Lockheed Martin Salutes South African Air Force For 50 Years Of C-130 Hercules Operations

MARIETTA, Ga., June 3, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Lockheed Martin [NYSE: LMT] officials joined members of the South African Air Force (SAAF) in commemorating 50 years of continuous C-130 Hercules transport operations during an event near Pretoria, South Africa on June 1.

In 1963, a new era of transport operations began in South Africa with the arrival of the original fleet of seven SAAF C-130B Hercules aircraft. Members of the SAAF's 28 Squadron (which also celebrated its 70th anniversary on June 1) ferried the new C-130s from the-then Lockheed-Georgia Co., facility in Marietta, Ga., (USA) to Air Force Base Waterkloof, near Pretoria and is where the SAAF C-130 fleet is stationed today.

South Africa has the distinction of being the fifth international operator of the C-130 Hercules, which is now operated by 70 nations worldwide. All seven original C-130Bs have been extensively revamped and are part of 28 Squadron's active Hercules fleet.

"The C-130 Hercules is known worldwide as a proven workhorse. Missions carried out by operators such as the South African Air Force and 28 Squadron have earned the Hercules this reputation," said George Shultz, vice president and general manager, C-130 Programs. "In its first 50 years of C-130 operations, the SAAF showcased the renowned capabilities of the C-130 within the borders of South Africa and beyond to support needs across the continent. We are proud to have South Africa as a member of the C-130 family and look forward to future decades of partnership and collaboration."

Missions supported by the SAAF C-130B fleet throughout the past 50 years include humanitarian, peacekeeping, transport, supply drop, search and rescue, anti-piracy and diplomatic missions. Lockheed Martin partners with the SAAF and Denel, South Africa's largest defense manufacturer. In 2009, Denel was named as the only authorized Lockheed Martin C-130 Hercules Service Center in Africa and provides integral support the SAAF Hercules fleet.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs about 118,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation's net sales for 2012 were $47.2 billion.

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