

FACT SHEET

VC-25A – “Air Force One”



Mission

The mission of the VC-25A aircraft -- Air Force One -- is to provide air transport for the President of the United States.

Features

The Presidential air transport fleet consists of two specially configured Boeing 747-200B's -- tail numbers 28000 and 29000 -- with the Air Force designation VC-25A. When the President is aboard either aircraft, or any Air Force aircraft, the radio call sign is "Air Force One."

Principal differences between the VC-25A and a standard Boeing 747, other than passenger capacity are the electronic and communications equipment, its interior configuration and furnishings, self-contained baggage loader, front and aft air-stairs, and the capability for in-flight refueling.

Accommodations for the President include an executive suite consisting of a stateroom (with dressing room, lavatory and shower) and the President's office. A conference/dining room is also available for the President, the First Family and staff. Other separate accommodations are provided for guests of the President, senior staff, Secret Service and security personnel, and news media representatives.

Two galleys provide up to 100 meals at one sitting. Six passenger lavatories, including disabled access facilities, are provided as well as a rest area and mini-galley for the aircrew. The VC-25A also has a compartment outfitted with life-saving equipment and supplies for medical emergencies.

The aircraft are flown and maintained by the Presidential Airlift Group and are assigned to Air Mobility Command's 89th Airlift Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland.

Background

Presidential air transport began in 1944 when a VC-54, nicknamed the "Sacred Cow," was put into service for Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt. President Roosevelt's successor, President Harry S. Truman, used the aircraft extensively during the first 27 months of his administration. On July 26, 1947, President Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947 on board the Sacred Cow. This act established the US Air Force as an independent service, making the Sacred Cow the "birthplace" of the US Air Force. Then came a VC-118, nicknamed the "Independence," which transported President Harry S. Truman during the period 1947 to 1953. It was nicknamed "Independence" after President Truman's hometown, Independence, Missouri. President Dwight D. Eisenhower traveled aboard a VC-121A and VC-121E, both nicknamed "Columbine II" and "Columbine III", from 1953 to 1961. These two aircraft were named after the official state flower of Colorado in honor of Mrs. Eisenhower's home state. While the call sign "Air Force One" was first used in the 50s, President Kennedy's VC-137 was the first aircraft to be popularly known as "Air Force One."

In 1962, a VC-137C specifically purchased for use as Air Force One, entered into service with the tail number 26000. It is perhaps the most widely known and most historically significant presidential aircraft. Tail number 26000 is the aircraft that carried President Kennedy to Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963, and returned the body to Washington, D.C., following his assassination. Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn into office as the 36th president on board the aircraft at Love Field in Dallas. In 1972 President Richard M. Nixon made historic visits aboard 26000 to the People's Republic of China and to the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Tail number 27000 replaced 26000 in 1990 and carved its own history when it was used to fly Presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter to Cairo, Egypt, Oct. 19, 1981, to represent the United States at the funeral of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

The first VC-25A -- tail number 28000 -- flew as "Air Force One" on Sept. 6, 1990, when it

transported President George Bush to Kansas, Florida and back to Washington, D.C. A second VC-25A, tail number 29000 transported Presidents Clinton, Carter and Bush to Israel for the funeral of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Tail number 29000 also carved its name in history on Sep 11, 2001, when President George W. Bush was interrupted as he attended an event at Emma E. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Florida, after the attack on the World Trade Center South Tower in New York City. The aircrew safely returned the President and staff members back to Washington, D.C. despite increased threats.

On March 23, 2016, tail number 28000 had the honor of transporting President Barrack H. Obama on a historic trip to Cuba. It was the first visit by a sitting U.S. president since President Calvin Coolidge in 1928.

Today, these aircrafts are operated and maintained by the Presidential Airlift Group, and are assigned to Air Mobility Command's 89th Airlift Wing located at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. The VC-25A continues the unique mission of presidential travel, upholding the proud tradition and distinction of being known as "Air Force One."

General Characteristics

Contractor: Boeing Airplane Co.

Power Plant: Four General Electric CF6-80C2B1 turbofan jet engines

Thrust: 56,700 pounds, each engine

Length: 231 feet, 10 inches (70.7 meters)

Height: 63 feet, 5 inches (19.3 meters)

Wingspan: 195 feet, 8 inches (59.6 meters)

Speed: 630 miles per hour (Mach 0.92)

Ceiling: 45,100 feet (13,746 meters)

Maximum Takeoff Weight: 833,000 pounds (374,850 kilograms)

Range: 7,800 statute miles (6,800 nautical miles) (12,550 kilometers)

Crew: 30

Passengers: 71

Introduction Date: Aug. 23, 1990 (No. 28000); Dec. 28, 1990 (No. 29000)

Date Deployed: Sept. 6, 1990 (No. 28000); Mar. 26, 1991 (No. 29000)