

# C-130 Hercules 70 Years Strong and Growing



A KC-130J Super Hercules, assigned to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, flies during a training exercise. The Hercules is celebrating 70 years and counting since its inception in 1954. Today, the C-130 Hercules is used in over 70 countries with more than a million flight hours and growing. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)

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PATUXENT RIVER, Md.—The ever-enduring C-130 Hercules celebrated 70 years of unwavering service last year. Since its inception in 1954, the Hercules continues to be used in over 70 countries with more than a million flight hours and growing.

Seven decades ago, the C-130 had an original usage as a medium cargo plane able to land in short, confined runways. As the mission and needs of the fleet changed, the aircraft moved

into providing tactical airlift, humanitarian aid, air support, and various mission support across the globe.

The C-130 has had over 70 variants, 15 of which are actively being produced by Lockheed Martin today, and is distinguished by having the longest continuous military aircraft production run in history. From aerial command centers to weather observation and, occasionally, an aerial drone carrier, the Hercules meets the needs of the fleet. The C-130 has lent its services to nearly every mission capability needed for military or civilian application.

The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps employ multiple variants to provide assault and logistics support, including the KC-130J “Super” Hercules. This “super” plane includes the troops and cargo transport capabilities of other C-130 variants and adds air-to-air refueling capability for helicopter, fixed wing, and tilt-rotor receiver aircraft to its mission.

One standout variant is the C-130J assigned to the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron. Affectionally named [Fat Albert, the C-130](#) made its Blue Angels debut in 1970 and continues to fly alongside F/A-18E Super Hornets in airshows around the world.

The C-130 is responsible for supplying mission critical troops and materials in every American military conflict since the mid-20th century. This stellar aircraft can deliver a variety of airlift support, including parachute or ground delivered combat troops or cargo, such as vehicles, supplies, and evacuation support.

“There is no more versatile aircraft than the C-130,” said Col. Steven Puckett, program manager Tactical Airlift Program Office (PMA-207). “As a C-130 pilot and now the program manager for Navy and Marine Corps variants of the platform, maintaining the combat relevance and reliability of this critical logistics support aircraft is my organization’s

highest priority.”

Tactical Airlift Program Office manages the cradle to grave procurement, development, support, fielding and disposal of the Navy’s tactical airlift platforms, including the C-130.