

**Colonel Robert W. “Rob” Walker Roy  
Inducted 2018**



**Colonel Robert W. “Rob” Walker Roy** was born in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on 4 May 1928. After attending Pennsylvania State College in 1946-47, he accepted an appointment to the United States Naval Academy (USNA) and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1951. Commissioned as a lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, his initial assignment took him to Patrick AFB, Florida, as a launch control officer with the 6555th Guided Missile Squadron.

During 1952–1958, Roy oversaw approximately 50 Matador missile launches at Cape Canaveral, from initial static testing through launch and target impact. Realizing the need for standardized procedures and equipment to improve mission performance, he co-designed an integrated-checkout-equipment prototype for the Matador program and, subsequently, did the same while managing other types of early missile and space launches. He served, for example, as launch controller on approximately 30 flights of the X-17, a three-stage, solid-propellant rocket used for atmospheric reentry testing of long-range missiles. Before leaving Patrick AFB, Roy also coordinated missile launches for testing Missile Defense Alarm System (MIDAS) infrared tracking sensors aboard a B-36 aircraft.

Roy’s innovative ideas for improving rocket launch reliability did not go unnoticed by senior Air Force officers. In 1958, they sent him to Vandenberg AFB, California, as Chief Launch Control Officer for Space Systems, one of twelve officers—the “Dirty Dozen”—originally assigned to West Coast space and missile launch operations. While at Vandenberg AFB, during 1958–1964, he oversaw activation of Space Launch Complexes 1, 3, and 4; he managed a total of four complexes (two Thor-Agena and two Atlas-Agena). From those complexes, he controlled more than a dozen of the earliest Thor-Agena Discoverer satellite launches, including those that sent the first human tissue and live mice into orbit. As controller for more than 20 Corona satellite

launches on Atlas-Agena vehicles, Roy “took to heart” the establishment of a successful space-based reconnaissance capability. He pioneered a philosophy and checkout procedures for payload integration by introducing the “task sequencing” concept to ensure orderly cross-subsystem checkout among different contractors, thereby assuring readiness for launches of national security payloads, particularly Corona, MIDAS, and Satellite and Missile Observation System (SAMOS) satellites.

After graduating with a Master of Science degree from the Air Force Institute of Technology in 1965, Roy was assigned to work with General Electric (GE) in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, where he oversaw in-plant production of a military satellite operating system and sought ways to improve predictability of launch failures or on-orbit problems. During 1967–1970, he served as Strategic Defense Division chief at Air Force Systems Command headquarters, Andrews AFB, Maryland, where he managed development planning of radars, warhead destruction systems, and investigated on-orbit warhead platforms. His last active-duty move, in 1970, took Colonel Roy to the Armament Development and Test Center (ADTC) at Eglin AFB, Florida, where he became deputy commander for the procurement and initial acquisition of non-nuclear munitions and, in 1973, deputy commander for armament development. Colonel Roy retired in 1976.

Retirement from the Air Force life by no means slowed Mr. Roy’s energetic lifestyle. He became a management consultant for various companies, such as Goodyear Aircraft Corporation, Motorola Government Electronics, RDM Incorporated, and General Research Corporation (GRC). He later served on GRC’s technical staff, where he developed and performed independent cost estimating of ADTC programs. In the 1980s, he taught graduate-level mathematics and systems management at Troy State University in Alabama. Then, in 1986, he founded Decision Sciences Incorporated (DSI), a company offering professional engineering services. Its Air Force Warrior Support System, developed in 2000 for the Air Armament Center, assessed the munitions industry’s potential to surge production during warfighting contingencies. Two subsequent DSI programs, the Industrial Base Assessment Tool (IBAT) and the Status Tool Environmental Program (STEP), continued to support all facets of industrial base management. At age 90, Mr. Robert Roy persisted in leading DSI’s development of modeling tools for improvement and execution of munition programs critical to effective warfighting.