.”

In addition, a wing incident management team — often meeting daily via videoconference — provided planning, communications and logistical support for the pandemic mission. Videoconferencing and online tools allowed members from around the state to serve in a variety of roles amid COVID-19 restrictions.

“The New Mexico Wing of Civil Air Patrol continues to do incredible work on behalf of New Mexicans during this COVID-19 public health crisis,” said Maj. Gen. Ken Nava, state adjutant general. “Their rapid response in transporting test kits throughout the state and specimens back to the lab is critical to the success of our testing efforts as we work to defeat the coronavirus.”

(From left) Lt. Cols. David Torres and Loren Olsen transfer packages from Truth or Consequences and Las Cruces to ground team member Capt. Daniel McGregor for delivery to labs in Albuquerque while Cadet Lt. Col. Joshua Williamson steadies the load.



New Mexico Wing 2020 Statistics

Volunteer Members

484 adult members
308 cadets
124 aircrew personnel
437 emergency responders

Squadrons

28 locations statewide

Aircraft

13 single engine
1 glider
1 balloon

Vehicles

16 vehicles

Interoperable Communications

17 VHF/FM repeaters
110 VHF/FM stations
38 HF stations

Missions

2 search and rescue missions
 2 lives saved*
 9 finds*
* Includes lives saved and finds credited with national team support
1 disaster relief mission
3 CAP, AFROTC and AFJROTC cadet orientation flight missions
8 other Air Force support missions
9 training missions

Significant Events Supported in Fiscal Year 2020

Dyess and Cannon AFB low-level route surveys; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo surveys; Air Defense Artillery Battalion Culminating Training Event (Falcon Virgo)

COVID-19 Mission Support

Distributing test kits and PPE;
Transporting completed test kits

Cadet Flying

278 CAP, AFROTC and AFJROTC cadet orientation flights

Total Hours Flown

1,631

Financial

\$276,000 in state funding
\$2,200,992 value of wing's volunteer hours

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DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ A New Mexico Wing cadet, Gwen D. Sawyer, was the first female to earn the CAP cadet program's highest honor, the Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award, in 1965. She was the eighth cadet nationwide to earn the award, which is achieved by less than one-half of 1% of all cadets. Sawyer now holds the rank of CAP major and serves at Group 800 headquarters in Albuquerque.
- ✓ CAP's national commander, Maj. Gen. Mark Smith, was New Mexico Wing commander from 2011-2015.
- ✓ As befits the state that hosts the world's largest hot-air ballooning event, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, the New Mexico Wing's aircraft inventory includes a hot-air balloon, routinely flown with senior members and cadets.

