

DOCUMENT RESUME

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[Procurement of Maintenance for VC-131H Aircraft]. B-169217; PSAD-77-56. December 20, 1976. 3 pp.

Report to Secretary, Department of the Air Force; by Richard W. Gutmann, Director, Procurement and Systems Acquisition Div.

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Routine instead of special maintenance and repainting on four aircraft was suggested as a way to save about \$635,000 in aircraft maintenance funds. As part of the Special Air Mission fleet to provide transportation for Government officials, including members of the President's cabinet, four VC-131H turboprop aircraft were given special maintenance that was more costly than the routine maintenance normally provided to Air Force C-131 aircraft. In January, 1975, these four aircraft were reassigned from the Special Air Mission Squadron to the Military Airlift Command where they are used for routine transportation and training flights. Although the four aircraft are no longer part of the Special Air Mission fleet, it is still planned to have the more costly maintenance performed on them. Findings/Conclusions: The costs of special maintenance and repainting aircraft exceeds routine maintenance and repainting by \$158,750 per aircraft. The costly repainting appears to be only for cosmetic reasons. Recommendations: The Air Force Logistics Command should revise the maintenance plan in order to obtain routine rather than special maintenance and reduce the costs associated with special painting of the Special Air Mission fleet. (RBS)

01109



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

PROCUREMENT AND SYSTEMS
ACQUISITION DIVISION

B-169217

DEC 20 1976

The Honorable
The Secretary of the Air Force

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are bringing to your attention a situation that we believe offers an opportunity to save about \$635,000 in aircraft maintenance funds. The savings can be achieved if routine, instead of special, maintenance and repainting are performed on four aircraft discussed below. The routine maintenance is the same as that performed on the majority of aircraft in the Military Airlift Command and meets safety-of-flight requirements.

Four VC-131H turboprop aircraft are currently assigned to the 1402nd Military Airlift Squadron at Andrews Air Force Base. These aircraft had previously been assigned to the Special Air Missions fleet to provide transportation for high ranking Government officials including members of the President's cabinet. As part of that fleet, the aircraft were given special maintenance that is more costly than the routine maintenance normally provided Air Force C-131 aircraft.

In January 1975, at the direction of the Air Force Chief of Staff, the four aircraft were reassigned from the Special Air Mission Squadron to the Military Airlift Command. We reviewed the actual usage of these aircraft over the past several months and found that the aircraft are generally being used for routine transportation and training flights.

Although these aircraft are neither a part of the Special Air Mission fleet nor used to transport high ranking officials, it is still planned to have more costly maintenance performed on them rather than the normal maintenance routinely performed on other Air Force C-131 aircraft. Three of the aircraft are scheduled for maintenance in fiscal year 1977 and one in fiscal year 1978.

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In addition, the four aircraft are scheduled for repainting while undergoing special maintenance. In April 1976, a qualified paint corrosion inspector examined the painted surfaces of the aircraft at the request of the San Antonio Air Logistics Center. He reported that the existing paint provided an adequate protective coating and was in good condition. The inspector concluded that repainting had been requested merely because the paint was faded and the aircraft looked inferior as compared with Special Air Mission aircraft.

The Director of Material Management, San Antonio Air Logistics Center, subsequently notified the Air Force Logistics Command that while the aircraft did not meet the Air Force technical criteria for repainting, they probably should be repainted for appearance sake. Subsequently, in June 1976, the Air Force Logistics Command waived its technical criteria and approved repainting the aircraft by the special maintenance contractor.

A comparison of the costs of maintenance and repainting for each Special Air Mission aircraft with costs for similar work on other Air Force C-131 aircraft follows:

	<u>Cost of special maintenance</u>	<u>Cost of routine maintenance</u>	<u>Potential savings</u>
Maintenance	\$159,600	\$36,126	\$123,474
Repainting	<u>42,193</u>	<u>6,917 1/</u>	<u>35,276</u>
Total	<u>\$201,793</u>	<u>\$43,043</u>	<u>\$158,750</u>

The comparison indicates that the costs of special maintenance and repainting aircraft exceed routine maintenance and repainting by \$158,750 each, or a total of \$635,000 for the four aircraft.

We have also observed, in connection with other ongoing work, what might be considered unnecessary repainting of the aircraft still in the Special Air

1/ C-131 aircraft, transferred to the Coast Guard from the Air Force, are completely repainted at this cost.

Missions fleet. The costly repainting appears to be only for cosmetic reasons.

We do not believe the decision to have special maintenance and repainting performed on the four VC-131Bs is justified. We recommend, therefore, that you direct the Air Force Logistics Command to revise its maintenance plan in order to obtain routine rather than special maintenance and repainting. We also recommend that you consider what appropriate actions ought to be taken in order to reduce costs associated with cosmetic repainting of the Special Air Missions fleet.

As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions taken on our recommendations to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations not later than 60 days after the date of the report and to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report.

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget, the Secretary of Defense, and interested congressional committees.

Sincerely yours,



R. W. Gutmann
Director