

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE RESERVE

FACT SHEET

919TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING (AFRES)
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AC-130A GUNSHIP

The AC-130A Hercules gunship is a modified C-130 aircraft configured as a side-firing weapons system.

Armament capability includes two 7.62mm mini-guns two 20mm Vulcan cannons and two 40mm Bofur cannons.

Firepower capabilities are 3,000 rounds per minute for each 7.62mm mini-gun; 2,500 rounds per minute for each 20mm cannon; and 100 rounds per minute for each 40mm cannon. Target detection is provided by electronic, radar, infrared and optical sensors.

The gunship carries its own defensive systems including electronic countermeasures, chaff and flares. The flares and a 2,000-watt illuminator are carried to illuminate target areas at night.

There are 14 crew positions on the AC-130A: pilot, co-pilot, navigator, flight engineer, fire control officer, electronic warfare officer, two sensor operators, illuminator operator and five gunners.

EVOLUTION OF THE GUNSHIP

Gunships were developed during the Vietnam/Southeast Asia Conflict, in the late 1960's, primarily as a close air support weapons system and ground vehicle interdiction weapon. Forerunners of the AC-130 gunships included the AC-47 (Spooky) and AC-119 (Shadow) aircraft. AC-130 gunships are nicknamed "Spectre".

As the gunship evolved into the present-day sophistication, it also became useful in armed interdiction and reconnaissance, armed escort, forward air control and search-and-rescue operations. Close air support remains the primary mission of the aircraft.

The 919th Special Operations Wing's 711th Special Operations Squadron, Air Force Reserve, at Eglin AFB Field 3 (Duke Field) is the only AFRES unit flying AC-130 gunships and the only unit, active duty or Reserve, owning and flying A-Model Hercules gun ships. The 16th Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Fla. flies updated versions of "Spectre," the gunship.

SPECIFICATIONS

Prime Contractor.....Lockheed Aircraft Corporation
Powerplant.....Four Allison T56-A-9 turbo prop engines
Wing Span.....132 feet, 7 inches
Length.....97 feet, 9 inches
Height.....38 feet, 4 inches
Speed.....250 mph (varies with load)
Range.....1,400 miles
Gross Takeoff Weight.....124,200 lbs

(Current as of 25 Aug 1995)