

AIR AMERICA: LOCKHEED C-130 HERCULES

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Air America crews flew the following types of C-130 operations:

I) The Tibetan airlift:

Since October 57, Tibetan guerrillas were supported by CAT aircraft. At first by a B-17, then by a “sanitized” C-118A bailed from the USAF. From July 1959¹ to May 1960, “sanitized” USAF C-130As belonging to the 21st Troop Carrier Squadron of Naha Air Base, Okinawa, and flown by “quarantined” Air America crews, continued these airdrops into Tibet out of Takhli, Thailand. For each mission, one to three USAF C-130A were flown from Naha to Kadena, Okinawa. There they were loaded by CIA people and then flown to Takhli by Air America crews, where they were “sanitized”, i.e. stripped of all military markings to make them non-attributable. Then they were flown from Takhli across Burma to Tibet by “quarantined” Air America crews, using letters like “Able flight” or “Baker flight” as call-signs, made their drops (cargo and guerrillas), returned to Takhli, and were then given back to the USAF at Naha. Such drops were flown on 18 September 59 (1 C-130A), in the second week of November 59 (1 C-130A), mid-December 59 (1 C-130A), mid-January 60 (1 C-130A), mid-February 60 (1 C-130A), mid-March 60 (2 C-130As), mid-April 60 (2 C-130As), and on two consecutive nights at the end of April 60 (2 times 3 C-130As).² These airdrops ceased in May 60, after the CIA pilot Francis Gary Powers had been shot down on 1 May 60. Reportedly, between November 1959 and May 1960, some 35 to 40 missions had delivered almost 400 tons of cargo to resistance fighters of Tibet.³ The airdrops were resumed on 31 March 1961 under the Kennedy administration, with known missions on 31 March 61 (1 C-130A), 2 April 61 to Mustang in Nepal (2 C-130As), and mid-December 61 to Mustang (2 C-130As),⁴ but the airdrop missions probably continued to about mid-1962.⁵ The C-130As used on that second Tibetan C-130 airlift still belonged to the 21st Troop Carrier Squadron,⁶ possibly including those of the E-Flight detachment, which were also based at Naha and temporarily at Takhli. Since 1962 the Tibetan program was slowly reorganized as to include the cooperation of India, so that Air Ventures Inc., the CIA’s outfit which had been set up in Nepal in the fall of 1963, did not have to be used for covert supply drops. For since that time the C-46s and Helio Couriers of the Indian ARC or *Aviation Research Center* of Charbatia Air Base, India, were responsible for supporting the Tibetan resistance.⁷ For more details about Air America’s Tibetan airlift see the file *Missions to Tibet* within my *History of Air America* at <http://www.utdallas.edu/library/collections/speccoll/Leeker/history/Tibet.pdf> . As to the first Tibetan C-130A airlift between July 59 and May 60, the USAF Assignment

¹ Leary, *Secret mission to Tibet*, p. 68. This date seems to be correct, as the drop of June 59 was still made by a C-118A (Conboy / Morrison, *The CIA’s secret war in Tibet*, p. 105).

² Conboy / Morrison, *The CIA’s secret war in Tibet*, pp. 110-33. The mission of 18 September 59 seems to have been the first one during which guerrillas were dropped who had been trained in Colorado.

³ Leary, *Secret mission to Tibet*, p. 71.

⁴ Conboy / Morrison, *The CIA’s secret war in Tibet*, pp. 140/1, 158-64.

⁵ Fax dated 29 May 2000, sent by Brigadier General Aderholt to the author.

⁶ Trest, *Air Commando One*, pp. 87, 92/3.

⁷ Robbins, *Air America*, pp. 90-98; Leary, *Secret mission to Tibet*, pp. 62-71; Trest, *Air Commando One*, pp. 75-98; Bowers, *The USAF in South-East Asia*, pp. 448/9; Conboy / Morrison, *The CIA’s secret war in Tibet*, pp. 171-207.

Records preserved at the AFHRA at Maxwell AFB (microfilms nos. ACA-56, ACA-60, ACA-66, ACA-67, and ACA-76) do not mention any C-130As belonging to the 21st TCS for that period. But the official history of the 21st TCS that can be found at the AFHRA site http://www.au.af.mil/au/afhra/wwwroot/rso/squadrons_flights_pages/0021as.html states that the 21st TCS was assigned to the 483rd TCW at least between 8 December 58 and 25 June 60 (when it was assigned to the 315th Air Division), and that the 21st TCS was officially stationed at Naha between 15 November 58 and 31 May 71. Indeed, several C-130As belonging to the 483rd TCW of Ashiya, Japan, were transferred to Naha in 1958/9, but their unit is still given as the 483rd TCW (based at Naha) in the USAF Assignment Records. So, it can be assumed that those Naha-based C-130As of the 483rd TCW (or part of them) were the 21st TCS aircraft used on the Tibetan airlift. They are listed below:

C-130As used for the Tibetan airlift between July 1959 and May 1960:



An unknown Air America C-130A in 1959-60, after the USAF tail markings had been removed prior to an overflight of Tibet – reportedly taken at Kadena AB, Okinawa, but probably at Takhli (with kind permission from Ken Conboy)

Type	registration / serial	c/n (msn)	date acquired	origin
Lockheed C-130A	57-467	3174	30 Jan. 58	USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483 rd TCW, Naha, on 30 January 58.				
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440 th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 20 April 59, possibly for modifications.				
Lockheed C-130A	57-469	3176	25 Sep. 59	USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483 rd TCW, Naha, on 25 September 59.				
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440 th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 12 May 60, possibly for modifications.				
Lockheed C-130A	57-470	3177	1 March 59	USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483 rd TCW, Naha, on 1 March 59.				
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440 th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 30 March 60, possibly for modifications.				
Lockheed C-130A	57-471	3178	1 March 58	USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483 rd TCW, Naha, on 1 March 58; transferred to the control of the 4440 th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 17 January 60,				

possibly for modifications; returned to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 30 April 60; transferred to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 30 October 60, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-472 3179 10 Jan. 58 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 10 January 58.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 29 January 60, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-473 3180 30 Jan. 58 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 30 January 58.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 7 March 60, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-474 3181 10 Jan. 58 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 10 January 58; transferred to Ashiya AFB, Japan, on 13 May 59; returned to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 8 January 60; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 13 January 60; returned to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 11 April 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 14 June 60, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-475 3182 8 April 59 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 8 April 59.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 9 June 60, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-476 3183 13 May 58 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW on 13 May 58; transferred to Ashiya AFB, Japan, on 1 March 59; returned to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 21 March 59.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 18 September 59, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-477 3184 13 June 59 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 13 June 59.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 3 June 60, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-478 3185 10 April 59 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 10 April 59.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 22 June 60, possibly for modifications.

Lockheed C-130A 57-479 3186 10 Jan. 58 USAF Japan

Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 10 January 58.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 11 April 60, possibly for modifications.

- Lockheed C-130A 57-480 3187 20 August 59 USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 20 August 59; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 29 August 59, possibly for modifications; returned to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 26 October 59; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 13 and 19 June 60; returned to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 19 June 60; transferred to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60.
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 22 December 60, possibly for modifications.
- Lockheed C-130A 57-481 3188 10 April 58 USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 10 April 58.
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 22 March 60, possibly for modifications.
- Lockheed C-130A 57-482 3189 31 July 59 USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 31 July 59; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 29 August 59, possibly for modifications; returned to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 1 October 59; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 2 and 11 June 60.
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 23 December 60, possibly for modifications.
- Lockheed C-130A 57-483 3190 30 Sep. 59 USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 30 September 59; transferred to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 16 and 20 July 60; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 20 July 60.
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 20 September 60, possibly for modifications.
- Lockheed C-130A 56-474 3082 25 Jan. 60 USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 25 January 60.
Fate: transferred to Ashiya AFB, Japan, on 22 March 60.
- Lockheed C-130A 56-476 3084 25 Jan. 60 USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 25 January 60; transferred to the 817th TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 19 and 24 August 60; transferred to the 817th TCS, Naha, on 24 August 60.
Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 18 June 61, possibly for modifications.
- Lockheed C-130A 56-477 3085 13 June 59 USAF Japan
Service history: to the 483rd TCW, Naha, on 13 June 59; transferred to 817th TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 9 and 15 September 60; returned to the 817th TCS, Naha, on 15 September 60.
Fate: transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 1 September 62.
- Lockheed C-130A 56-543 3151 14 Sep. 59 USAF Japan
Service history: to 483rd TCW, Naha, on 14 September 59; transferred to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between

17 and 22 August 60; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 22 August 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 7 June 61, possibly for modifications.

After the Tibetan operations were resumed in March 1961 and until its end in 1962, C-130As from the 21st Troop Carrier Squadron, based at Naha, Okinawa and being a part of the 315th Air Division, were used. According to the information contained in the official USAF Assignment Records, preserved at the AFHRA at Maxwell AFB, AL, the following C-130As belonged to the 21st TCS, Naha, between 1961 and mid-1962, and several of them were probably used in the Tibetan airlift at one time or another:

C-130As used for the Tibetan airlift between 1961 and mid-1962:

A) SF aircraft of the 21st TCS, Naha, probably based at Takhli (T-05):

Lockheed C-130A 56-490 3098 16 Aug. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del.
Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 16 August 60; transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 26 August 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 21 August 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East later.

Lockheed C-130A 56-491 3099 7 April 61 ex 4440th Aircraft Del.
Group, Langley

Service history: transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 7 April 61.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 21 August 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East later.

Lockheed C-130A 56-493 3101 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS CA on 25 June 60; transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 26 August 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 2 November 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East later.

Lockheed C-130A 56-497 3105 30 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 30 June 60; transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 26 August 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 9 November 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East later.

B) Regular C-130As of 21TCS, Naha:

Lockheed C-130A 56-542 3150 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 3 and 7 September 60; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 7 September 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 12 April 61, possibly for modifications; returned to the

21st TCS, Naha, on 12 October 61; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 13 November 62; returned to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 10 May 63; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 20 and 31 July 62; between 11 and 12 October 62; between 10 and 16 May 63; and between 22 and 23 November 63.

Fate: current with 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 1 July 64.

Lockheed C-130A 56-543 3151 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha
Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 17 and 22 August 60; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 22 August 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 7 June 61, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 24 September 61; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 19 February 63; returned to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 19 April 63; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 8 and 31 July 62; between 6 and 8 October 62; and between 1 and 14 August 63 (= LOG LAI CI OL48, Naha).
Fate: current in December 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-467 3174 6 Feb. 61 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley
Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 6 February 61; a period of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, was between 11 and 13 September 62.
Fate: transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 25 September 62.

Lockheed C-130A 57-469 3176 31 Aug. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley
Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 31 August 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 3 March 61, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 16 September 61; transferred to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 26 July and 2 August 62; between 29 and 31 August 62; and between 19 and 27 March 63.
Fate: transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 20 July 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-470 3177 18 Aug. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley
Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 18 August 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 4 September 61, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 5 November 61; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 11 and 13 September 62; and between 20 and 28 February 63.
Fate: transferred to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; current on 1 July 64.

Lockheed C-130A 57-471 3178 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha
Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 30 October 60; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 22 January 61; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 19 and 28 August 62; between 1 and 19 March

63; and between 24 August 63 and 2 April 64.

Fate: transferred to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; current on 1 July 64.

Lockheed C-130A 57-472 3179 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 12 and 16 July 60; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 16 July 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 21 August 60, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 11 November 60; transferred to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; a period of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, was between 28 September and 1 October 62.

Fate: transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 7 April 63; returned to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 July 63; current on 1 July 64.

Lockheed C-130A 57-473 3180 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 30 June and 4 July 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 15 September 60, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 15 December 60; transferred to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 26 and 28 September 62 and between 7 and 14 May 63.

Fate: transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 28 October 63; returned to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 20 January 64; transferred to McClellan AFB on 27 January 64; returned to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 11 February 64; current on 1 July 64.

Lockheed C-130A 57-474 3181 10 Jan. 58 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, 12 October 60; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 11 Aug. 62; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 23 October 62; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 2 and 5 July 62; between 30 November and 1 December 62; and between 13 and 18 April 63.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 25 April 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-475 3182 29 Oct. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 29 October 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 19 October 61, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 31 July 62; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 13 and 16 September 62; between 4 and 12 April 63; and between 25 and 27 May 63.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 5 June 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-476 3183 25 June 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 16 August 62; returned to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31

October 62; a period of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, was between 28 and 39 November 62.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 18 April 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-477 3184 23 Oct. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 23 October 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 10 September 61, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 7 November 61; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 18 and 26 July 62 and between 20 and 23 September 62.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 2 May 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-478 3185 11 Nov. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 11 November 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 10 November 61, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 4 April 62; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 21 and 26 July 62; between 8 and 11 September 62; and between 7 and 15 March 63.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 24 April 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-479 3186 6 Aug. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 6 August 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 12 November 60, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 15 March 61; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 28 May 62; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 18 August 62; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 18 and 19 October 62; between 27 March and 12 April 63; and between 22 and 25 May 63.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 25 May 63; between 13 and 29 April 64, the aircraft was flown from Tachikawa to Naha for maintenance (WM) with LOG LAI CI OL48.

Lockheed C-130A 57-480 3187 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 22 December 60, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 15 April 61; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were on 25 July 62; between 31 July and 3 August 62; and between 19 and 25 August 62.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 10 Mai 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-481 3188 16 Aug. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 16 August 60; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 8 September 62; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters,

Naha, on 7 November 62; a period of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, was between 27 and 28 November 62.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 29 April 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-482 3189 11 April 61 ex 4440th Aircraft Del.
Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 11 April 61; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 12 March 63; returned to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 27 April 63; periods of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, were between 25 and 31 July 62 and between 18 and 20 September 62.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 10 May 63.

Lockheed C-130A 57-483 3190 25 June 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60; to Kawasaki, Gifu, Japan, for maintenance (WK) between 16 and 20 July 60; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 20 July 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 20 September 60, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 21 December 60; transferred to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; transferred to Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 20 December 62; returned to 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 12 March 63; a period of maintenance (WM), while based at Naha, was between 16 and 18 September 62.

Fate: transferred to Tachikawa AB, Japan, on 18 April 63.

II) Military cargo missions flown into Laos in 1961:

On 26 August 1960, three C-130As, later joined by a 4th C-130A, all belonging to the 21st TCS were transferred to a special detachment within the 21st TCS, which is marked "SF" in the official USAF Assignment Records, preserved at the AFHRA at Maxwell AFB, AL. According to Bowers, four or five C-130As from the 21st Troop Carrier Squadron, being part of the 315th Air Division, were based at Naha, Okinawa, for supply missions into Laos. When the B-26 fleet of Project *Mill Pond* was built up at Takhli, Thailand, in April 61 in order to bomb the Plain of Jars, there were also four C-130As based at Takhli (T-05), Thailand, for CIA scheduling. They were to be used for close air support of an invasion of the Plain of Jars. But when the strike was called off by Washington on 17 April 61, the C-130As remained at Takhli, and in late April and May 61, those 4 USAF C-130As were used to ferry two volunteer Thai artillery batteries to Seno (L-46), Laos, to help repel the Pathet Lao advance. And for several weeks military supplies were flown into Wattay airport, Vientiane. On these missions, the C-130As were flown from Takhli into Laos by "CIA crews", which certainly means by Air America crews. And in late 1961, the remaining two of these aircraft may have formed the first nucleus of the E-Flight which was established within the 21st TCS on Okinawa at that time.⁸

C-130s used for military cargo missions into Laos in 1961:

Type	registration / serial	c/n (msn)	date acquired	origin
SF aircraft of the 21st TCS, Naha, probably based at Takhli (T-05):				

⁸ Bowers, *The USAF in South-East Asia. Tactical Airlift*, pp. 441 and 448/9; Hagedorn / Hellström, *Foreign Invaders*, p. 134.

Lockheed C-130A 56-490 3098 26 Aug. 60 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 16 August 60; transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 26 August 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 21 August 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East after that date.

Lockheed C-130A 56-491 3099 7 April 61 ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 7 April 61.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 21 August 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East after that date.

Lockheed C-130A 56-493 3101 26 Aug. 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, CA-service (combat support) on 25 June 60; transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 26 August 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 2 November 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East after that date.

Lockheed C-130A 56-497 3105 26 Aug. 60 ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 30 June 60; transferred to the 21st TCS SF, Naha, supposed to stand for “Special Flights”, on 26 August 60.

Fate: transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 9 November 61, possibly for modifications; no longer in the Far East after that date.

III) Air America’s “Project” C-130s:

From the end of 1961 until the second half of 1965, the authorization to use C-130s into Laos, given by President Kennedy in March 61, was seldom translated into action. In late 1961, E-Flight was established within the 21st Troop Carrier Squadron / 315th Air Division at Naha, Okinawa, probably with the two C-130As remaining from the cargo missions flown into Laos in 1961, that is 56-493 (c/n 3101) and 56-497 (c/n 3105), which were later transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 2 and 9 November 61 respectively. The 21st TCS had officially been attached to Detachment 1, Headquarters, 315th Air Division, between 25 June 60 and 20 October 64, to the 6315th Operations Group between 20 October 64 and 7 August 66, and to the 374th TCW since 8 August 66.⁹ The first real E-Flight C-130As were probably 57-470 (c/n 3177) and 57-471 (c/n 3178), which returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 5 November 61 and on 22 January 61 respectively. Unlike other C-130As of the 315th AD, the four or five E-Flight C-130As were uncamouflaged. They had very small USAF insignia, and had skate-wheel rollers installed on the cargo-compartment floor over which cheap wood pallets could be moved. That made handling easier at locations without forklifts and made it unnecessary to recover the pallets.

⁹ See the official squadron history at: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/afhra/wwwroot/sqs/0021as.htm>.

In September 65, 4 C-130As were staged to Don Muang Royal Thai AFB, Bangkok, to become Detachment 4, 315th Air Division. They had to conduct shuttle operations within Thailand. In August 66 this number was reduced to 3 C-130As.¹⁰ The 5 C-130As temporarily based at Kadena, Okinawa, however, were not E-Flight, but *High Gear* aircraft. This was a group on continuous ground alert for the airlift of nuclear weapons in the event of a general war.¹¹ However, E-Flight was not only responsible for deliveries into Laos, but E-Flight aircraft and crews also flew cargo missions over the western Pacific and often made deliveries at intermediate points during ferry flights from Okinawa to Takhli. So not all four or five E-Flight aircraft were used by Air America, and between 1961 and 1965, no C-130s seem to have been flown by Air America crews at all. In June 1965, however, the CIA and the US Embassy at Vientiane recommended that C-130s should be used for deliveries from Takhli (T-05) into Laos. So, 4 five-man Air America-crews (including a navigator) were trained to fly the C-130. From the second half of 1965 to the spring of 1971 Air America used USAF C-130As from Takhli, Thailand to fly large supplies of ammunition into “forbidden territory under cover of darkness”.¹² Those flights ended at Long Tieng, Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Sam Thong, Pakse, Savannakhet, or Saravane. In 1965 the Takhli-Long Tieng service (CIA logistic support pipeline) was opened.¹³ Since 1967 at least one of the two C-130As at Takhli flew into Laos every day; and since 69, C-130 missions from Udorn to Luang Prabang were added.¹⁴ For more details about the C-130A missions flown into Laos by Air America crews since 17 August 1965, see the file *Air America in Laos II – military aid, Part I* within my *History of Air America* that can be found at <http://www.utdallas.edu/library/collections/speccoll/Leeker/history/Laos2Part1.pdf> . But unfortunately, the “Aircraft status reports” regularly published by Air America do not list up project aircraft, and the official USAF Assignment Records, preserved at the AFHRA at Maxwell AFB, AL, in most cases do not indicate squadrons or smaller units like E-Flight. As to the number of “Project” C-130s actually flown by Air America, the following is known: Robbins quotes Jim Parrish, who states that in the mid-sixties, Air America started with four C-130-crews; Bowers states that in 1967 the Company operated two ships out of Takhli; and a Memorandum by James A. Cunningham, dated 10 October 70, notes that “we also operate, on a bailed basis, C-130 project aircraft - up to two at a time”.¹⁵ So the only way to identify the actual E-Flight aircraft, which were uncamouflaged, scheduled and used entirely separately from the other planes of the larger unit and even outside squadron control (as the squadron commander exerted direct supervisory authority), is by observation or by looking for those aircraft which did not participate in the activities of the others like in periodical rotation. In the early days most Naha-based C-130As rotated to Tachikawa AB, Japan, or to Robins AFB, GA. Between 1967 and 1971 most Naha-based C-130As rotated between Naha, Cam Ranh Bay, and Ubon. And the only way to identify the C-130As bailed to Air America is by photos or by entries in the log books of those pilots who flew the aircraft. But possibly Air America started with four C-130-crews in 1965 instead of two, because two of these

¹⁰ *1966 History of the 315th Air Division*, p. 49, in: microfilm no. 23820, preserved at the AFHRA.

¹¹ *1966 History of the 315th Air Division*, pp. 34/35+64, in: microfilm no. 23820, preserved at the AFHRA.

¹² Robbins, *Air America*, p. 126.

¹³ The 1965 history of the 315th Air Division contained in microfilm 23820 preserved at the AFHRA at Maxwell AFB states (p. 6) that in September 1965, 4 USAF C-130As were based at Don Muang airport, but “as many as five users were forwarding requests for airlift”; one of these on-call customers may have been Air America.

¹⁴ Bowers, *The USAF in South-East Asia*, pp. 441 + 448-50; Robbins, *Air America*, pp. 126-33.

¹⁵ Robbins, *Air America*, p. 126; Bowers, *The USAF in South-East Asia*, p. 448; Memorandum “Air America Share of Flying”, dated 10 October 70, by James A. Cunningham, in: UTD/CIA/B29F4.

crews possibly had to fly the two C-130Es which had been transferred to the CIA in December 64 (64-0506 and 64-0507). Those aircraft were seen all black in Laos in May 69 and were both reported to have been written off in South East Asia in February 70.¹⁶ Other reports say that those two C-130Es belonged to Project *Heavy Chain*, which was based at Norton AFB, California, but operated out of Nha Trang after they had been modified with special electronics equipment to allow them to operate at low level at night in higher threat areas.^{16A} In 1965 there seems to have been even an electronic reconnaissance C-130B-II leased to Air America, as 59-1531 was officially being worked on at Air Asia's maintenance facility at Tainan for no less than 9 months. This was the only C-130B-II ever to be officially maintained by Air Asia, and in those early days USAF aircraft bailed to Air America more than once appeared as "out for maintenance at Tainan" in the USAF Assignment Records preserved at the AFHRA at Maxwell AFB, AL. It can only be guessed that this C-130B-II was possibly used for some covert overflights.

Air America's "Project" C-130s used for military cargo flown into Laos 1965-71:



An E-Flight C-130A landing at Takhli, possibly prior to use by Air America; the aircraft still has a small USAF insignia and a standard USAF tail number ("0-") (USAF photo by Sgt. Jack Gurner; with the permission of the photographer submitted by Bob Vaughn)

Type	registration / serial	c/n (msn)	date acquired	origin
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A) C-130As which are supposed to have been used by Air America

¹⁶ Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 50; Denham, *World directory of airliner crashes*, p. 114.
^{16A} E-mail dated 29 August 2003 by Sam McGowan, kindly forwarded to the author. In June 1968, a C-130 from Norton AFB flew to Charbatia Air Base, India ("Oak Tree") and picked up a CIA-owned nuclear sensor that had been on one of the mountain tops of the Indian Himalayas to "listen" into the Red China for details about the Chinese atomic program (Conboy / Kohli, *Spies in the Himalayas*, p. 184). On 17 May 69, under the command of RoCAF Major Huang Win-lu, a C-130 belonging to a joint CIA-RoCAF project departed Takhli for a 13 hours flight around China's nuclear testing sites at Lop Nor (ib., pp.192/3); although the text called that operation "Heavy Tea", it might have been a "Heavy Chain" aircraft.

Lockheed C-130E 64-0506 3990 mid-1965? USAF 64-0506

Service history: transferred by the USAF “to outside the USAF” on 31 December 64; reportedly used by Air America and seen in Laos in May 69, all black (CIA?); but it is more likely that they were part of Project *Heavy Chain* and used out of Nha Trang, South Vietnam, after having received special electronic equipment (E-mail by Sam McGowan dated 29 August 2003, kindly forwarded to the author); reportedly written off in South East Asia in February 70, when flown by Air America (Denham, *World directory of airliner crashes*, p. 114); but this seems to be wrong. In his e-mail dated 15 November 2004, Mark Sublette reports to have seen 64-0506 and 64-0507 at Norton AFB in 1971/2, where they were tested by the 1198th Operational Evaluation & Training Squadron; at that time, the 1198th OETS was involved in testing C-130 electronic modifications out of Lockheed Air Services, Ontario CA; then, in mid-1972, both aircraft were seen again at Hurlburt and Duke Fields with 711th SOS as MC-130Es, now wearing the serials of 2 C-130s documented to have been lost in South East Asia many years before, that is 62-1843 (which had crashed into a hill on approach to Tuy Hoa on 20 December 1965) and 63-7785 (which had exploded over the South China Sea on 17 June 1966); 64-0506 became “62-1843” (e-mail dated 28 February 2005, kindly sent by the author by Bob Daley).

Fate: current with the AFRC at Eglin Field 3 in 2005 (e-mail dated 28 February 2005, kindly sent by the author by Bob Daley).

Lockheed C-130E 64-0507 3991 mid-1965? USAF 64-0507

Service history: transferred by the USAF “to outside the USAF” on 26 December 64; reportedly used by Air America and seen in Laos in May 69, all black (CIA?); but it is more likely that they were part of Project *Heavy Chain* and used out of Nha Trang, South Vietnam, after having received special electronic equipment (E-mail by Sam McGowan dated 29 August 2003, kindly forwarded to the author); reportedly written off in South East Asia in February 70, when flown by Air America (Denham, *World directory of airliner crashes*, p. 114); but this seems to be wrong. In his e-mail dated 15 November 2004, Mark Sublette reports to have seen 64-0506 and 64-0507 at Norton AFB in 1971/2, where they were tested by the 1198th Operational Evaluation & Training Squadron; at that time, the 1198th OETS was involved in testing C-130 electronic modifications out of Lockheed Air Services, Ontario CA; then, in mid-1972, both aircraft were seen again at Hurlburt and Duke Fields with 711th SOS as MC-130Es, now wearing the serials of 2 C-130s documented to have been lost in South East Asia many years before, that is 62-1843 (which had crashed into a hill on approach to Tuy Hoa on 20 December 1965) and 63-7785 (which had exploded over the South China Sea on 17 June 1966); 64-0507 became “63-7785” (e-mail dated 28 February 2005, kindly sent by the author by Bob Daley).

Fate: current with the AFRC at Eglin Field 3 in 2005 (e-mail dated 28 February 2005, kindly sent by the author by Bob Daley).

Lockheed C-130B-II 59-1531 3579 1 Feb. 65 ex 41st AD, Yokota

Service history: electronic reconnaissance aircraft, which had been delivered to the 6091st Reconnaissance Squadron, Yokota, in May 61; officially for maintenance at Air Asia, Tainan, between 1 February and 25 October 65 (41st AD, Yokota, GF to AAI TTF WQPC on 65032, back to 41st AD, Yokota, on 65298), possibly leased to Air America; possibly used for overflights over mainland China.

Fate: returned to the 41st AD, Yokota, on 25 October 65; used as a ground trainer at the Inter-American Air Forces Academy, Kelly AFB, TX, in 1994; 59-1531 now

stored at Lackland AFB TX, may be put on display, No longer with IAAFA. (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley)

Lockheed C-130A 57-470 3177 mid-65? ex 4440th Aircraft Del. Group, Langley

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 18 August 60; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 4 September 61, possibly for modifications; returned to 21st TCS, Naha, on 5 November 61; **probably to E-Flight in November 61; transferred to a special service within the 21st TCS, Naha, on 31 July 62;** transferred to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; current on 1 July 64; between 1961 and 1965, all maintenance had been done at Naha, but on 11 January 65, the ship was transferred to Lockbourne and to the USAF's Facility Checking Squadron, St. Petersburg, FL, on 9 February 65, from where it returned to the 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 12 May 65; **believed to have been used by Air America from the second half of 1965 to early 1966;** transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, for maintenance on 10 February 66; returned to the 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 16 March 66; transferred the USAF's Facility Checking Squadron, St. Petersburg, FL, on 21 May 66; the Wing became the 374th TCW, Naha, on 16 August 66; **believed to have been used by Air America from May 66 to June 67;** leased to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, for maintenance, between 5 and 20 June 67; the Wing became the 374th TAW, Naha, on 31 December 67; reportedly with 35th TAS/374th TAW, Naha, using tailcode "YJ", possibly since mid-1968,¹⁷ but this was probably an error; from 18 June to 6 November 68, 57-470 was at the Lockheed Martin Aircraft Center, Greenville, SC, for overhaul and returned to 374th TAW, Naha, on 20 November 68; **probably to E-Flight/21st TAS/374th TAW, Naha; became 57000470 in 68 (?); bailed to Air America in 1969 as 704, flying out of Takhli (T-05) in January, February, April, June, and October 69;** transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, between 4 and 19 December 69 for maintenance; to F2-service, **that is probably Air America, between 3 January and 30 June 70 (70003-181).**

Fate: delivered to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, for IRAN on 28 November 70 (70332); worked on since 1 December 70 (70335); did not return, but was transferred to 95th TAS, General Mitchell Field, Milwaukee, WI, in 71; to the *Fuerza Aérea Peruana* as FAP 396/OB-1395 in 1987; current in June 90.

Lockheed C-130A 57000471 3178 mid-65? ex 483rd TCW, Naha

Service history: to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 25 June 60 as 57-471; transferred to the control of the 4440th Aircraft Delivery Group, Langley AFB, Virginia, on 30 October 60, possibly for modifications; returned to the 21st TCS, Naha, on 22 January 61; **probably to E-Flight in November 61; transferred to a special service within the 21st TCS, Naha, on 31 July 62;** transferred to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 31 October 62; current on 1 July 64; still used by the 21st TCS; between 1961 and 1965, all maintenance had been done at Naha, but on 15 February 65, the ship was transferred to the USAF's Facility Checking Squadron, St. Petersburg, FL, from where it returned to 315th AD Headquarters, Naha, on 24 May 65; **believed to have been flown with Air America since the second half of 1965 until early 1966;**¹⁸ transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, for maintenance on 10 February 66; returned to the 315th AD, Headquarters, Naha, on 16 March 66;

¹⁷ Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 15.

¹⁸ Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 15: 21st TAS.

transferred to the USAF's Facility Checking Squadron, St. Petersburg, FL, on 21 June 66 for WK-maintenance; returned on 16 August 66 and transferred to the 374th TCW, Naha, the same day; in the beginning of 1967, the ship commuted frequently between Naha and Cam Ranh Bay; but since **19 April 67**, it remained at Naha; between 17 and 28 July 67, the ship was transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, for maintenance; the Wing became the 374th TAW, Naha, on 31 December 67; sent to Lockheed Martin Aircraft Center, Greenville, SC, for overhaul on 2 December 68; became **57000471** in 68 (?); delivered back to the 374th TAW, Naha, from Lockheed Martin Aircraft Center, Greenville, SC, on **17 March 69**, back in service (CA) with them on 28 March 69; transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, between 15 and 28 November 69 for maintenance; **returned from F2-service, that is probably from Air America, on 13 January 70 (70013), on 28 February 70 (70059), and on 8 June 70 (70159)**; transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, between 7 and 19 October 70 (70280-92) for VK-maintenance.

Fate: departed to the 142nd TAS, Greater Wilmington Airport, DE, on 5 April 71 (71095, that is much later than the other 374th TAW C-130As); used at Sheppard AFB as maintenance ground trainer in October 89 and still in September 96.

Lockheed C-130A 56-473 3081 Dec. 65? ex FSC, St. Petersburg

Service history: 56-473 was transferred to 345th TCS, Naha, on 31 July 62; on 31 October 62 (62304), the unit was integrated into 315th AD, Naha; after several periods of local WM-maintenance done by LOG LAICI, Naha, (13-16 September 62; 23 November to 1 December 62; 28 June to 2 July 63), 56-473 was sent for maintenance to WRAMA / Warner Robins AFB, Georgia, on 20 April 64 (64110); it returned to 315th AD, Naha, on 8 June 64 (64160); it was still current on 30 June 64 (64182); but since the second half of 1964, it was based outside Naha, until 56-473 returned from FSC, St. Petersburg, to 315th AD, Naha, on 15 December 65 (65349); **believed to have been transferred to E-Flight/21st TCS on 15 December 65**, as 56-473 had no movements in 1966, while most of the other C-130As of 374th TCW, Naha, were assigned to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha; on 16 August 66, 315th AD became part of the 374th TCW, Naha; this idle situation without movements continued until 18 February 67 (67049).

Fate: Since March 67, 56-473 rotated between Naha and Ubon, Thailand, and in 1968, it rotated between Naha and Cam Ranh Bay, now being part of 35th TAS, Naha, using tail-code "YJ"; in 68, it became 56000473, in 1970, it still rotated as part of 35th TAS / 374th TAW, Naha, and on 21 February 71 (71052), 56000473 was transferred to Minneapolis; in August 89, it was sold to TBM Inc., Redmond, OR, as N473TM; current in October 96.

Lockheed C-130A 56-507 3115 25 Nov. 65? ex 317TCW, Lockbourne

Service history: transferred from the 317th TCW, Lockbourne, to the 315th AD, Naha, on 25 November 65 (65329); **possibly to E-Flight/21st TCS on 25 November 65**; sent to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, on 20 December 65 (65354) for IRAN; returned to 315th AD, Naha, on 16 March 66 (66075); **believed to have been transferred to E-Flight/21st TCS on 16 March 66**, as 56-507 had no movements in 1966 - except for a period of VK-maintenance between 3 to 16 October 66 (66276-89) - , while most of the other C-130As of 374th TCW, Naha, were assigned to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha; on 16 August 66, 315th AD became part of 374th TCW, Naha; this idle situation without movements continued until 23 February 67 (67054).

Fate: Since March 67 and in 1968, 56-507 rotated between Naha and Cam Ranh Bay; in 1971, it had returned to mainland USA; sold to Hawkins and Powers, Greybull, WY, in May 89 as N8055R, rereg. N45S in June 90; then N4172Q; then N132HP in November 90.

Lockheed C-130A 56000504 3112 19 Jan. 67? ex 374th TCW, Naha
Service history: 56-504 was transferred from 314th TCW, Sewart, to 345th TCS, Naha, on 25 June 62 (62176); transferred to 21st TCS, Naha, for WM-maintenance between 16 August and 16 October 62 (62228-289); became part of 315th AD, Naha, on 31 October 62 (62304); current in June 63; WM-maintenance was done at Naha between 16 and 31 October 62 (62289-304); transferred to a unit outside Naha in 1963/64; returned from the USAF's Facility Checking Squadron, St. Petersburg, FL, to 315th AD, Naha, on 10 January 65 (65010); WM-maintenance was done by DYNYJ, Naha, between 14 January and 10 February 66 (66014-41); transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, between 10 February and 16 August 66 (66041-228) for maintenance; back to 315th AD, Naha, on 16 August 66 (66228); to the USAF's Facility Checking Squadron, St. Petersburg, FL, on 29 October 66 (66302); returned to 374th TCW, Naha, on 19 January 67 (67019); **possibly used by E-Flight/21st TAS in 1967, as it did not rotate;**¹⁹ transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, for maintenance between 15 and 26 August 67 (67227-238) and between 28 October and 21 November 67 (67301-25); to Lockheed Martin Aircraft Center, Greenville, SC, for overhaul on 21 November 67 (67325); returned to 374th TAW, Naha, on 18 April 68 (68109); to 56000504 in 68; between 1968 and 1970, 56000504 of 374th TAW rotated between Naha, Cam Ranh Bay, Tan Son Nhut, and Kadena, so was a regular 374th TAW aircraft.
Fate: transferred to 139th TAS, Schenectady County Airport, NY, on 3 March 71 (71062).

Lockheed C-130A 56000510 3118 27 Nov. 67 ex 374th TCW, Naha
Service history: 56-510 was transferred from 314th TCW, Sewart, to 345th TCS, Naha, on 25 June 62 (62176); became part of 315th AD, Naha, on 31 October 62 (62304); to WRAMA/Robins AFB, Georgia, for IRAN on 3 July 63 (63184); returned to the 315th AD, Naha, on 30 November 63 (63334); current in December 63; periods of WM-maintenance by LOG LAICI at Naha were 8 to 11 October 62; 30 November to 15 December 63; 10 August 64; 21 to 27 October 64 (64295-64301); and 15 to 18 January 65 (65015-18); transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, between 10 February and 11 July 66 (66041-192); VK-service (maintenance) from 11 to 18 July 66 (66192-99); became the 374TCW, Naha, on 16 August 66 (66228); in the beginning of 1967, 56-510 rotated frequently between Naha and Cam Ranh Bay, until it went to WRAMA/Robins AFB, Georgia, for IRAN on 8 September 67 (67251); returned to Naha, 374th TCW, on 27 November 67 (67331); **most probably to E-Flight/21st TCS/374th TCW on 27 November 67;**²⁰ **most probably bailed to Air America as 605 since November 67;** the Wing became 374th TAW on 31 December 67 (67365); no further movements, except for local maintenance by WRAAR, Naha, between 16 and 21 May 68 (68137-42); **used by Air America out of Takhli (T-05) in December 68 as 605;** transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, for maintenance, between 16 and 30 December 68 (68351-65); no more movements in 1968; reserialled 56000510 with the 374th TAW, Naha, in 1969; for

¹⁹ Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 10, has no entry.

²⁰ Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 11, notes: E-Flight/21st TAS.

maintenance (WJ) at Naha on 18 and 19 July 69, done by the squadron; **used by Air America out of Takhli (T-05) in April, June, and October 69 as 605**; delivered to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, for IRAN, leaving Naha on 4 November 69 (69308), arriving there for work (WK) on 8 November 69 (69312); redelivered from Hayes to the 374th TAW, Naha, on 12 January 70 (70012); entered service (CA) with 374TAW, Naha, on 4 February 70 (70035); to F2-service, that is **probably bailed to Air America between 4 February and 25 March 70** (70035-84); **definitely transferred to Air America (TL) on 9 April 70** (70099).

Fate: crashed into the 7500 foot level of the northwestern slope of Phou Bia mountain range on approach to Long Tieng, Laos, on 10 April 70, while en route from Takhli, Thailand, to Long Tieng (LS-20A), Laos, carrying fuel and ammunition, killing Captain Kevin N. Cochrane, F/O Huey D. Rogers, Navigator Roger B. McKean, Flight Engineer Milton E. Smart and Air Freight Specialists Gerald L. De Long and Billy K. Hester (Memorial; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3; Board of Review report, in: UTD/CIA/B34F4; List "Aircraft destroyed or lost", in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; Memorandum of 7 December 71, in: UTD/CIA/B19F1; UTD/Leary/B1 for 10 April 70).

Lockheed C-130A 56000503 3111 14 June 67 ex 317TCW, Lockbourne AFB, OH

Service history: transferred from the 317th TCW, Lockbourne AFB, OH, to the 374th TCW, Naha, on 24 May 67 (67144); based at Cam Ranh Bay between 12 and 14 June 67 (67163-65); back to Naha **on 14 June 67, most probably to E-Flight/21st TCS**; to REC2-service with the 374th TCW, Naha, between 21 June and 9 September 67 (67172-252), that is **probably bailed to Air America on 21 June 67**; on 31 December 67, the Wing became 374th TAW, Naha; to WRAAR, Naha, for overhaul between 31 March and 11 April 68 (68091-102); transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, for maintenance, between 28 May and 10 June 68 (68149-62); **possibly used by Air America out of Takhli (T-05) in December 68 as 605**; delivered to Lockheed Martin Aircraft Center, Greenville, SC, for overhaul on 18 April 69 (69108); arrived there on 22 April 69; redelivered from Greenville to the 374th TAW, Naha, on 24 July 69 (69205), reentering CA-service at Naha on 30 August 69 (69242); **used by Air America out of Takhli (T-05) in November and December 69**; to E-Flight/21st TAS/F2-service, that is **believed bailed to Air America between 31 January and 10 June 70** (70031-70161); transferred for VK-maintenance to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, between 9 and 21 July 70 (70190-202); then back to the 374th TAW, Naha; no other rotations or movements in 1967-1970.²¹

Fate: transferred to 139th TAS, Schenectady County Airport, NY, on 19 April 71 (71109, that is much later than the other 374th TAW C-130As); to AMARC, Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ, in December 91 as CF101; current in October 97.

Lockheed C-130A 56000542 3150 6 July 69 ex 374th TAW, Naha

Service history: in the first half of 1969, 56000542 was still one of the regular 374th TAW aircraft, rotating between Naha, Tan Son Nhut, and Cam Ranh Bay until 6 July 69; on 6 July 69 (69187), it entered CA-service from Naha, rotating no longer; so, most probably, it went **to E-Flight/21st TAS/374th TAW, Naha,**²² **on 6 July 69**; on 22 December 69, 56000542 entered VK-service (maintenance) from Naha, probably with

²¹ Olausson has no entry.

²² Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 13, notes: 21st TAS.

the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, to whom it was officially transferred between 1 and 8 January 70; on 8 January 70, it probably returned to **E-Flight/21st TAS/374th TAW**, Naha, until 6 May 70 (70126); during this time, it was probably **604** with **Air America, used on the refugee airlifts**; on 6 May 70, it was delivered to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, for IRAN; redelivered to 21st TAS/374th TAW, Naha, on 22 November 70 (70326), where it entered service on 9 December 70 (70343).

Fate: transferred to the 142nd TAS, Greater Wilmington Airport, DE, on 11 February 71 (71042); given to the South Vietnamese Air Force in November 72; written off in April 75.

Lockheed C-130A 56000523 3131 11 April 70 ex 374th TAW, Naha
Service history: transferred to the 374th TCW in August 66; in 1969, 56000523 was still one of the regular 374th TAW aircraft, rotating between Naha and Tan Son Nhut until 2 January 70; on 18 January 70, it was delivered to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, for maintenance; WK-maintenance was done by Hayes between 24 January and 2 April 70; on 2 April 70, it was redelivered to the 374th TAW, Naha, reentering CA-service on 11 April 70; transferred to **E-Flight/21st TAS/374th TAW**, Naha,²³ probably on **11 April 70**, as a replacement aircraft for the ill-fated 56000510, which had crashed with Air America on 10 April 70; local maintenance was done by WRAAR, Naha, between 21 and 22 July 70; to F-2 service, that is **probably bailed to Air America, on 22 July 70** (70203).
Fate: transferred to the 142nd TAS, Greater Wilmington Airport, DE, on 19 April 71 (71109, that is much later than the other 374th TAW C-130As); in 1972, it flew with the 96th TAS, Minneapolis; transferred to AMARC, Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ, in March 90 as CF082; still there in October 97.

Lockheed C-130A 56000551 3159 27 May 70 ex 374th TAW, Naha
Service history: In 1967 with 40th TCS/317th TCW, Lockbourne; to 35th TAS/374th TAW, Naha, on 9 June 68 (68160); rotated between Naha and Cam Ranh Bay until 29 October 68 (68302); transferred to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, Naha, between 17 November and 1 December 68 (68321-35) for maintenance; no entry for 1969; 374th TAW, Naha, to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, on 20 January 70 for overhaul; redelivered to 21st TAS/374th TAW, Naha, on 8 May 70; in service **on 9 May 70**; to F-2-service on 70208, that is **probably bailed to Air America, on 27 July 70**; local maintenance was done at Naha between 25 and 27 July 70; no other movements.²⁴
Fate: transferred to the 142nd TAS, Greater Wilmington Airport, DE, on 20 April 71 (71110, that is much later than the other 374th TAW C-130As); sold to the Chad Air Force as TT-PAC before August 86; crashed landing in Chad on 16 November 87.

B) Confirmed service details while with Air America:

Lockheed C-130A "704" 3177 mid-65? 57000470 of E-Flight / 21st TAS / 374th TAW, Naha

Service history: flown from Takhli (T-05) on project "69-01A", i.e. local training and flight check, on 4 and 5 January 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in:

²³ Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 12, notes: E-Flight/21st TAS.

²⁴ Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 14, notes: E-Flight/21st TAS.

UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-02A” to Long Tieng (LS-98), Savannakhet (L-39), Houei Ki Nin (LS-38) and Nam Lieu (LS-118A) between 7 and 13 January 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-09B” to the same destinations between 21 and 23 February 69 and on project “69-10B” to Moung Soui (L-108) and Luang Prabang (L-54) between 24 and 26 February 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-21D” to the same destinations from 9 and to 13 April 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-22D” to Moung Soui (L-108) and Luang Prabang (L-54) between 22 and 24 April 69 and on project “69-24D” to Long Tieng (LS-20A/LS-98) between 25 and 30 April 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-33F” to Long Tieng (LS-30/LS-98) and Savannakhet (L-39) between 4 and 10 June 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Udorn (T-08) on project “69-49K” to Long Tieng (LS-98) between 2 and 3 October 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); also flown by Clifford A. Costa (e-mail dated 30 January 2006, kindly sent to the author by Cliff Costa).

Fate: delivered to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, for IRAN on 28 November 70 (70332); worked on since 1 December 70 (70335); did not return, but was transferred to 95TAS, General Mitchell Field, Milwaukee, WI in 71; to the Fuerza Aérea Peruana as FAP 396/OB-1395 in 1987; current in June 90.



Air America C-130A “605” at Takhli RThAFB, taken by Ken McClintick
(with the permission of the photographer submitted by Bob Vaughn)

Lockheed C-130A	“605”	3118	27 Nov. 67	56000510 of E-Flight / 21 st TAS / 374 th TAW, Naha
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Service history: flown from Takhli (T-05) on project 68-47 between 17 December 68 and 21 December 68 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-20D” to Luang Prabang (L-54) and Moung Soui (L-108) between 16 April 69 and 19 April 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); used on project “69-31E”, i.e. for local training from Okinawa on 1 June 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-34F” to Long Tieng (LS-30) and Nam Lieu (LS-118A) between 23 June 69 and 24 June 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Udorn (T-08) on project “69-35F” to Vientiane (L-08), Luang Prabang (L-54), Long Tieng (LS-98), Xieng Dat (LS-26) and Korat (T-13)

between 24 June 69 and 1 July 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flown from Takhli (T-05) on project “69-48K” to Long Tieng (LS-98) and Savannakhet (L-39) between 6 October 69 and 10 October 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); flew Udorn-Naha, Okinawa, on 11 November 69 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); also flown by Clifford A. Costa (e-mail dated 30 January 2006, kindly sent to the author by Cliff Costa); uncamouflaged; leased from the USAF, E-Flight, 21st TAS, 374th TAW, Naha AB, Okinawa.

Fate: crashed into the 7500 foot level of the northwestern slope of Phou Bia mountain range on approach to Long Tieng, Laos, on 10 April 70, while en route from Takhli, Thailand, to Long Tieng (LS-20A), Laos, carrying fuel and ammunition, killing Captain Kevin N. Cochrane, F/O Huey D. Rogers, Navigator Roger B. McKean, Flight Engineer Milton E. Smart and Air Freight Specialists Gerald L. De Long and Billy K. Hester (Memorial; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3; Memorandum of 7 October 71, in: UTD/CIA/B19F1; UTD/Leary/B1 for 10 April 70).

Lockheed C-130 “503” 3111 14 June 67 56000503 of E-Flight /
21st TAS / 374th TAW,
Naha

Service history: flew Naha AB, Okinawa, to Takhli (T-05) on 17 November 69; used to train Air America pilot Donald Wharton at Takhli (T-05) on 19 November 69 (project “69-58M”?); possibly also used on PPG (*Peppergrinder*) project “69-60M” out of Takhli (T-05) from 1 December 69 to ? (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2).

Fate: transferred to the 139th TAS, Schenectady County Airport, NY, on 19 April 71 (71109, that is much later than the other 374th TAW C-130As); to AMARC, Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ, in December 91 as CF101; current in October 97.

Problem:

On 1 July 69 an unknown Air America “Project Aircraft”, believed to be C-130A “704”, damaged Air America UH-34D H-44 while on landing roll out at Luang Prabang (L-54). I. R. Gram, the Second in Command of H-44, received head injuries by contact with an unknown object within the cabin of H-44 which was in process of shutting down in front of the Customer warehouse. He was evacuated to Udorn on 2 July 69 after a first treatment in Luang Prabang hospital (XOXO of 1 July 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F9).

IV) Air America’s refugee airlifts in 1970:

When, in early 1970, the situation became too dangerous in the Plain of Jars, Air America made several refugee airlifts. One took place between **4 and 10 February 70**. At that time 2 C-130s bailed to USAID flew a total of 65 sorties into and out of Ban Thang (LS-275) and Lat Sen (LS-276), carrying some 10,000 refugees to Vientiane. On each flight, roughly 150 passengers were carried per C-130 plus their personal effects, which were estimated to amount to about 12,000 to 15,000 pounds per trip. In the month of March the critical period was between **17 and 20 March** and again between **1 and 3 April 70**. It was then that the enemy moved in on Sam Thong (LS-20) and Long Tieng (LS-20A), requiring the evacuation of refugees and the importation of troops along with the backhaul of critical USAID and -713 Customer material, much of which was of a highly classified nature. During this period, the C-130s flew a total of 16 sorties, five of which were for the insertion of 751 troops to Long Tieng and the backhaul of 183,000 pounds of cargo. Between 4 and 8 February 70, E-Flight

crews had to fly the C-130As of operation no. III because Air America's C-130 crews were busy with operation no. IV.²⁵



An unknown Air America C-130A taken at Vientiane during the refugee airlift in February 1970
(*Air America Log*, vol. IV, no. 3, 1970, p.3)

Type	registration / serial	c/n (msn)	date acquired	origin
C-130s used Air America's refugee airlifts of 1970:				



Air America C-130A "604" on the Plain of Jars in February 70
(*Air America Log*, vol. IV, no. 3, 1970, p. 7)

Lockheed C-130A	"604"	3150	Feb. 70	probably ex 56000542 of E-Flight / 21 st TAS / 374 th TAW, Naha
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Service history: used by Air America in February 70 to transport refugees from the Plain of Jars; no markings, all silver; a photo was published in: *Air America Log*, vol. IV, no.3, 1970, p. 7.

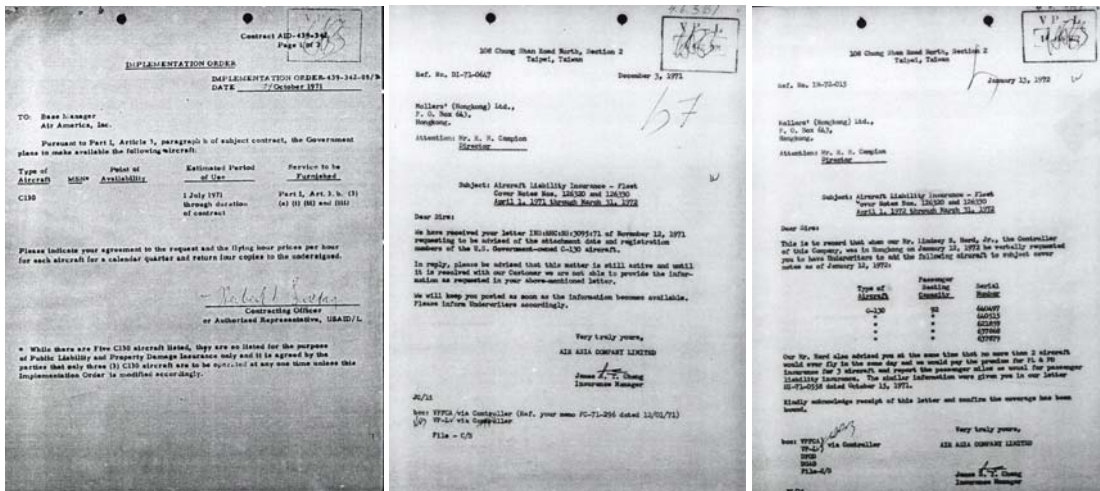
Fate: delivered to Hayes Aircraft Industries, Birmingham, AL, on 6 May 70 for

²⁵ *Air America Log*, vol. IV, no.3, 1970; Report, dated 8 June 1970, regarding the organized refugee airlift of the first months of 1970 and sent by Air America's Vientiane Base Manager James A. Cunningham to Washington, in: UTD/CIA/B29F4; Bowers, *The USAF in South-East Asia*, p. 450.

maintenance; redelivered to the 21st TAS/374th TAW, Naha, on 22 November 70 (70326), where it entered service on 9 December 70 (70343); transferred to the 142nd TAS, Greater Wilmington Airport, DE, on 11 February 71 (71042); given to the South Vietnamese Air Force in November 72; written off in April 75.

V) Air America's C-130Es flown into Laos:

When, in the spring of 1971, that part of the 374th TAW which had used C-130As from Naha, Okinawa, was deactivated, the responsibility for supply flights to Laos activities shifted to the E-model wing at Ching Chuan Kang Airbase, Taiwan. So, on 31 May 71, one of the squadrons based at Ching Chuan Kang AB was redesignated the 21st and included a special flight to replace the old E-Flight. These C-130Es were left uncamouflaged but were painted gray to retard corrosion.²⁶ In June 71, five E-Flight C-130Es were bailed to Air America: These aircraft flew under contract AID-439-342 since 1 July 71.²⁷ Nevertheless, only 3 and later 2 out of these 5 C-130Es were operated by Air America at any one time. At the beginning, this matter was so secret that Air America was not even told the serial numbers of those 5 C-130Es: Implementation Order no. 439-342-05/71 dated 29 October 71 notes that the aircraft were used since 1 July 71, but does not give the serials. On 12 November 71, Mollers' of Hongkong, the company whose insurance was to cover these aircraft, wanted to know their serials, but on 3 December 71, Air Asia, who was doing the insurance business for Air America, had to reply that "until it [this matter] is resolved with our Customer we are not able to provide the information as requested". It was not until 13 January 72 that Air Asia could indicate the serial numbers of those 5 C-130Es to the Insurance Company, and so, Implementation Order no. 439-342-05/72 of 15 March 72 finally lists those 5 aircraft.²⁸



Implement. Order dated 29 Oct.71, Letters to the Insurance Co dated 3 Dec.71 and 13 Jan.72 (all in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29)

²⁶ Bowers, *The USAF in South-East Asia*, p. 450.

²⁷ See the Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committee of Air America Inc. and Air Asia CoLtd of 9 May 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7.

²⁸ All documents in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29.

Contract AID-439-342
Page 1 of 4

IMPLEMENTATION ORDER

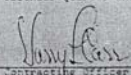
439-342-05/72
IMPLEMENTATION ORDER Revision 1
DATE 15 March 1972

TO: Base Manager
Air America, Inc.

Pursuant to Part I, Article 3, paragraph 3 of subject contract, the Government plans to make available the following aircraft:

Type of Aircraft	USG Nr*	Point of Availability	Estimated Period of Use	Service to be Furnished
C130	62-1859 63-7889 63-7875 64-0437 64-0513	Udon	1 July 1971 through duration of contract	Part I, Art. 3.b.(3) (a)(i), (ii) and (iii)

Please indicate your agreement to the request and the flying hour prices per hour for each aircraft for a calendar quarter and return four copies to the undersigned.


Contracting Officer
or Authorized Representative, USAID/L

* While there are five (5) C130 aircraft listed, they are so listed for the purpose of Public Liability and Property Damage Insurance only and it is agreed by the parties that only three (3) C130 aircraft are to be operated at any one time unless this Implementation Order is modified accordingly.

Contract AID-439-342
Page 2 of 4


CONTRACTOR'S OFFER

Date 15 March 1972

To: Contracting Officer
USAID/Laos

Air America, Inc. hereby agrees to accept, operate and maintain the aircraft as specified above (unless otherwise modified below), at the flying hour prices set forth below. This offer shall expire on _____.

Flying Hours per Calendar Quarter	Normal	Including Services	Maintenance & Supply Support Services to be Furnished at Hourly Prices or Materials Reimbursable
*	*	Part I, Art. 3.b.(3) (a)(i), (ii) and (iii)	


Air America, Inc.

Part I, Article 3.b.(3):
SEE ATTACHED

Implementation Order no. 439-342-05/72 dated 15 March 1972
(in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 29)

The C-130Es were not only used to fly large amounts of military supplies into Laos, but also to serve as troop carriers. In this role, they could carry Lao, Hmong or Thai troops between their training camps in Thailand and places in Laos or transport Hmong *Groupements Mobiles* within Laos, like reinforcements for MR II coming from the southern part of the country. Finally they were also used to parachute Hmong *Groupements Mobiles* into Laotian battle fields.²⁹ Miles Lechtman recalls: "We just loaded them in until there was no more room and closed up. The load was from 180 to 230, with troops."³⁰ For more details about Air America's C-130E operations see the file *Air America in Laos II – military aid, Part II* at <http://www.utdallas.edu/library/collections/speccoll/Leeker/history/Laos2Part2.pdf>.



An E-Flight C-130E, probably returning from service with Air America (note the small USAF insignia next to the side door)
(with kind permission from Ward S. Reimer)

²⁹ Parker, *Covert ops*, pp.1-4.

³⁰ E-mail dated 16 January 2006, kindly sent to the author by Miles Lechtman.



An unknown Air America C-130E at
Tha Tam Bleung in the early seventies
(UTD/Walton/B3)



An unknown Air America C-130E taken
by Tom Lum, probably at Udorn in the
early seventies
(photo no.VA024860, No Date, Allen
Cates Collection, The Vietnam Archive,
Texas Tech University, with kind
permission from Steve Maxner)

Type	registration / serial	c/n (msn)	date acquired	origin
C-130s used for operation number 5:				
Lockheed C-130E	“218” (21859)	3823	2 June 71	USAF 62-1859, used by E-Flight, 21 st TAS, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan; 314 th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, to 374 th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, on 1 June 71 (71152); to GF on 2 June 71 (71153); no further entries in the USAF Assignment Records

Service history: flown into Laos since 1 July 71 under contract AID-439-342 (Minutes ExCom-AAAC/AAM of 25 January 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); on 1 July 72, contract AID-439-342 became part of contract F04606-71-C-0002 (Price negotiations for 1973, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F6); listed as assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 and based at Udorn at least 16-30 April 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14), 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.Circulars of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C), 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.Circulars of 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); all known F.O.C.s of 1973 note: “Up to 2 aircraft provided for daily operations”, and all known F.O.C.s of 1974 note: “One basic aircraft provided for daily operations”; seen all grey in August 71 (Olausson, *Lockheed Hercules*, p. 39); flew Pakse (L-11) - Ubon (T-19) - Udorn (T-08) on 1 October 71 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); flown into Laos at least between 30 June 72 and 10 May 74 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6); on 19 August 72, “218”, crewed by Messrs. Nugent, Jackson, Moon, Bond, Reber, and Winkle, flew Udorn (T-08) - Nam Phong (T-712) - Phitsanulok (T-01), as directed by ASB-044, with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops, as in the summer of 1972, the Hmong guerillas of

Groupement Mobile 26 were trained at Nam Phong, and as close to Phitsanulok was Camp Surat Sena nicknamed “Pitt’s Camp”, which served as garrison for the Thai “Special Battalion” and as training camp for Lao troops, especially for SGUs from MR III and IV as well as for Hmong *Groupement Mobiles* 21 and 22 (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 19 Aug. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7; Conboy, *War in Laos*, pp. 58, 53, and 42; Conboy/Morrison, *Shadow war*, pp. 328, 331, and 98); on 12 September 72, C-130E “218”, crewed by Messrs. Seigrist, Jackson, Bond, Lechtman, King, and Winkle, flew Udorn (T-08) - Seno (L-46) -Ban Xieng Lom (LS-69) - Udorn (T-08) - Seno (L-46) -Ban Xieng Lom (LS-69) - Udorn (T-08) for ASB-044 with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 12 Sept. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 21 October 72, C-130E “218” flew Udorn (T-08) - Nam Phong (T-712) - Pakse (L-11) - Udorn (T-08) - Luang Prabang (L-54) - Udorn (T-08), for ASB-044 with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 21 Oct. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 17 November 72, “218” shuttled between Long Tieng (LS-20A) and Seno (L-46) (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 17 Nov. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 7 January 73, “218” was used at Udorn on stand by for *Peppergrinder* operation (Udorn daily schedule of 7 Jan. 73, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); “218” flew the following routes out of Udorn on 2 March 73: 1) Udorn (T-08) - Vientiane (L-08) - Long Tieng (LS-20A) - Vientiane (L-08) - Luang Prabang (L-54) - Udorn (T-08); 2) Udorn (T-08) - Vientiane (L-08) as directed by “PPG” and 3) Vientiane (L-08) - Luang Prabang (L-54)/Shuttles - Udorn (T-08) (Udorn daily flight schedule of 2 March 73, in: UTD/Bonansinga).

Fate: returned to the 21st TAS, USAF, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, in 1974, which still used it in January 89, now camouflaged; transferred in August 89 to the 167th TAS / West Virginia Air National Guard, Martinsburg, WV, and in April 96 to the 192nd TAS / Nevada Air National Guard, Reno; in 2009 still flying with 62nd AS Little Rock AFB (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley).

Lockheed C-130E	“404” (40497)	3981	April 71	USAF 64-0497 was used by the 374 th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, in Sept. 71 and Sept. 73 and painted grey overall; 314 th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, to 374 th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, on 1 June 71 (71152); no further entries in the USAF Assignment Records
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Service history: not on the F.O.Circular of 1 July 71; but at Luang Prabang (L-54), Laos, with Air America on 19 April 71 (Accident report for C-46 N9458Z, in: UTD/Anthony/F3); on 21 April 71, C-130E “404”, piloted by Capt. D. Wharton and his crew, struck a motorcycle immediately after touch down at Long Tieng (LS-20A), killing one of the riders, and damaging two main gear tires and the left main wheel well door and well; the aircraft was on Project no. 71-26D (XOXO of 21 April 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F14); repaired; flown into Laos since 1 July 71 under contract AID-439-342 (Minutes ExCom-AAAL/AAM of 25 January 72 in UTD/CIA/B9F7); on 1

July 72, contract AID-439-342 became part of contract F04606-71-C-0002 (Price negotiations for 1973, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F6); listed as assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 and based at Udorn at least 16-30 April 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14), 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.Circulars of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C), 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.Circulars of 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); all known F.O.C.s of 1973 note: "Up to 2 aircraft provided for daily operations", and all known F.O.C.s of 1974 note: "One basic aircraft provided for daily operations"; while maneuvering to park at the AB-1 ramp at Udorn (T-08) on 25 December 71, the propeller wash damaged CASI C-47 N650K; "404" was operating under contract 342 (XOXO of 25 December 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F11; Minutes ExCom-AAAL/AAM of 11 January 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); flown into Laos at least between 1 April 72 and 27 May 74 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6); at Udorn on 18 April 73 (Udorn daily flight schedule of 18 April 73, in: UTD/Dexter/F1); flew Udorn (T-08) - Vientiane (L-08), then as directed for *Peppergrinder* and back to Udorn on 5 May 73 (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 5 May 73, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7; Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); flew Udorn (T-08) - Nam Phong (T-712) and then as directed by ASB-044 on 18 June 73, until it returned to Udorn (T-08) the same day, probably flying back Thai troops volunteers; the same routes were flown on 19 June 73 (Vientiane daily flight schedules of 18 and 19 June 73, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); flew Udorn-Vientiane-Long Tieng-Udorn with food on 28 April 74 and then Udorn-Pakse-Udorn and Udorn-Savannakhet-Udorn for the DAO the same day (Udorn Flight Schedule of 28 April 74, in: UTD/Walker/B31 III d).

Fate: returned to the 21st TAS, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, in 1974, which used it in 75; still with the 374th TAW in Jan. 93; transferred in Sept. 93 to AMARC, Davis-Monthan AFB, with storage number CF134; 64-0497 was broken up and scrapped at AMARC (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley)



C-130E 405 at Long Tieng in 1971
(UTD/Stuart)



C-130E 405 accident at Seno on 30 Aug. 72
(UTD/Hitner/B2)

Lockheed C-130E	"405" (40515)	3999	June 71	USAF 64-0515; had been used by the 314 th TCW, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, in Dec. 65 and by the 50 th TAS, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan;
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314th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, to 374th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, on 1 June 71 (71152); no further entries in the USAF Assignment Records

Service history: leased from E-Flight, 374th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, and seen all gray in Sept. 71 and Sept. 73; flew Udorn (T-08) - Luang Prabang (L-54) on 28 March 71 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); a photo taken at Long Tieng (LS-20A) in 71 can be seen in: UTD/Stuart, Sm. Coll. 5; flown into Laos since 1 July 71 under contract AID-439-342 (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 25 January 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); on 1 July 72, contract AID-439-342 became part of contract F04606-71-C-0002 (Price negotiations for 1973, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F6); listed as assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 and based at Udorn at least 16-30 April 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14), 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.Circulars of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C), 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.Circulars of 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); all known F.O.C.s of 1973 note: "Up to 2 aircraft provided for daily operations", and all known F.O.C.s of 1974 note: "One basic aircraft provided for daily operations"; flown into Laos at least between 8 May 72 and 31 May 74 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6); on 30 August 72, C-130 "405", crewed by Messrs. Wharton, Hitner, Koch, Knop, Headlee and Feind, flew Udorn (T-08) - Seno (L-46) and then shuttles to Luang Prabang (L-54) for ASB-044; during one of these flights, C-130 "405" suffered from a collapse of the right main landing gear at Seno (L-46), Laos, on 30 August 72, when operating under contract 0002; the aircraft landed on asphalt runway 04, slowed down and commenced a 180 degree left turn around, approximately 750 feet short of the runway end and the turn around area. After approximately 160 degrees of turn, the right main gear broke thru the wet, partially rock-stabilized runway shoulder and settled until the number 4 engine propeller contacted the ground; no crew member was injured, but the right out board engine propeller and the gear box were damaged (XOXO of 30 August 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2); a photo of that accident can be seen in: Yearbook 1984 (in: UTD/Wharton/B1F3, and, in: UTD/Hitner/B2); repaired and returned to service (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 12 September 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); flown from Seno (L-46) to Udorn (T-08) on 1 September 72, by an Air America crew (Messrs. Nugent, Hoff, Cordova, and Lechtman) (Udorn daily flight schedule of 1 Sept. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 5 October 72, C-130E "405" apparently shuttled Hmong or Lao troops for ASB-044 between Pitsanulok (T-01) and Pakse (L-11), with centerline seats installed, before returning to Udorn (T-08) (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 5 Oct. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); flew Udorn (T-08) - Nam Phong (T-712) and then as directed by ASB-044 on 18 June 73, until it returned to Udorn (T-08) the same day, probably flying back Thai troops (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 18 June 73, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 19 June 73, "405" flew from Udorn (T-08) to Vientiane (L-08) and on to Saigon (V-01), apparently for the Requirements Office, and then back the same way (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 19 June 73, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 3 May 74, C-130E "405" carried the remains of the ill-fated DHC-6 N389EX back to Udorn (XOXO of 3 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F14).

Fate: returned to the USAF, flying with the 21st TAS, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, in 74; current with the 135th TAS, Baltimore, in 1996; 64-0515 still flying with 198th AS PRANG San Juan in 2009 (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley)

Lockheed C-130E “786” (37868) 3938 2 June 71 USAF 63-7868; had been used by the 464th TCW, Pope AFB, North Carolina, in Dec. 65, was used by E-Flight, 21st TAS, Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, in Sept. 71 and Sept. 73 and painted gray overall; 314th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, to 374th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, on 1 June 71 (71152); to GF on 2 June 71 (71153); no further entries in the USAF Assignment files

Service history: flown into Laos since 1 July 71 under contract AID-439-342 (Minutes ExCom-AAAL/AAM of 25 January 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); on 1 July 72, contract AID-439-342 became part of contract F04606-71-C-0002 (Price negotiations for 1973, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F6); listed as assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 and based at Udorn at least 16-30 April 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14), 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.Circulars of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C), 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.Circulars of 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); all known F.O.C.s of 1973 note: “Up to 2 aircraft provided for daily operations”, and all known F.O.C.s of 1974 note: “One basic aircraft provided for daily operations”; flew Udorn (T-08) - Pakse (L-11) on 14 September 71 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); flew Udorn (T-08) - Seno (L-46) - Pakse (L-11) - Seno (L-46) shuttles for ASB-044 on 24 May 72, with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 24 May 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 15 August 72, “786”, crewed by Messrs. Welk, Knop, Hoff, Gamelin, Cordova, and Lavin, flew shuttles between Udorn (T-08) and Khang Kho (LS-204) for ASB-044 (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 15 Aug. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 17 August 72, “786”, crewed by Messrs. Welk, Bond, Hoff, Gamelin, Reber, and Winkle, flew Udorn (T-08) - Pakse (L-11) and on as directed by ASB-044, with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 17 Aug. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 18 August 72, “786”, crewed by Messrs. Welk, Jackson, Gamelin, Bond, Reber, and Winkle, flew Udorn (T-08) - Pakse (L-11) - Keng Ka Boa (LS-235) as directed by ASB-044, again with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 18 Aug. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); flew Udorn (T-08) - Long Tieng (LS-20A) - Nam Phong (T-712) shuttles for ASB-044 on 1 September 72, with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops (Udorn daily flight schedule of 1 Sept. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 2 September 72, “786”, crewed by Seigrist, Jackson, Stone, Moon, Reber, and Winkle, was used on

arms flights out of Udorn (T-08) for *Peppergrinder* (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 2 Sept. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 3 September 72, C-130 "786", crewed by Messrs. Wharton, Jackson, Moon, Stone, Reber, and Winkle, first carried Thai troops for ASB-044 from Udorn (T-08) to Ban Xieng Lom (LS-69) and back, with centerline seats installed, then, the same day, "786" carried arms out of Udorn (T-08) as directed by *Peppergrinder* (Vientiane daily schedule of 3 Sept. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 4, 5 and 6 Sept. 72, "786" again shuttled arms out of Udorn (T-08) as directed by *Peppergrinder* (Vientiane daily flight schedules of 4, 5, and 6 Sept. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 21 October 72, C-130E "786" flew Udorn (T-08) - Nam Phong (T-712) - Pakse (L-11) - Udorn (T-08) - Luang Prabang (L-54) - Udorn (T-08), for ASB-044 with centerline seats installed, so probably carried Thai troops (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 21 Oct. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 11 November 72, "786" shuttled troops for ASB-044 between Udorn (T-08) and Ban Xieng Lom (LS-69), with centerline seats installed (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 11 Nov. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 17 November 72, "786" flew 2 trips between Pakse (L-11) and Nong Saeng (T-338) for ASB-044, and then shuttled between Long Tieng (LS-20A) and Seno (L-46) (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 17 Nov. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); flown into Laos at least between 25 April 72 and 30 March 74 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6); flew Udorn (T-08) - Luang Prabang (L-54) on 8 January 73 for Air America (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); flew Udorn (T-08) - Vientiane (L-08) on 26 January 73 (Udorn flight schedule of 26 Jan. 73, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7).

Fate: returned to the USAF in 1974; in service with 143rd TAS/Rhode Island Air National Guard (Quonset Point, RI) since August 89. 63-7868 still flying with 62nd AS Little Rock AFB in 2009 (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley)

Lockheed C-130E	"787" (37879)	3950	2 June 71	USAF 63-7879; had been used by the 346 th TAS, Dyess AFB, Texas, in Sept. 69, was used by the 21 st TAS (E-Flight), Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, in Sept. 71 and Sept. 73 and was painted gray overall; 314 th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, to 374 th TAW, Ching Chuan Kang, on 1 June 71 (71152); to GF on 2 June 71 (71153); no further entries in the USAF Assignment Records
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Service history: a photo of E-Flight C-130E "787" taken by Chris O. Buswell between 1971 and 1973 can be found at the site http://www.spectrumwd.com/c130/image2/c130_590.jpg; flown by Air America into Laos since 1 July 71 under contract AID-439-342 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 January 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); on 1 July 72, contract AID-439-342 became part of contract F04606-71-C-0002 (Price negotiations for 1973, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F6); listed as assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 and based at

Udorn at least 16-30 April 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14), 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.Circulars of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C), 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.Circulars of 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); all known F.O.C.s of 1973 note: "Up to 2 aircraft provided for daily operations", and all known F.O.C.s of 1974 note: "One basic aircraft provided for daily operations"; flown into Laos at least between 5 July 72 and 26 March 74 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6); flew Udorn (T-08) - Long Tieng (LS-20A) - Vientiane (L-08) for ASB-044 on 2 August 72, and then, the same day, shuttles between Vientiane (L-08) - Long Tieng (LS-20A) and drop zone Alpha, before it returned to Udorn (T-08) (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 2 Aug. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 28 Aug. 72, "787" crewed by Messrs. Seigrist, Hoff, Bond, Lechtman, Cordova and Fiend, flew arms shuttles out of Udorn as directed by *Peppergrinder* (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 28 Aug. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 13, 14, and 15 Sept. 72, "787" again flew arms out of Udorn as directed by *Peppergrinder*, and again on 3 and 4 October 72 (Vientiane daily flight schedules of 13, 14, and 15 Sept. 72 and of 3 and 4 Oct. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 5 October 72, C-130E "787" apparently shuttled Hmong or Lao troops for ASB-044 between Pitsanulok (T-01) and Pakse (L-11), with centerline seats installed, before returning to Udorn (T-08) (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 5 Oct. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 7 October 72, "787" flew out of Udorn (T-08), first as directed by ASB-044, then by *Peppergrinder* (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 7 Oct. 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); on 9 November 72, "787" shuttled arms out of Udorn as directed by *Peppergrinder* (Vientiane daily flight schedule as of 9 November 72, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7); flew Udorn (T-08) - Pakse (L-11) on 12 December 72 for Air America (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); on 23 August 73, an Air America crew consisting of Messrs. Seigrist, Melich, Houston, Walter, Bonessa and Seymour, flew "787" from Udorn (T-08) to Long Tieng (LS-20A) and back to Vientiane (L-08) for ASB-044, then again to Long Tieng, from where it shuttled to point "A" for ASB-035, until it returned to Udorn (T-08) the same day (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 23 August 73, in: UTD/Severson/B1F7).

Fate: returned to the USAF in 1974; in service with the 36th AS, 374th TAW (Yokota AFB, Japan) in December 95. 63-7879 Stored at AMARC CF0299 (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley)

Lockheed C-130E 63-7770 3836 March 73? USAF 63-7770; leased from 463rd TAW, Dyess AFB, Texas

Service history: used by Air America between 23 March 73 and 25 March 73 for flights into Laos (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6); probably a replacement aircraft for another Air America C-130E out for maintenance.

Fate: probably returned to the USAF in March 73; current with the 815th AS in December 96; 63-7770 stored at AMARC CF0288 (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley).

VI) Air America's L-100-20 Hercules:

In November 1968 L-100-20 Hercules N7951S was bought new from Lockheed Aircraft,³⁰ and it was immediately leased to Southern Air Transport. This aircraft was owned by Air America all the time between November 68 and February 74 and was leased to Southern Air Transport during the whole period.

Type	registration / serial	c/n (msn)	date acquired	origin
Lockheed L.100-20	N7951S	4301	20 Nov. 68	bought new

Service history: leased to Southern Air Transport, Miami, from Air America upon delivery from Lockheed on 20 November 68; registered to Air America on 4 December 68; the original lease agreement dated 15 November 68 was to last until 31 December 70; on 15 May 70, N7951S was sold to Southern Air Transport, Miami, and registered to them on 20 May 70, but on 15 June 70, this sale was annulled by mutual agreement of both parties; bought again by Air America on 20 June 70 and registered to them on 13 July 70; on 6 April 71, the lease to Southern Air Transport was extended to 31 December 71; on 30 March 71 and 18 May 71, Air America contracted with Lockheed for certain modifications of the aircraft, and on 30 August 71, the modification to L.100-30 was completed; on 28 December 71, the lease to Southern AT was extended to 31 December 72, on 29 December 72, it was extended to 31 January 73, and on 29 January 73, it was extended to 30 June 74 until sooner terminated; on 1 February 74, it was definitely sold to Southern Air Transport (Status of 5 April 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); so although owned by Air America all the time between November 68 and January 74, it was never flown by Air America, but only by Southern Air Transport.

Fate: sold to Southern Air Transport, Miami, on 1 February 74 (Minutes BoD-AAM of 19 February 74, in: UTD/CIA/B4F4; Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); deregistration was requested on 13 February 74 (Letter of SAT dated 29 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B17F1; Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 13 February 74, in: UTD/CIA/B17F3); sold by Southern to Saturn Airways as N23ST on 1 February 74; to Trans International Airlines in December 76; to Transamerica Airlines in October 79; leased to Southern Air Transport, Miami, in November 86; bought by them in March 88 and rereg. as N923SJ; current in 1996; not current in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at <http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/>); in 2009 flying for Transafrik Airlines as S9-CAV (e-mail dated 26 October 2009, kindly sent to the author by Bob Daley)

VII) Errors:

- Several publications report that there was an Air America C-130 "Graybird" serialled "636", and some even guess its identity to be "61-2636". This is an error which goes back to a photo taken in late 1972 or 1973 and published in Conboy, *War in Laos*, p. 60. The photo depicts 2 Air America Chinooks, and a tail bearing the serial "636" can be seen behind these two helicopters. The text says: "The aircraft in the background is a USAF C-130 Graybird (636), on loan to Air America". The presence of the Chinooks makes clear that the photo was taken in late 72 or in 73. At that time, all C-130s operated by Air America appeared in the Flight Operations Circulars, and there were none but the C-130Es mentioned in chapter V. But, between 1968 and 1973, Air America had C-123K "636" (c/n 20085 ex USAF 54-0636),

³⁰ Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors of Air America Inc. of 17 September 68, in: UTD/CIA/B3F6.

and this was the mysterious tail that can be seen behind the two Chinooks on that photo, creating the myth of a C-130 serialled "636".

- an Air America C-130A "625" has also been reported as seen at Long Tieng in 1971; the error goes back to my own mis-reading of a photo preserved in: UTD/Stuart (Sm. Coll. 5), where the serial was not clearly visible; a new look taken in 1998 at the original photo with a better lens showed it to be "405" (c/n 3999).

- it has been reported that Air America operated C-130Es to support Phnom Penh in 1974/5. This is an error. There was no such Air America C-130E airlift into Phnom Penh (e-mail dated 21 February 2005 kindly sent to the author by Henry Melich; e-mail dated 1 March 2005, kindly sent to the author by Jack Knotts), and the report that stated that there was one simply confused it with the C-130s operated into Phnom Penh by Bird Air.

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