

109 Airlift Wing LC-130 Ski-Hercules Polar Airlift Support

What is it?

- The 109AW operates 10 special capable LC-130 ski-equipped Hercules aircraft to perform wartime polar airlift tasking
- Largest ski-equipped aircraft in the world
- Deploys annually to support National Science Foundation (NSF) Office of Polar Programs (OPP)
- Provides the only ski-equipped tactical transport capability in the military
- Can operate from prepared and unprepared snow fields, floating ice sheets glaciers, and traditional airfields

What has the Air National Guard done?

- Up to seven LC-130 aircraft and 140 personnel deploy annually from October through February to McMurdo Station Antarctica as part of Joint Task Force / Support Forces Antarctica (JTF/SFA) Operation Deep Freeze. The 109AW airlifts approximately 10 million lbs of cargo & fuel, and 2400 personnel each Antarctic season to/from the South Pole Station and numerous remote field camps
- Three LC-130 aircraft and 50 personnel forward operate from Kangerlussuaq (Old Sondrestrom AB), Greenland from April to August each year to support U.S. and European science camps on the Greenland ice sheet. Typically, 2.5 million pounds of cargo & fuel and 2000+ personnel are moved each season. This 109AW Arctic mission began in 1975 with the construction/ support of the Distant Early Warning radar sites across Greenland and the High Arctic
- Lead unit for the development and implementation of the 8 blade NP-2000 propeller
- Development of the Crevasse Detection Radar (CDR) System and External Science Pod
- In addition to polar airlift LC-130 operations the 109AW supports overseas contingency operations with combat coded C-130 tactical aircraft.
- The 109AW also provides aero-medical evacuation crews and numerous other mission critical personnel to the combatant commander.

What continued efforts have the Air National Guard planned for the future?

- Annual support of the U.S. NSF/OPP and other countries in Antarctica and Greenland
- Evolve unique Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for polar tactical airlift operations
- Provide specialized polar tactical airlift to joint military customers

Why is this important to the Air National Guard?

- The 109AW is the center point for development of Air Force and Joint polar airlift doctrine in support of NSPD-66/HSPD-25 Arctic National Policy
- Only ski tactical transport capability in the world. These specialized aircraft, aircrew, and maintenance personnel provide an invaluable and unique asset to commanders as the Arctic becomes a growing theater of operations
- High visibility support of scientific efforts to understand Global Climate Change
- The only LC-130 airlift organization in the world – unique science/military mission