Two Boeing C-17s Prime Globemaster III Fleet in the Northwest

The U.S. Air Force accepted its 51st and 52nd Boeing C-17 Globemaster III cargo airplanes in a brief ceremony here today. Gen. Charles T. "Tony" Robertson Jr., Commander of the U.S. Air Force Air Mobility Command, then flew C-17 aircraft number 52, named "The Spirit of McChord" to a waiting audience of well-wishers at McChord Air Force Base, Wash. Aircraft number P-51 arrived a few moments later at the C-17 fleet's newest home.

The event marked the 39th and 40th consecutive C-17s delivered ahead of schedule by Boeing Airlift and Tanker Programs, recipient of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Boeing President and Chief Operating Officer Harry Stonecipher joined state and local dignitaries on hand in Tacoma, Wash., for the arrival and dedication of the aircraft.

The two C-17s also are the first in the U.S. Air Force fleet with the lightweight composite horizontal stabilizer. The new tail weighs nearly 500 pounds less than the more complex aluminum structure it replaces and represents a 20 percent cost savings.

The Globemaster III continues to be the U. S. airlifter of choice. More than 1,100 C-17 missions have been flown in support of Operation Allied Force and on-going efforts in Kosovo, transporting more than 100 million pounds of cargo.

McChord will continue to receive a new C-17 about once a month until the full complement of 48 has been delivered.

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