

Mark Pestana



Mark Pestana, Colonel, USAF (ret) is a research pilot and spaceflight operations engineer. He is a consultant for NASA, FAA, academia, and industry as a Subject Matter Expert in Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), operations research, and human factors engineering. He earned a BS in Natural Sciences (with minor studies in engineering mathematics) from Loyola University, Los Angeles, and an MS in Systems Management/Research and Development from the University of Southern California. In the USAF he served as a pilot, a research & development engineer, and Space Shuttle operations director. Mark served as a NASA Research Pilot and Flight Test Engineer for NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards AFB, CA. He flew worldwide Earth Science and Aeronautics research missions. His previous NASA assignment was at the Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX, as a flight crew operations engineer in the NASA Astronaut Office. He developed flight crew operations concepts, interfaces, and procedures for the International Space Station Program. Mark has flown over 5000 hours in various types, from heavy transport to supersonic jet, and piloted 213 reconnaissance missions in hostile airspace. He has published several technical papers and presentations on aviation and space research topics, as a member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, the International Test & Evaluation Association, Society of Flight Test Engineers, Aerospace Human Factors Association, USAF, DOD, and NASA. He is an adjunct faculty in aerospace engineering and safety at the University of Southern California and California State University Northridge. Mark is an award-winning artist with paintings in the USAF Pentagon, corporate, and private collections.