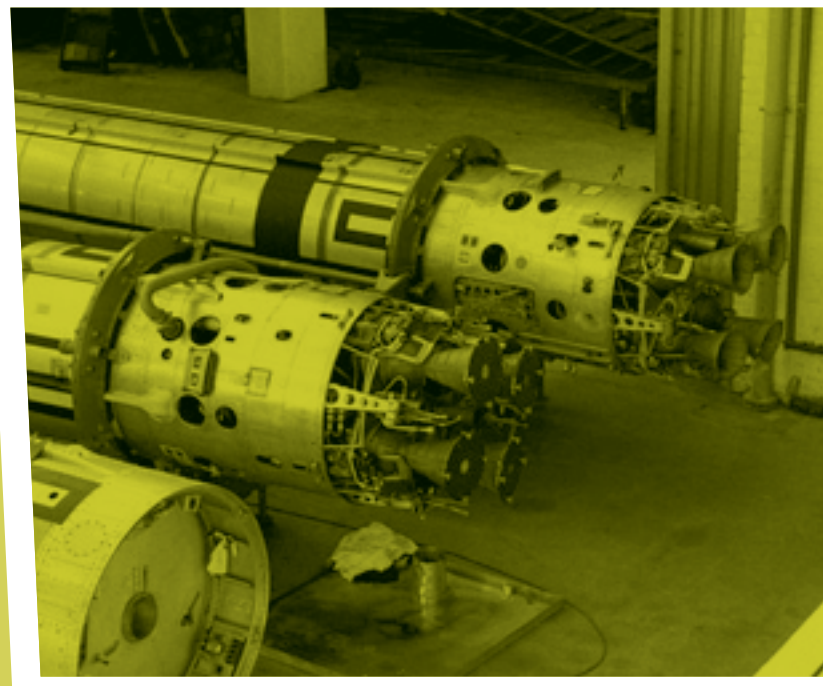


Black Knight



PREPARATION OF BLACK KNIGHT ROCKETS
COURTESY OF SAUNDERS ROE ARCHIVE



BLACK KNIGHT ON LAUNCH PAD IN WOOMERA, AUSTRALIA
COURTESY OF SAUNDERS ROE ARCHIVE



BLACK
Rocket

BLUE
*Nuclear
weapon*

ORANGE
Radar

Two designs of rocket were built by Saunders Roe engineers in East Cowes, Black Knight and Black Arrow. The names of the rockets came from the British military's 'Rainbow Code'.

Once built, the rockets were transported by low-loader lorries from East Cowes to Highdown for testing.

After testing, the rockets were flown or shipped to Australia where they were launched from the Woomera range where there was a British base.

The data collected by Black Knight was very valuable. It is said that without it NASA would not have been able to send a Man to the Moon in 1969.

PURPOSE:

To test rocket re-entry to Earth's atmosphere

NUMBER BUILT:

25

NUMBER TESTED:

22

COST PER ROCKET:

£40,000

(ABOUT £1½M IN TODAY'S MONEY)

HEIGHT:

11m

(TWICE AS HIGH AS A DOUBLE-DECKER BUS)

WEIGHT:

6 tonnes

(THE SAME AS A FULL GROWN AFRICAN ELEPHANT)

RAINBOW CODES

These were code names used to disguise British military research projects. They were mainly used from after the Second World War until 1958. Each code used a colour of the rainbow plus a noun taken from a list.