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The Airlift Instructor School

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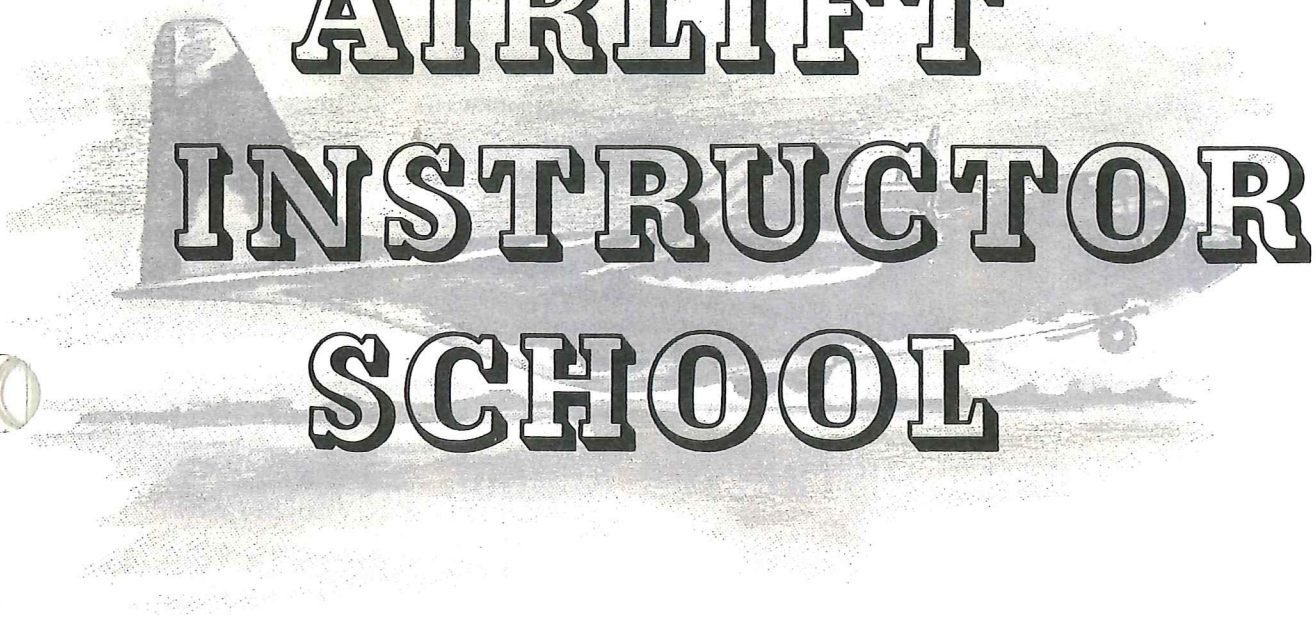
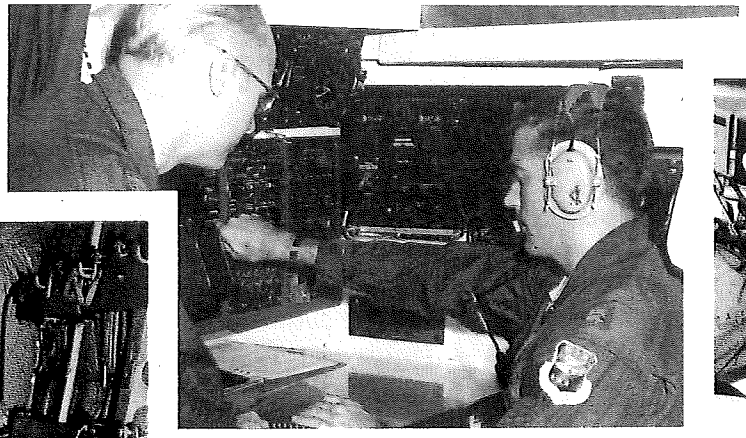
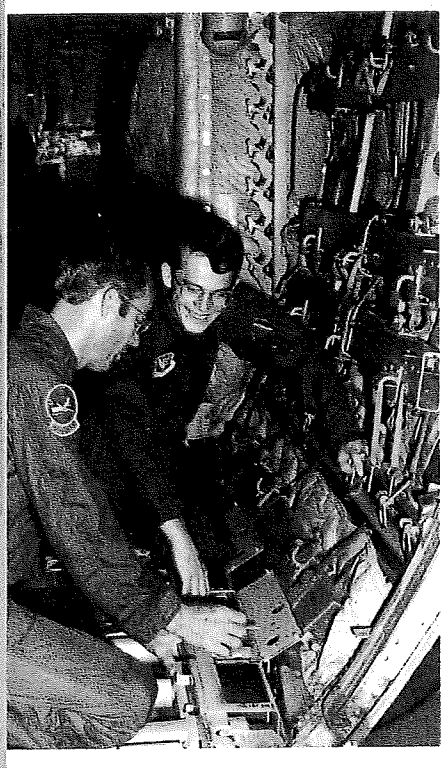
THE AIRLIFT INSTRUCTOR SCHOOL

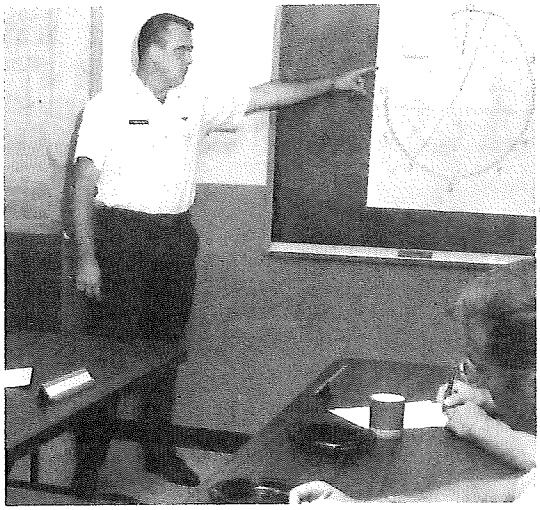


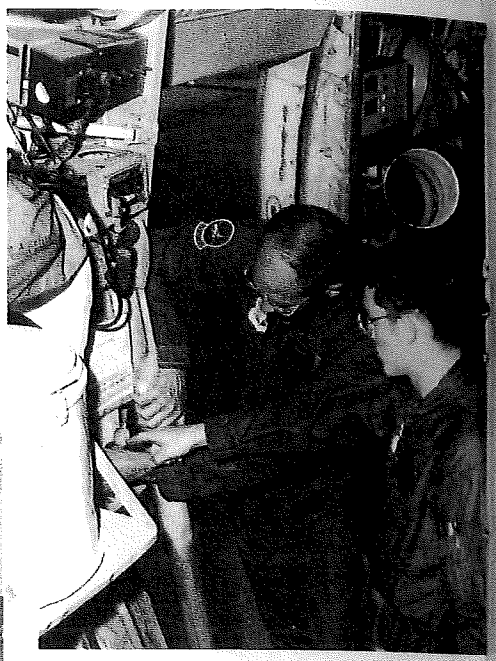
When you wander back through the history of TAC's long association with the C-130 Hercules, it gives one the impression that he's actually looking at the barometer of reaction by the United States to incidents of civil strife, natural disaster, and world crises. In many ways one can even judge the depth of national policy commitment by counting the number of C-130s that were called to the [illegible]e, be it internal or international. And rightly so. There [illegible]no airplane anywhere, in its category, that is as flexible as the Hercules. After all, how many airplanes can be loaded with 30,000 pounds of assorted cargo, flown for 3000 miles, then landed on a 3000 foot dirt strip?

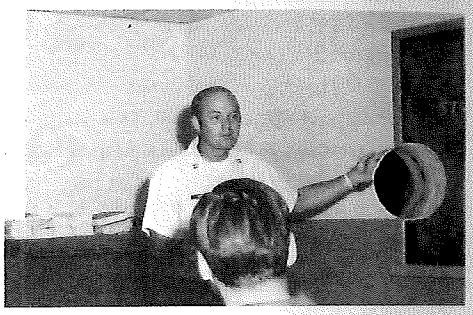
Of course, as with other things, the C-130 has changed through the years. We've seen it go from Roman-nosed, three-bladed prop A model to the longer legged E model identified by its four-bladed props and large external fuel tanks. We've seen the gross weight increase from 124,000 and 135,000 to 155,000 and even to 175,000 pounds. We've seen it grow skis, sprout whiskers, bristle with guns, drop bombs, carry and launch other airmachines, and act as an airborne command post. We've seen the people flying the machine go from rosy-cheeked lieutenants and captains to sage-old lieutenant colonels and majors and back to lieutenants and captains again. We've seen airdrop tactics move from the WW II "V" formation to the more flexible "in-trail" formation. We've seen the introduction of the Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System (AWADS) which will call for even more changes in tactics. And we've seen pilots progress from the right seat to the left seat, then back to the right seat again as instructors. We've seen navigators, flight engineers, and loadmasters increase











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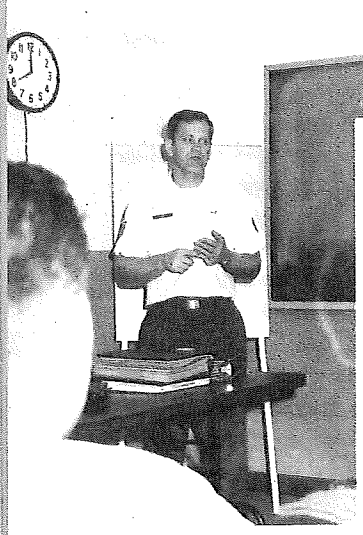

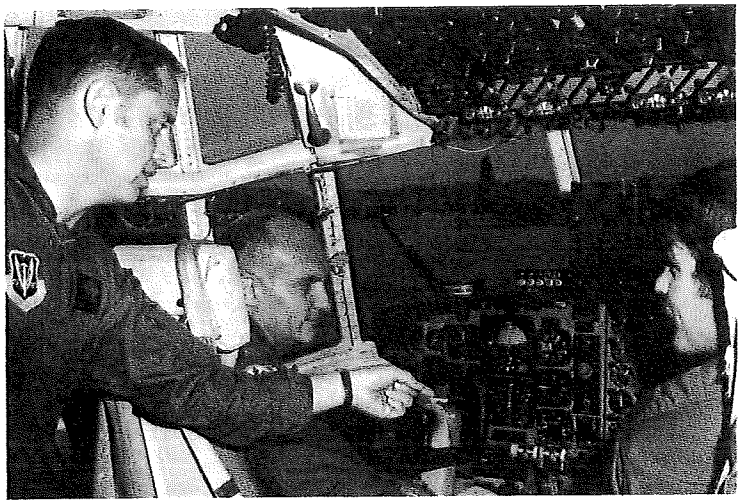

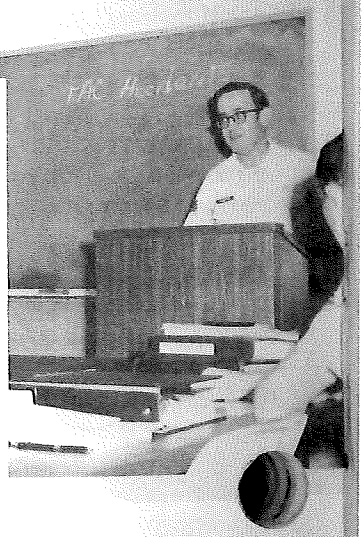

their knowledge and proficiency and thus attain instructor status. But there's one thing we haven't seen . . . a TAC Airlift Instructor School. That is, up until this year.

Now, out at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, just such a school has been organized. Eventually the school will train instructors for all crew positions; however, at the present time only pilots and flight engineers are receiving the full course (ground school and flying). As a matter of record,

school attendance is now mandatory for those upgrading to Instructor Pilot (IP) and Instructor Flight Engineer (IFE). TAC airlift units can no longer upgrade pilots and flight engineers to instructor status within their unit. Exception to this policy can be granted through TAC DOL (Director of Airlift). It's a different story for instructor navigator and instructor loadmaster candidates. Currently, navigators and loadmasters are receiving only ground school; however, along about January 1973, they too will receive flying training and it is anticipated that at that time similar restrictions concerning unit upgrading will apply.

THE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Picture a dimly lit classroom with papers strewn about, ashtrays bulging, and a quivering mass of students fidgeting in their seats while nervously awaiting the arrival of the airlift deity, the INSTRUCTOR. The door bursts open and in strides the INSTRUCTOR with a mangled rum crook jutting from the seasoned face. He steps behind the lecturn, gazes with disgust over the assemblage of lowly students, slowly removes the pulpy cigar from his mouth, belches once, then begins. "All right, I'm gonna tell you what I'm gonna tell you and if you get it, you'll be able to pass the stan/eval test. If you blow the test, it'll be for one of two reasons. Number one: you didn't listen; number two: you didn't study. If you got any questions, save them till the end of my pitch and if I can't answer the question, then you don't need to know it. Any questions?"

Of course this is an obvious exaggeration of the traditional instructor and is not representative of the new school. The example is used to point out that in the past, instructional efforts have revolved around the instructor as the center of learning. Today, while the classrooms appear to be conventional and the ashtrays may still overflow occasionally, the training philosophy has gone through a complete (and needed) change. The traditional training philosophy has been replaced by a new approach called Instructional Systems Development (ISD) which focuses on the student as the center of learning. It removes the instructor from his ivory tower position of dictatorial information dispenser and instead integrates him into the learning situation as a guide and manager. It also removes the student from the barrage of fast flowing facts which, traditionally, he has had to absorb by osmosis and instead thrusts him into the learning environment as a participator.

The school instructors are a group of dedicated, aggressive men who apply the ISD approach both in the classroom and the airplane. Their purpose is to train the instructor candidates, using the ISD approach, so that the graduate can apply the learned principles in his future instructional efforts. Thus, the primary objective of the school is to teach the instructor candidates HOW to teach rather than what to teach.

THE PROGRAM

The first few classes to attend the new school were composed of previously qualified instructors. Their attendance was necessary in order to get quality feedback concerning course content, course goals, and methods of instruction. Many of these instructors' ideas were adopted and incorporated into the syllabus.

As stated previously, the primary objective of the instructor school is to teach the instructor candidate how to teach. Not a great amount of time is spent on advancing the attendee's knowledge of aircraft systems. When the unit wing commander selects a man to attend the course, he is selecting the best qualified individual who should already have a detailed knowledge of aircraft systems. It's important to note, however, that during the course of instruction, the attendee will conduct practice teaching sessions on aircraft systems. In this manner, the instructor candidate gains a measure of additional system knowledge.

THE COURSE

The length of the course for all crew positions is 17 training days (approximately 23 calendar days). This includes 8 classroom training days plus various other academic, mock up, or instrument trainer sessions that vary according to crew position. In the flying phase, pilots and engineers will get five flights plus a stan/eval check ride (30 hours); navigators will get three rides (20 hours) plus a lead flight check (5 hours) and an instructor flight check (5 hours). Loadmasters will receive three instructional flights plus a check ride (20 hours).

SUMMARY

The Airlift Instructor School has been the goal of many people for a long time. With the overall experience level of airlift pilots decreasing, the school represents a repository of knowledge that will be vital in maintaining a well informed and highly qualified instructor force. Additionally the school offers the bright prospect of eliminating the burden of instructor upgrade training within primary mission squadrons and, without a doubt, its future contributions to instructor standardization within the airlift fleet will be long reaching. Better standardization means a better safety posture. All TAC airlift will benefit.