

The True Story of the C-27A DID YOU KNOW?

Service in the United States Air Force

- 10 C-27As were procured as G222s by Chrysler Technologies—now L-3 Integrated Systems—in Waco, TX in 1990 & 1991 and modified to C-27A configuration for delivery to the United States Air Force.
- These aircraft were based at Howard Air Force Base in Panama and operated by SOUTHCOM.
- The mission of the C-27As was to provide Forward Operating Base (FOB) support for SOUTHCOM interests in the Central and South American theatre and supported counter narcotics efforts in cooperation with allies in the region including Columbia and Peru.
- The C-27A was instrumental in supporting the United Nations Military Observer Mission to Ecuador and Peru (MOMEP) which resolved a long standing border conflict between Ecuador and Peru that had been ongoing since 1941. The C-27A was the only fixed wing aircraft in theatre able to land at many of the unprepared, short strips in the region.
- The C-27A was invaluable to the U.S. Air Force. The C-27A provided much needed operational capability in austere conditions and short runways many of which litter the Panamanian country side. Without the C-27A, the USAF would not have been able to support missions in a significant portion of the countryside.
- With the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Panama the C-27As were retired.
- The C-27A achieved an average mission capable rate of 99.44% and a 99.2% departure reliability rate during its last year of service—when they had accumulated the most hours—with the USAF.

Where are the C-27As now?

- The U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs currently operates 4 C-27As out of Patrick Air Force Bases in Florida. These aircraft are used in support of counter drug activities in South America. Each month these aircraft contribute to the drug war by transporting on average 2,000 persons and over 400,000 lbs. through-out Columbia.

Differences between the C-27A and the C-27J

The C-27A is a 30 year old platform equipped with equally old technology. It served the USAF well and is continuing to serve with the State Department. The C-27J is the newest generation of military airlifter in the world. The C-27J is not a prototype aircraft. It has a military certified 25 year service life and the aircraft is civil and military certified. To demonstrate this point, here are a few of the areas where significant modifications and technology infusions have been made:

- *Landing Gear:*
The landing gear on the C-27J is 3 times more robust than the C-27A. The gear was designed specifically for the C-27J. The landing gear is civil and military certified.
- *Engines:*
The C-27J uses state-of-the-art Rolls Royce AE2100 D2 engines. It is the most powerful engine in its class and is from the same family of engines used on the C-130J. There is no commonality with the C-27A. The engines are civil and military certified.
- *Avionics:*
The avionics suite was developed based on the C-130J and uses 2/3rds of the same software code. The result is a highly reliable and mature avionics suite with significant commonality to other cockpits in the U.S. military. The avionics are civil and military certified.
- *Structure:*
The C-27J airframe is based on C-27A with significant structural enhancement to increase its payload capacity and ruggedness. It is a robust, military designed airframe with a 3 spar wing and tail. The C-27J is certified for a 25 year service life—the only military aircraft in its class with such a certification. The structure is civil and military certified.
 - The C-27A and its international sister the G-222 have not suffered any accidents or significant reductions in fleet availability due to structural design or manufacturing failures.