

COMMITMENT





Hercules C-130 XV177 landing at Cambridge Airport on 19th December 1966



Royal Air Force Hercules C-130J aircraft in service



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Marshall Aerospace and Defence Group celebrates fifty years of supporting the Royal Air Force's C-130 fleet.

The RAF's first Hercules C-130s flew in 1966 and entered service with 242 OCU at RAF Thorney Island the following year. Throughout their service career, the RAF Hercules aircraft have been ever-present on operations, performing vital roles both in the UK and overseas. Air Cdre Steve Lushington, Royal Air Force's Air Mobility Force Commander, commented: "The C-130 has been the mainstay of the Royal Air Force's air transport fleet for five decades."

The RAF currently has 24 Hercules C-130 air transporters, a fleet which is maintained under the Hercules Integrated Operational Support (HIOS) programme which is a highly effective, risk-reducing and incentivised partnership between the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD), Marshall Aerospace and Defence Group, Lockheed Martin and Rolls-Royce. The programme debuted in 2006 and focusses on meeting the RAF's immediate and long-term operational capabilities through maintenance and upgrades to improve front line availability.

"Marshall Aerospace and Defence Group's engineering and fleet management roles have been fundamental in helping the Royal Air Force deliver this important air transport capability," continued Air Cdre Steve Lushington. "Working together, the RAF and Marshall have ensured the RAF's C-130 Hercules aircraft remain at the centre of the Service's global air transport capability. Marshall has always risen to the technical and logistical challenges. It is a tried and tested partnership worthy of the highest praise."

During the last five decades, Marshall has worked on more than 90 C-130s for the RAF, performing both standard and deep maintenance, as well as special mission modifications. In addition, Marshall's relationship with the RAF's forbear, the Royal Flying Corps, dates back to 1912.

Marshall's C-130 engineering and project management skills were demonstrated in 2013, when the company quickly returned to service five aircraft based at Kandahar, Afghanistan, when they suffered severe hailstone damage. In recognition of the rapid response, the RAF awarded Marshall a Chief of the Air Staff's Commendation.

George Shultz, Vice President & General Manager, Air Mobility & Maritime Missions, Lockheed Martin, said: "The C-130 Hercules is truly an unmatched global asset for military and commercial operators alike. As such, it requires a worldwide network of trusted partners to deliver proven fleet support. For 50 years, Marshall has been the very definition of such a trusted partner — for the Royal Air Force, Lockheed Martin and many Hercules operators around the world. We are proud to celebrate Marshall's contributions to the entire Hercules community and look forward to many more decades of partnership with the Marshall team."

Marshall has supported the C-130 in 33 countries for 52 customers, and has worked on more than 300 aircraft.

Commenting in 2016, the 50th anniversary of supporting the RAF's C-130 fleet as well as the 10th anniversary of HIOS, Steve Fitz-Gerald, CEO of Marshall Aerospace and Defence Group, noted: "It is incredible to think that our first engagement with the RAF in relation to its C-130 fleet was back in 1966, and we look forward to continuing the partnership to provide the highest levels of availability, affordability and innovation. I would also like to thank our dedicated employees and suppliers for their continued support, and in helping Marshall achieve such an incredible milestone."

Marshall was the first authorised C-130B-H service centre in the world, and it is the only European centre authorised to service C-130J variants. It is Marshall's reputation of support for the RAF which has led to the company also supporting 10 other air forces around the world; an export capability that was a contributing factor to the company winning a 2016 Queen's Award for International Trade.

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