U.S. Marine Corps KC-130J Sets Record Performance Levels

The Lockheed Martin KC-130J Super Hercules transport tankers operated by the United States Marine Corps in Iraq reported a record level of performance for the month of May.

With over 4,275 sorties completed, these six Marine Corps KC-130Js tankers have transported nearly 9.8 million pounds of cargo, more than 25,400 passengers and have off-loaded more than 46.8 million pounds of fuel. In May, the tanker crews achieved the highest month marks for performance:

* Completing over 318 Sorties
* Logging over 636 flight hours
* Offloading over 5.3 million pounds of fuel

The KC-130Js are deployed from squadrons at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point, N.C. and MCAS Miramar, Calif. and have flown over 8,400 hours since arriving in theater in February 2005.

"The KC-130J is yet another member of the C-130J aircraft line that is demonstrating high operational successes in both Iraq and Afghanistan," says David Haynes, Lockheed Martin C-130 programs vice president. "We are seeing nothing but good news out of theater from both the tankers and the U.S. Air Force combat delivery C-130Js. International operators are all seeing the tremendous value the C-130J brings to airlift operations."

Lockheed Martin recently submitted a proposal for the U.S. Army/Air Force Joint Cargo Aircraft program based on the short-fuselage version of the C- 130J, an airframe similar to the one flown by the Marine Corps. Performance statistics such as those reported by the Marine Corps clearly show the capability of the C-130J to operate in austere environments reliably and effectively. A short version of the C-130J meets all the operational requirements set out in the JCA request for proposal.

The KC-130J aerial refueler is the world's most advanced tactical tanker in terms of operational capability, versatility and cost-effective functionality. The KC-130J is in production for the Marine Corps and is available to international customers, as well. Key enhancements of the KC- 130J over previous models include increased performance, survivability and ground safety enhancements, digital technology, improved operational effectiveness and reductions in personnel and maintenance costs.

Using only wing and external tanks, the KC-130J has a 57,500-pound (8,455 U.S. gallons) fuel offload capability while performing a 500-nautical mile radius mission, compared with 38,000 pounds (5,588 U.S. gallons) for the current fleet of KC-130Fs. The KC-130J is also configured to accept a fuselage tank, adding another 24,392 pounds (3,600 U.S. gallons) of available fuel offload to a mission. The standard probe-and-drogue configuration on the KC-130J is suited for helicopters and jet aircraft. Provisions for its own refueling probe provide the KC-130J with even greater flexibility.

A total of 182 C-130Js are on order, and 139 have been delivered to date. Thirty-four KC-130Js have been ordered, of which 21 have been delivered. In addition to the United States Marine Corps, Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard units fly C-130Js and the Coast Guard flies the HC-130J, which saw extensive service during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita relief efforts. International C-130J operators include the Royal Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force, Italian Air Force and the Royal Danish Air Force.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2005 sales of $37.2 billion.

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