

First Lockheed Martin 'Stretched' C-130J-30 For USAF Takes Shape

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Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company is assembling the first of the longer C-130J Hercules tactical airlifters being acquired by the U.S. Air Force. The USAF's newest transport aircraft has now completed "body mate" at the company's facility in Marietta.

The C-130J-30, based on the standard C-130J model, features a fuselage 180 inches longer than the standard C-130J model, providing the greater airlift capability required by many operators. When compared with the standard model, the -30 carries eight 463L pallets rather than six, 97 medical litters instead of 74, and 24 Container Delivery System bundles instead of 16. Most important, the -30 carries 128 combat troops instead of 92, and 92 paratroops instead of 64.

Lockheed Martin has already delivered several of this longer version of the C-130J, but this is the first time the U.S. military has acquired the new C-130J-30 capability. With the new engines and propeller combination on the C-130J model, there is minimal performance difference for the added cargo capacity of a C-130J-30. In fact the normal operating weight used for day-to-day C-130J-30 missions has been increased by 9,000 lb. over the standard length aircraft. The C-130J has a maximum payload capacity of over 40,000 lb.

A USAF Tiger Team last year recommended the service build its future tactical airlift force around a fleet of 150 new C-130J-30s. These would replace today's older C-130Es that were delivered in the early 1960s and are the mainstay of most of the C-130 units in the active Air Force.

The first three new C-130J-30s are under construction now for the Air Force and are scheduled to undergo operational test and evaluation next year before being delivered. In addition to the USAF, the Royal Air Force, the Royal Australian Air Force and Italian Air Force will operate the new C-130J-30.

While offering the same outstanding "unimproved" field performance as the short C-

130, the new longer J-30 will help tactical users increase the number of troops and cargo delivered by airlanding and airdropping directly to the battlefield. In fact, the Army Chief of Staff has directed that all new equipment bought to support the Army be sized to fit in a C-130.

In addition to outstanding short and dirt field performance, the C-130J-30 has the range, non-stop and unrefueled, to carry a full load of combat troops from the East Coast of the United States to Europe.

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