

AIR AMERICA: DOUGLAS C-47 GOONEY BIRDS

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The types of missions flown by Air America's C-47s:

The C-47 was one of the aircraft Air America inherited from CAT times in March 59. They were immediately used in a number of theaters: One C-47 was operated on Taiwan for the NACC, a front for the CIA (B-809, later "6110"); up to two of them were based at Bangkok for use by USAID - including a plane for parachute training by the Royal Thai Border Police and one that ensured the Embassy run from Bangkok to Vientiane via Udorn. But in the early sixties at least four C-47s were based at Vientiane for use in Laos (B-817, B-829, "147", "994"), two of which had been bailed from the USAF especially for that use. Those C-47s were also responsible for what was called the "Milk Run North" and the "Milk Run South," scheduled flights for customer ASB-036 following the route Vientiane > Luang Prabang > Sayaboury > Luang Prabang > Vientiane to the north and back and Vientiane > Savannakhet > Pakse > Attopeu > Pakse > Savannakhet > Vientiane to the south and back. On 8 September 64, for example, the "Milk Run North" was flown by C-47 "994", and the "Milk Run South" by C-47 B-817 (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 8 Sept. 64, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8), and on 20 May 66 the "Milk Run North" was ensured by C-47 "994" and the "Milk Run South", which followed a slightly different pattern at that time (Vientiane > Paksane > Thakhet > Savannakhet > Pakse > Savannakhet > Thakhet > Paksane > Vientiane) by C-47 "147" (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 20 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B). At that time, the other C-47s which had been used to drop supplies and arms to locations in Laos had already been replaced by bigger aircraft. In South Vietnam C-47s were used at a very early date, including B-829, B-879, and B-929, which were joined by the former Laos-flyers B-817, B-829, "147", and "994" in the mid-sixties when Air America Saigon also received five newly bailed C-47s from the USAF. From the second half of the sixties to the very end in 1975 the bulk of Air America's C-47 operations was at Saigon where nearly everything was transported under both USAID and military contracts: passengers like CIA and *Phoenix* personnel or even troops and cargo ranging from medicine or life animals to arms. On one occasion an Air America C-47 even transported a Volkswagen from Danang to Saigon. But although USAID was officially the main contractor to Air America in South Vietnam, all CIA missions in South Vietnam were flown as part of the USAID contracts, and within those contracts all CIA requirements were handled with priority (Harnage, *A thousand faces*, pp. 42-45 and 81/2). But two particularities should be mentioned: Between 1964 and 1969, Air America even operated a C-47 that was painted in full USAF colors ("0-50883") and which was operated under various contracts out of Bangkok. And there was a special C-47 (B-879) that was used out of Udorn for nightly drops to road watcher teams in the late sixties and then, in the early seventies, was used as a VIP aircraft out of Bangkok, having 8 plush seats (Aircraft and avionics information as of 1 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14). At the very end, when they had to leave the country, many of Air America's remaining C-47s had been inactivated, thus creating those technical problems that Robbins (*Air America*, pp. 292-98) describes in a fascinating story.

Statistics according to official Air America documents:

1964: 1 C-47 was acquired in August 64 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 15 September 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3), that is B-879

1965: it was approved that USAID Vietnam will receive 4 C-47s for contract AID-430-1092 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 24 November 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4)

1966: Inventory of 1 Feb. 66, in: UTD/Herd/B2: 8 plus 6 planned

Oct. 70: 1 C-47 was sold (Minutes ExCom-AAAC/AAM of 13 October 70, in: UTD/CIA/B8F4), that is B-829

1972: Inventories of 31 March 72 and 30 November 72 (both in: UTD/CIA/B1F10): 3 + 5 leased on both dates

The individual aircraft histories:

Type registration / serial c/n (msn) date acquired origin

D) C-47s owned by Air Asia Co Ltd or Air America Inc.:

Douglas C-47B B-801 20681 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-801; previously USAF 43-16215, "215", XT-T501, XT-801, N8421C and XT-801

Service history: used on CAT's round-the-island flight in February 57 (John E. Lee, interview with William Leary, in: UTD/Leary/I B8F9)

Fate: sold to ICA (U. S. International Cooperation Agency) in June 1959 for \$ 89,000 (Minutes ExCom-AAAC of 14 July 59, in: UTD/CIA/B6F4), to be used by Royal Nepal Airlines as 9N-AAC; damaged at Katmandu on 19 April 64, when it ran into a ditch; repaired and sold to Jamair Co, regd. as VT-DTQ on 20 February 65; in store at Calcutta in March 77; canx.

Douglas C-47B B-809 19932 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-809; previously USAF 43-15466, then Philippine Airlines PI-C54; then Lutheran World Federation XT-543 "St. Paul II"; to Max Springweiler / CAT as XT-811; then International Air Transport VR-HEX; then Max Springweiler / CAT, as XT-809 in Dec. 1950

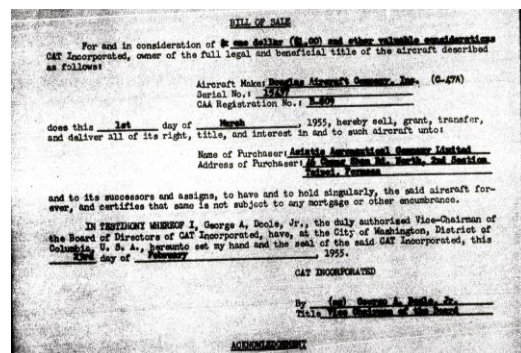
Identity: for this C-47, 2 different identities are quoted in official records since at least 1950: a) factory serial no. 15437, which would make it c/n 15437/26882 ex USAF 43-49621, and at the same time b) ex USAF 43-15466, which would make it c/n 19932. The oldest document available that gives both identities at the same time,

CAT
MEMORANDUM

TO : Secretary-Legal Council DATE: 17th February 1955
FROM : Director of Operations REF. No. DU-55-199-C/B
SUBJECT: Registration of Fleet Aircraft

In response to your verbal request we have prepared the following list of serial numbers of aircraft in the Company fleet for your use for the purpose of aircraft registration:-

Present Registration No.	Aircraft Model	Serial No.	FAA Serial No.	Manufacturer
B-801	C-47B	20681	43-16215	Douglas Aircraft Company, Inc.
B-809	C-47A	15437	43-15466	"
B-815	C-47A	19258	42-19795	"
B-817	C-47A	19256	42-19793	"
B-827	C-47A	13784	42-26413	"
B-1902	C-54AF	3078	41-37287	"
B-1004	C-54B	313672	(Group 2)	"
B-819	DC	901-54	55	Consolidated Tultec Aircraft Corp.
B-824	PBY-5A	18641	-	"



C-47A B-809: Identity given as c/n 15437 and USAF 43-15466 in CAT's fleet list of 17 Feb. 55 and as c/n 15437 only in the Bill of Sale (dated 1 March 55) to Asiatic Aeronautical Co Ltd (both documents in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 2)

seems to be a letter dated 13 February 50, by which the Lutheran World Federation confirms that the ownership of their C-47 "St. Paul" had been transferred to Max Springweiler (in: Max Springweiler, *Pioneer Aviator in China*, translated by Larry D. Sall, Dallas 1998, p.391, Appendix no.23); the Bill of Sale dated 18 November 1950, by which the aircraft (then registered VR-HEX) was nominally sold to Civil Air Transport (ib., p.400, Appendix no.29) again gives both identities: factory serial number 15437 and military serial no. 43-15466. Finally, an official CAT fleet list dated 17 February 55 (in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 2) repeats both identities for C-47 B-809; in later CAT and Air America documents like Air America's Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to September 1963 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), the identity of Air America C-47 B-809 is always given as "15437". As C-47 c/n 15437/26882 is known to have been with the Royal Air Force in September 1950 and in the USA in May 1962, the identity of B-809 is believed to have been c/n 19932 ex 43-15466.

Previous history: After the Lutheran World Federation's first C-47 XT-T72 "Saint Paul" had crashed on 11 February 49, the "Saint Paul II" was acquired at Manila and ferried to Shanghai on 16 March 49 (Max Springweiler, *Pioneer Aviator in China*, translated by Larry D. Sall, Dallas 1998, pp.168-75); the aircraft was then operated as XT-543, but "we did not operate the *St. Paul* with our own flight permit but under charter as a CATC aircraft" (ib., p.185), that is in the colors of CATC (see the photo ib., p.374); the aircraft then flew to Hong Kong in November 49, where it was apparently treated as one of CATC's aircraft; in the meantime, part of CATC's personnel had defected to the Communists, so "at this time we were obliged to dissolve our connection with CATC [...] and seek out a contractual relationship with CAT that would allow us to continue our missionary flights. CAT agreed and we were able to continue our work. [...] Beginning on November 10, 1949 we flew under CAT registration. The quick change from CATC to CAT was possible because an old friend from my Eurasia days, Dai Anjo, the Director of Civil Aviation was coincidentally in Hong Kong and could immediately authorize a new registration" (ib., pp.185/6); the new registration – apparently improvised by the DCA out of office – was XT-811: on the photo of C-47 XT-811 published at <http://www.edcoatescollection.com/ac5/ROW%20Asia/XT-811.html> the aircraft had CAT letters on the rear fuselage and "St. Paul" below the cockpit; on 14 December 49, this aircraft made its last flight for the Lutheran World Federation (ib., p.386), and on 13 February 50, its ownership was transferred from the Lutheran World Federation to William Dudding and Max Springweiler (ib.p.391). The same day, the new owners incorporated International Air Transport Co Ltd at Hong Kong (ib., p.394), and in May 50, the former "St. Paul" was regd. as VR-HEX, and charter flights were undertaken to Singapore or Bangkok (ib., p.230).

Service history: leased by CAT on 1 November 50 and nominally bought by CAT for \$ 1 on 18 November 50 (Max Springweiler, *Pioneer Aviator in China*, translated by Larry D. Sall, Dallas 1998, pp. 396-400, Appendix 28 and 29); probably reregistered as XT-809 in November 50 and then B-809 in June 51; in commercial use out of Taipei in September 51 (Memorandum dated 11 September 51, in: UTD/Leary/I B2F1); really bought by CAT Inc. from Springweiler/Dudding for \$ 61,600 on 11 January 55 (Springweiler, *Pioneer Aviator in China*, p.406); leased to the NACC (Naval Auxiliary Communication Center), Taipei, for flights for the CIA (Memorandum of 11 October 61, in: UTD/Fink/B2F15).

Fate: sold on 9 June 61 (Memorandum of 11 October 61, in: UTD/Fink/B2F15), evidently to VIAT – Vietnamese Air Transport, for dropping agents into North Vietnam; VIAT's only C-47 was shot down in Ninh Binh Province on 1 July 61

(Conboy / Andradé, *Spies and commandos*, pp.33-41 and 317, note 2). The remains of that aircraft were picked up by the Government of North Vietnam, and the tail surface of VIAT's C-47 B-809 – whose tail number is clearly visible – is exhibited at the Air Defense Museum at Hanoi, where it was photographed by Pedro Fuster in October 2005; the fact that it was listed in 1963 as still owned by Air Asia (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) may be a trick to hide the identity of the downed aircraft, as C-54 B-1002, also sold to VIAT, also appears in that list although it did no longer exist in 1963; or at that time VIAT had not yet remitted the entire sum to be paid for B-809; officially not current with Air America in April 64 (Operations Circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4).



The remains of C-47 B-809, photographed at the Air Defense Museum, Hanoi, in October 2005 by Pedro Fuster (with kind permission from Pedro Fuster)



C-47 B-815 at Vientiane on 24 April 60
(UTD/Kirkpatrick, slide A 5242)

Douglas C-47A	B-815	19258	(31 Mar. 59)	CAT B-815; previously USAF 42-100795, then CAT XT-815
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Service history: used out of Bangkok in February 57 (John E. Lee, interview with William Leary, in: UTD/Leary/I B8F9); at Vientiane on 27 April 60 (UTD/Kirkpatrick slide A 5242). Assigned to contract no. 62-38 in July 63 until 10

September 63, when it was assigned to contract no. AID-493-8 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8).

Fate: crashed 35 miles southwest of Songkhla, Thailand, on 27 December 63, while flying under the provisions of USAID contract 493-8 for the Royal Thai Border Police, killing pilot Herbert Liu, co-pilot Tsuan-Ho Hsieh, radio operator L. S. Yu, and 9 Royal Thai Border Police passengers (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 30 December 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2; Aircraft accidents 1963, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; List "Aircraft destroyed or lost", in: UTD/CIA/B49F2).

Douglas C-47A B-817 19256 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-817; previously
USAF 42-100793

Service history: acquired by CAT in "41/1", that is in January 52, according to Air Asia's Statement of Property of 31 March 73 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); sank into mud while taxiing in Laos on 9 October 60 (Aircraft accidents 1960, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; had a landing accident at Vientiane (L-08), Laos, on 17 November 61, when a native truck crossed the runway in front of the aircraft; the pilot (Fred F. Walker), the First Officer and the Radio Operator remained unhurt, but two occupants of the truck were seriously injured (List "Operational casualties in SEA", in: UTD/CIA/B29F1; Aircraft accidents 1961, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; an accident photo is preserved in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9); leased from Air Asia; seen at Vientiane in 1963; had a collision while taxiing in Laos on 24 June 63 (Aircraft accidents 1963, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; assigned to contract no. AID-439-342 at least between 1 July and 5 December 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); made a premature gear retraction in Laos on 28 January 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane in February 64 and in April 64, called thru 3 June 64 (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; Operations Circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); still so in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 at least between 2 September 64 and 30 November 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); still so in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); when a fully armed RLAFF T-28 exploded on the ramp of Vientiane airport on 24 January 65, several more bombs cooked off, and flying metal also caused damage to a number of Air America aircraft parked nearby; in his report to the President of Air America, Dave Hickler notes that "817" was one of the aircraft that were damaged by flying metal (Report "Blow up", that is document no. GML-65-036H sent by Dave Hickler to Air America's President on 28 January 1965; copy in the possession of Joe Hazen who kindly faxed it to the author on 9 May 2005); in use out of Vientiane on 21 November 65 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6); still based at Vientiane on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); received battle damage near coordinates YS 995838 on 6 March 66, while on a training flight (XOXO of 6 March 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26 F16); repaired; was struck by a jeep at Long Xuyen (V-169) on 28 April 66, damaging the right aileron; returned to service by 11 May 66 (XOXO of 28 April 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 11 May 66, in: UTD/CIA/ B8F1); assigned to contract AID-430-1092 for use out of Saigon in April and May 66, called thru 29 May 66, on loan from AID-439-342 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status

Fate: shot down by small arms on final approach to Quang Ngai (V-23) on 11 June 67, resulting in fire on landing; there were no injuries, but B-827 was completely destroyed by fire after landing (XOXO of 11 June 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; List “Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; the Minutes ExCom-AAAL/AAM of 13 June 67, in: UTD/CIA/B8F2, give 12 June 67; photos in Yearbook 1984, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F3).



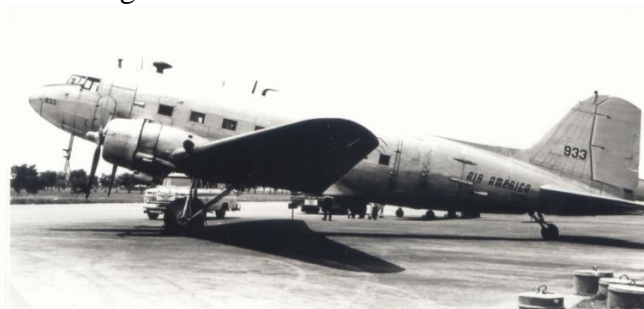
C-47A B-829 at Saigon in the mid-sixties
(with kind permission from Ward S. Reimer)

Douglas C-47A	B-829	17033/ 34298	(31 Mar. 59)	CAT B-829; previously USAF 45-1030
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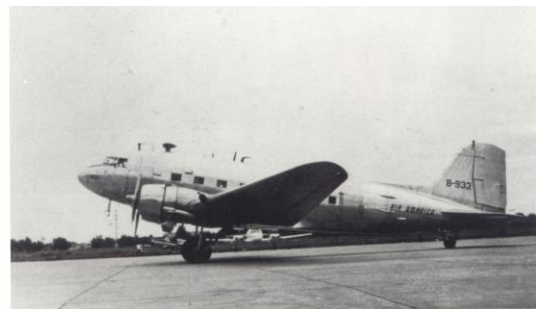
Service history: acquired by CAT in “47/7”, that is in July 58, according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 65 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); promissory note no.18 dated 31 March 67 (in: UTD/CIA/B9F4) mentions \$ 40,000.00 owed by Air America to the Pacific Corp. for this aircraft in Note no.9 of 1963/4; photo in *Airliners*, summer 93, p. 16; regd. to CAT on 5 May 58; seen in Laos in 59; seen all silver devoid of markings in 1960 (photo in: Gradidge/Davis/Whittle, *The Douglas DC-3 and its predecessors*, p. 662); assigned to Thai Police contract no. 58-056 for use out of Bangkok at least July to 13 September 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); assigned to contract DA92-321-PBC-1861 for use out of Danang for CSG on 13 September 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); still in February 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004); had a ground accident at Saigon (V-01) on 21 March 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane in April 64, called thru 3 June 64 (Operations Circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); assigned to contract CA92-321-PBC-1861 for CSG Flying Services out of Saigon until 31 March 64, when it was released from that contract and remained unassigned as a spare aircraft out of Saigon (Operations Circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); in July 64, B-829 was still unassigned at Saigon with frequent calls from contracts AID-430-675 and CA92-321-PBC-1861 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); on 8 January 65, an aileron of C-47 B-829 was damaged when touching the area perimeter fence of Saigon airport (XOXO of 8 January 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); based at Saigon in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65,

27 October 65, and 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, 27 October 65, and 1 January 66, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4 and B7F8); made a low landing approach at Saigon on 25 October 65 (Aircraft accidents 1965, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); assigned to contract AID-430-1092 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still so in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon as a basic aircraft in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); in use at Saigon at least between 25 September 66 and 15 July 69 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); taxi accident at Saigon (V-01) on 5 January 67 (XOXO of 5 Jan. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; used as a spare aircraft out of Saigon 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1).

Fate: sold to Xieng Khouang Air Transport, Vientiane, as XW-TFB in October 1970, and delivered Saigon-Vientiane on 7 October 70 (Saigon Base Monthly Report for September 70, that is CIA document no. 0000174576, published at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000174576.pdf); current with them on 26 May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); sold to Tri-9 Corp., Phnom Penh, as XW-TFB and leased to Khemara Air Transport, Phnom Penh, in 72/3?; leased to Lane Xang Airlines, Vientiane, in March 74; leased to Air Cambodge, Phnom Penh, in 74?; leased to Golden Eagle Airlines, Phnom Penh, in 74; rereg. in 75 as N48230, but not taken up; destroyed by a rocket attack at Pochentong on 11 April 75; the US registration was cancelled in June 77.



C-47A 933 taken at Bangkok in the late sixties
(UTD/Hickler/B28)



C-47A B-933 taken at Bangkok in 1971
(*Air America Log*, vol. V, no. 7, 1971, p. 2)



C-47A B-933 taken at Bangkok in September / October 1973
(with kind permission from Ward S. Reimer)

Douglas C-47A B-841 13817 9 Oct. 61 bought from Aloha Airlines N63376; previously USAF 43-30666

Service history: acquired in “50/10”, that is in October 61 according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 65 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); officially regd. on 12 October 61 (info obtained from the CAA of Taiwan, kindly supplied by Martin Best on 17 May 2013); the US registration N63376 was cancelled on 13 October 61 (Status as of 5 April 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); owned by Air Asia (Aircraft status as of June 62, corrected to Sept. 63, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1)

Fate: reregistered as “6110” in 1962 (Aircraft status as of June 62, corrected to Sept. 63, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1)



C-47 “6110” taken during a ceremony in June 1966 by Lu Teh-chi
(photo kindly supplied by Clarence Fu)

“6110” 13817 62 B-841 reregistered

Service history: leased to the NACC - Naval Auxiliary Communication Center, Taipei, as “6110”, under the provisions of 2 contracts, that is contract no. N-(713)55-169-15-62 between the NACC and Air America covering the dry lease of the C-47, and contract no. 62-56 between the NACC and Air Asia Co Ltd, covering the charter of the C-47; both contracts were provisionally terminated on 30 June 65, with continuations requested until finalization (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); not mentioned in the Aircraft status list of 1 November 65 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); but dry leased to the USAF’s Detachment 10, 6003 Support Squadron, Taipei, in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2; lease contract no.8-65 according to Planned Aircraft Assignment as of 1 June 66, formerly in: UTD/Leary/Ser.I/B3F4, now B32F5?); bore the insignia of the Republic of China Air Force as is shown in the photo above, although it was not the standard color scheme of the Republic of China Air Force; used to fly US personnel between Hsinchu AFB and Taipei city, where the US personnel had their homes (e-mail dated 2 February 2005, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu).

Fate: reregistered as B-933 in June 67

B-933 13817 12 June 67 “6110” reregistered

Service history: registered to Air Asia CoLtd on 15 June 67 (Status as of 5 April 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); at Bangkok as “933” in ? (photos in UTD/Hickler/B28+B29); probably the reason for dropping the “B-” was that China and Laos broke off diplomatic relations in mid-1962 which also affected the registration of AAM aircraft

(see Minutes ExCom-AAACL of 25 September 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1); assigned to contract AF62531-67-C-0028 for use out of Bangkok on 28 June 67; still so in May 68, called thru 30 September 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); on 30 January 68, C-47 B-933 struck the taxiway sign during taxi, causing minor damage to the left elevator (XOXO of 30 Jan. 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F17); repaired; at Saigon on 31 March 68; flew Udorn-Bangkok on 25 November 68 and Bangkok-Hua Hin (T-10) on 27 November 68 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); believed based at Bangkok, from December 68 to June 71; flew Udorn-U Tapao on 26 March 69 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); assigned to contract AF-0028 for use out of Bangkok 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 for use out of Bangkok 1 July 71-31 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); seen at Hong Kong on 5 August 71 (*Aviation Letter* 59, October 1971, p.3); photo in *Air America Log*, vol. V, no. 7, 1971, p. 2; at Bangkok on 8 November 72; put into temporary storage at Bangkok on 10 January 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14); used as a spare aircraft at Bangkok 1-30 November 73; was to be stored at Tainan, but was instead transferred to Saigon and used as a spare aircraft at Saigon 1-31 December 73 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C).

Fate: sold to Continental Air Services, Vientiane, as N11AF on 2 February 74 (Status as of 28 March 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4; Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6), on lease from Air Alliance, to whom it was sold on 27 February 74; ferried from Saigon to Vientiane on 4 February 74 for CASI (F.O.C. of 1-28 February 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21); leased to Sahakol Air, Bangkok, in September 74; sold to Oil and Gas Explorations Inc. on 17 July 76; sold to Air Fast Services, Seletar, on 15 February 79; a photo was published in: *Propliner*, no. 64, p. 29; sold to D. B. Leib, W. Hartford, Hartford, CT, Director of Airfast, on 4 April 79 and reregistered to him on 30 April 79, but the aircraft was used by Airfast for survey work until 8 1/2 (*Propliner*, no. 64, p. 33); the aircraft was scrapped in March 82, and the registration was cancelled on 1 July 82.



C-47B B-879 at Bangkok in September / October 73
(with kind permission from Ward S. Reimer)

Douglas C-47B	B-879	34325/ 17058	17 Aug. 64	N4788C of Sholton & Carson, Spenard, AK;
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previously USAF 45-1055

Service history: acquired in “53/9”, that is in September 64, according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 65 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); bought by Air America on 17 August 64; sold to Air Asia CoLtd and registered as B-879 on 15 September 64 (Status as of 12 August 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); initially flown as “879”, photos in UTD/Hickler/B28 + B34; probably the reason for dropping the “B-” was that China and Laos broke off diplomatic relations in mid-1962 which also affected the registration of AAM aircraft (see Minutes ExCom-AAACL of 25 September 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1); based at Saigon in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); assigned to contract AF49(604)-4395 for use out of Saigon in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); based at Udorn on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); assigned to contract AID-439-713 for use out of Udorn in April and May 66, called thru 11 July 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); on 7 December 66, the left engine caught fire on start at Udorn (XOXO of 7 Dec. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; a Lao woman ran into B-879, while the aircraft took off from Nam Lieu (LS-118A), Laos, on 7 March 68 (Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F3; XOXO of 7 March 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); on 16 April 68, a ground vehicle struck B-879, which was parked at Long Tieng (LS-20A), Laos, damaging the left aileron during off loading; the aircraft was operating under contract USAID-439-713 (XOXO of 16 April 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B10F12); repaired; still assigned to contract AID-439-713 for use out of Udorn in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); at Saigon on 15 March 69; assigned to contract AID-493-66 for use out of Bangkok 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); assigned to contract AID-493-66 for use out of Bangkok 1-31 July 71, and still 16-30 April 73 and 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14; F.O.C. of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 for use out of Bangkok at least 1-28 February 74 and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21; F.O.C. of 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); seen at Bangkok on 1 March 70 (*Aviation Letter* 44, July 70, p.2) and on 31 October 70; believed based at Bangkok, from December 68 to June 71; leased from Air Asia to June 74.

Fate: sold to China Airlines, Taipei, on 14 June 74 (Agreement of Sale); delivered to Phnom Penh and officially sold to them (Bill of Sale) on 29 June 74 (Status as of 12 August 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); registered as B-1555 on 9 July 74; withdrawn from use at Taipei in March 77; cancelled on 20 March 1978, to the Republic of China Air Force as “451055”, then “7347”.

Douglas C-47A B-929 19496 Dec. 65 ex N4732S of Wm. G. Luker; previously 42-101033, then N4732S

Service history: used out of Saigon under contract AID-430-1092; arrived at Saigon on 1 December 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 November 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1);

still based at Saigon on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8);.

Fate: shot down by Viet Cong during an approach to landing and crashed approximately 11 miles north of Vi Thanh (V-175), Mekong Delta, South Vietnam, on 14 January 66 at 0740 hours local time, while transporting a load of ammunition under contract AID-430-1092 on a flight from Saigon to Vi Thanh. The pilot, William R. Pruner, and the co-pilot, Johnny Y. H. Chang, were executed by the Viet Cong, and the kicker Nguyen Van Thai was interned. During rescue attempts, an Air America Bell 204B was precluded from landing to pick up the downed C-47 crew, when the helicopter crew saw Viet Cong exiting from the C-47 and throwing grenades at the Bell. The helicopter co-pilot, Daniel F. Janik, was hit in the arm and hand during this landing attempts. Later, the bodies of the dead crew were recovered, and the aircraft was destroyed by ground fire. It was deleted from Air America flight status on 15 January 66 (XOXO of 14 Jan. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Board of Review report, in: UTD/CIA/B34F1; Accidents 1966, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; Accident report at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/1818029/196601.pdf ; DD/S, Monthly Report for January 1966, p. 1, online at 1818029/196608; Robbins, *Air America*, p. 156; Memorial; List "Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed", in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List "Aircraft destroyed or lost", in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; Minutes BoD-AAM 18 January 66; Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2).

II) C-47s bailed from the USAF:

Douglas C-47B	"147"	20613	June 61	bailed from USAF 43-16147; identity officially given as 43-16147A (A = Air Force)
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Service history: lease covered by contract No. AF33(600)-40818 originally dated 16 January 1960 (preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); received from the USAF on 14 June 61 (Memorandum by J. Fink dated 11 October 61, in: UTD/Fink/B2F15); ferried Tainan-Vientiane on 2 and 3 July 61 by "Doc" Johnson (Page from "Doc" Johnson's log book kindly supplied by his son James on 18 February 2013); assigned to contract no. AID-439-342 at least between 1 July and 5 December 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); current in Laos to at least September 63 (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; Operations Circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); still so in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still so at least from 7 October 62 to 1 October 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); still so in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still so in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); photo in UTD/Hickler/B29; when a fully armed RLAFF T-28 exploded on the ramp of Vientiane airport on 24 January 65, several more bombs cooked off, and flying metal also caused damage to a number of Air America aircraft parked nearby; in his report to the President of Air America, Dave Hickler notes: "C-47 147 sustained the worse damage and has numerous holes in it"; according to the statement of D. Fisher that is part of that report, "147" was parked "at the North end

of the military ramp [...] south of 156”; it was then moved “onto the terminal ramp” (Report “Blow up”, that is document no. GML-65-036H sent by Dave Hickler to Air America’s President on 28 January 1965; copy in the possession of Joe Hazen who kindly faxed it to the author on 9 May 2005); on 13 June 65, “147” was ferried back Tainan-Hong Kong-Danang-Vientiane (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 13 June 65, copy kindly supplied by Joe Hazen); Air America titles were painted on the fuselage sides in mid-June 1966 (List of aircraft seen by Dr. Jonathan Pote in Laos, e-mail kindly sent to the author on 8 August 2008 by Dr. Pote); on 26 October 66, “147” struck a ground power unit on the ramp at Saigon (V-01), damaging the right elevator (XOXO of 26 Oct. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; on 2 May 67, C-45 N7695C taxied into C-47 “147”, which was parked at Danang (V-03), damaging the right wing tip (XOXO of 2 May 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; struck by Air America C-46 B-926 on 29 July 67, while parked at Tan Son Nhut (V-01), damaging the nose (XOXO of 29 July 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1); repaired; seats were installed on 4 January 68, assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); in use out of Saigon at least between 24 April 68 and 23 November 71 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6; Saigon Schedules of 20 April 71 and 24 July 71 in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); assigned to contract AID/VN-41 for use out of Saigon 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon on 1 July 71, current 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); used as a spare aircraft at Saigon 1 November-31 December 73 and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C); lost the right main wheel, the right propeller and the tail wheel, when landing 75 feet short of the usable portion of a runway which was under repair at Bao Loc (V-260), South Vietnam, on 11 January 69; struck a bundle of steel planking (XOXO of 11 Jan. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F18; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F2); repaired and returned to use in February 69 (Minutes ExCom-AAAC/AAM of 14 January 69, in: UTD/CIA/B8F3); seen at Hong Kong on 31 August 70 (*Aviation Letter* 47, Oct. 70, p.4); on 16 February 71, the left main landing gear collapsed upon landing at Ban Me Thuot East (V-12); repaired (XOXO of 16 Feb. 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F11); was to be returned to the USAF on 30 June 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 April 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F3).

Fate: escaped from Saigon on 29 April 75 and landed at Bangkok, Thailand (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 October 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); declared surplus by the USAF in May 75 (Telex dated 9 May 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F5); to the Royal Thai Air Force as “147” on 20 January 76; Thai serial is L2-53/19; struck off charge on 14 August 81 (RTAF C-47 at <http://www.thai-aviation.net/military%20-%20C47.htm>).



C-47 994 somewhere in Laos in the early sixties
(UTD/Wiren/B2)

Douglas C-47A	“994”	34259	62?	bailed from USAF 45-994
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Service history: lease covered by contract No. AF33(600)-40818 originally dated 16 January 1960 (preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); current from June 62 to at least September 63 (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept.1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); assigned to contract no. AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane at least between 1 July and 5 December 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; Operations Circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); still so in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still so at least from 7 October 62 to 1 October 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); still so in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still so in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); Air America titles were painted on the fuselage sides in mid-June 1966 (List of aircraft seen by Dr. Jonathan Pote in Laos, e-mail kindly sent to the author on 8 August 2008 by Dr. Pote); in use out of Vientiane in October 66 (Flight Crew Manning of Oc.66, in: UTD/Leary/I B3F4); photo in UTD/Hickler/B28; slide in UTD/Wiren/B2; struck US Army Caribou “39737” at Saigon on 28 October 66 at the end of the landing roll, due to failure of the brakes, damaging the right wing tip and aileron (XOXO of 28 October 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon on 15 December 67, still in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); in use out of Saigon at least between 21 March 69 and 28 August 69 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); assigned to contract AID/VN-41 for use out of Saigon 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, *The aircraft of Air America*, p. 20); assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon on 1 July 71, still 1-31 July 71, 16-30 April 73, and 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14; F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); assigned to contract AID-SA-C-1029 at least 1-28 February 74 and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 February 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21; F.O.C.s

of 1 April 74, 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); was to be returned to the USAF on 30 June 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 April 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F3).

Fate: escaped from Saigon on 29 April 75 and landed at Bangkok, Thailand (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 October 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); declared surplus by the USAF in May 75 (Telex dated 9 May 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F5); to the Royal Thai Air Force as L2-54/19 on 29 January 76; struck off charge on 14 August 81 (RTAF C-47 at <http://www.thai-aviation.net/military%20-%20C47.htm>).



HC-47D 0-50883 at Bangkok in the late sixties
(UTD/Hickler/B28)

Douglas HC-47D “0-50883” 34142 Dec. 64? bailed fr. USAF 45-0883

Service history: probably bailed to Air America on 2 December 64 (64337) (AVH-2); on 24 December 64, a radio message mentioned a new pilot arrived to fly “that new C-47” out of Bangkok (XOXO of 24 December 64, in: UTD/Walker/B23F17); not noted in the USAF Assignment Records for 1965 (AVH-2); based at Bangkok in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); current with Air America in November 65, used out of Bangkok under contract AF62(531)-1845 (Aircraft status as of 1 November 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still so in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); flown in USAF colors as “0-50883”; during a taxi accident at Songkla (T-29), Thailand, the right elevator of “0-50883” was damaged on 29 August 66 (XOXO of 29 August 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; undershot the runway and incurred substantial damage, while landing at Pitt’s Camp, Thailand (T-603), on 6 September 67; the main landing gear sheared off; both engines and props, the wings and the fuselage were damaged; the aircraft had been on a flight from Bangkok to Pitt’s Camp via Takhli (T-05) under the provisions of contract no. 493-66 (XOXO of 6 Sept. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F3 and in UTD/CIA/B59F1; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 12 September 67, in: UTD/CIA/B8F2); photo of the accident in UTD/Hickler/B28 and in UTD/CIA/B59F10); repaired and returned from Tainan to Bangkok on 5 November 67 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); at Saigon on 31 March 68 (photos in UTD/Hickler/B28+B33); assigned to contract F62531-68-C-0007 for CSG Flying out of Bangkok as a basic aircraft in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); used at Songkla (T-29) at least between 29 June 68 and 27 October 68 (Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); according to USAF records (reel AVH-11) to WRAAR, Warner-Robins AFB, from FBZF1 service on 22 January 69; assigned to contract AF-0005 for

use out of Bangkok 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1).

Fate: not current on 1 July 70 (Leary, *The aircraft of Air America*, p. 20); probably returned to the USAF; to the Royal Thai Air Force as 45-0883 on 24 March 1971, receiving the Thai serial "B.L2/38-14"; seen at Bangkok as such on 8 November 72 (*Aviation Letter*, no. 75, p. 2); reserialled as "883"; seen at Bangkok Don Muang on 13 January 96 (*Air-Britain News*, February 96, p. 167); went to Oshkosh for conversion by Basler about 1998, but was damaged before conversion; the remains are believed to e still at Oshkosh; the "883" currently flying with the Royal Thai Air Force is a Basler stock airframe used to replace it; this aircraft is not identical with the Royal Thai Police C-47 "3115883".

Douglas C-47A "083" 20549 July 66 bailed from USAF 43-16083

Service history: lease covered by contract No. AF33(600)-40818 Supplemental Agreement No.11 dated 6 April 1966 (preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); still in the USA in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); arrived from the US; was to be put into service in June 66 for USAID-Vietnam after modification at Tainan (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 May 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); acquired in July 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 13 July 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); at Saigon on 5 October 66 and on 31 July 68; damaged by shrapnel during a mortar attack at Danang (V-03) on 15 March 67 (XOXO of 15 March 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); both propellers made contact with the taxiway surface, as the tail rose during engine run-up on the ground at Phan Rang (V-28), South Vietnam, on 9 December 67 (XOXO of 9 Dec. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F8; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F3); repaired; assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon on 9 June 67, still in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); on 24 March 68, a fast moving thunderstorm of more than 70 knots passed thru Vientiane's Wattay airport, damaging the antennas and the skin of C-47 "083"; repaired (XOXO of 24 March 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); used as a spare aircraft out of Saigon 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); struck a post with the left wing tip while taxiing in South Vietnam on 23 June 69, damaging the left wing tip; returned to service shortly after the accident (Minutes ExCom-AAM/AACL of 8 July 69, in: UTD/CIA/B8F3); in inactive storage at Saigon 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); a strong wind made the parked C-47 "083" slide across the wet ramp at Tan Son Nhut on 25 May 72, causing minor damage to the left horizontal stabilizer and the left elevator control surface (XOXO of 25 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2); probably repaired; and again in inactive storage since 1 July 72, at least until 31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); was to be returned to the USAF on 30 June 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 April 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F3).

Fate: escaped from Saigon on 29 April 75 and landed at Tainan, Taiwan (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 October 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); declared surplus by the USAF in May 75 (Telex dated 9 May 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F5); probably to the Royal Thai Air Force as "083" around 1976; probably identical with the C-47 which has been dumped at Lopburi AFB since at least 1987 and which has usually been reported as "093"; for later inspections showed that it is more likely to

be "083" (the paint is very faint and damaged).

Douglas C-47A "084" 25345 July 66 bailed from USAF 43-48084

Service history: lease covered by contract No. AF33(600)-40818 Supplemental Agreement No.11 dated 6 April 1966 (preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); still in the USA in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); arrived from the US; was to be put into service in June 66 for USAID-Vietnam after modification at Tainan (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 May 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); acquired in July 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 13 July 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); on 15 December 66, a forklift ran into "084" at Saigon, damaging the left elevator (XOXO of 15 Dec. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; on 10 November 67, C-47 "084" was hit by the engine thrust of TIA DC-8 N61T, when parked at Tan Son Nhut (V-01), damaging the left wing, the gust locks, the elevators, and the vertical stabilizer of "084" (XOXO of 10 Nov. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F8; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 14 November 67, in: UTD/CIA/B8F2); repaired; assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon on 14 June 67, still in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); at Saigon on 9 July 68 and on 15 October 68 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); assigned to contract AID/VN-41 for use out of Saigon 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); a photo taken at Saigon on 24 May 70 can be seen in: UTD/Misc.Mat./B4F4; inactive storage at Saigon since 20 June 70 until at least 31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C); was to be returned to the USAF on 30 June 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 April 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F3).

Fate: escaped from Saigon on 29 April 75, but crash-landed at U Tapao Royal Thai Navy Base, Thailand, 10 km east of Sattahip, on 29 April 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 October 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); declared surplus by the USAF in May 75 (Telex dated 9 May 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F5).

Douglas C-47A "559" 20025 July 66 bailed from USAF 43-15559

Service history: lease covered by contract No. AF33(600)-40818 Supplemental Agreement No.11 dated 6 April 1966 (preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); still in the USA in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); arrived from the US; was to be put into service in June 66 for USAID-Vietnam after modification at Tainan (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 May 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); acquired in July 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 13 July 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); in use at Saigon at least between 14 September 66 and 27 November 71 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); a photo of "559" is in: Love, *Wings of Air America*, p. 39; on 14 March 67, a USAF van drove into the wing on the parking area of Tan Son Nhut (V-01), damaging the right wing tip and aileron (XOXO of 14 March 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon on 6 June 67, still in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); on 20 December 67, C-46 B-928 taxied into "559", which was parked at Tan Son Nhut (V-

01), damaging the nose (XOXO of 20 Dec. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F8); repaired; assigned to contract AID/VN-41 for use out of Saigon 16-30 June and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon on 1 July 71, 16-30 April 73, and 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14; F.O.C.s 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); seen at Hong Kong on 27 December 71 (*Aviation Letter* 63, Feb. 72, p.2); on 23 September 72, "559" touched a small steel peg, when it was towed on the Air America ramp at Saigon (V-01), damaging the left aileron (XOXO of 23 Sept. 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2); repaired; received several holes, when the aircraft was parked at Tan Son Nhut on 5 December 72 during a rocket attack (XOXO of 5 Dec. 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2); repaired; assigned to contract AID-SA-C-1029 at least 1-28 February 74 and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 February 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21; F.O.C.s of 1 April 74, 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); was to be returned to the USAF on 30 June 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 April 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F3).

Fate: escaped from Saigon on 29 April 75 and landed at Bangkok, Thailand (Letter by Clyde S. Carter to the USAF, dated 10 October 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); declared surplus by the USAF in May 75 (Telex dated 9 May 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F5); given to the Royal Thai AF as "559" in 76 (Gradidge/Davis/Whittle, *The Douglas DC-3 and its predecessors*, p. 82; identity confirmed in *Air-Britain News*, Feb. 98, p. 253); it received the Thai serial B.L2/52-19; at Bangkok in February 85; noted stored at Lopburi AFB in May 89; no longer current in 1996, but noted preserved there as "559" in January 99 (*Air-Britain News*, June 99, p. 710), in January 2000 (Carroll, *World Air Forces Directory 1998-99*, p. 382), in May 2003 (e-mail dated 27 Aug. 2003, sent by Steve Darke to Eric Carlson, who kindly forwarded it to the author), and still in 2006 (*Air-Britain News*, February 2007, p. 247).



C-47 607 at Nha Trang in early 68
(UTD/Misc.Mat./B4F4)



C-47 607 at Gia Nghia after its crash
in March 68 (UTD/Hickler/B32)



C-47 607 at Gia Nghia in 1972, abandoned
(UTD/McCauley/B1F3)

Douglas C-47A	“607”	13537	July 66	bailed from USAF 42-93607
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Service history: lease covered by contract No. AF33(600)-40818 Supplemental Agreement No.11 dated 6 April 1966 (preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); still in the USA in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); arrived from the US; was to be put into service in June 66 for USAID-Vietnam after modification at Tainan (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 May 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); acquired in July 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 13 July 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); on 21 May 67, C-47 “607” taxied into Volpar N6154U, which was parked at Tan Son Nhut (V-01), damaging the left rudder (XOXO of 21 May 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; a photo taken at Nha Trang in early 68 is preserved in: UTD/Misc.Mat./B4F4.

Fate: veered off the runway and rolled down a steep embankment to the right of the extreme end of the runway at Gia Nghia (V-202), South Vietnam, on 22 March 68 (XOXO of 22 March 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F2); the accident is also mentioned by Robbins, *Air America*, p. 161, but without details; the C-47 had been used under the provisions of contract AID/VN-23 and was called thru 30 June 68, if it had been decided to recover the aircraft (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); a photo of the ill-fated C-47 is in UTD/Hickler/B32; but “607” was apparently abandoned, as the wreck was still on place in 1972 (photo of “607” taken in 1972, in: UTD/McCauley/B1F3); it was never listed as lost in the list “Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed” (UTD/CIA/B1F10).

Douglas C-47A	“949”	20415	July 66	bailed from USAF 43-15949
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Service history: lease covered by contract No. AF33(600)-40818 Supplemental Agreement No.11 dated 6 April 1966 (preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); still in the USA in April and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); arrived from the US; was to be put into service in June 66 for USAID-Vietnam after modification at Tainan (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 May 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); acquired in July 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 13 July 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); in use out of Saigon at least between 17 July 66 and 5 January 69 (Crew member duty report

of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6).

Fate: crashed into a mountain side approximately 15.5 nautical miles SE of Hue Phu Bai Airport near Danang (V-03), South Vietnam, on 16 January 69 at about 1345 hours local time during bad weather, when en route from Hue to Danang, killing PIC Captain Howard W. Kelly, F/O Milton N. Matheson, AFD Nguyen Van Hanh and 9 passengers, consisting of seven US military personnel and one Vietnamese woman (XOXO of 16 January 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F18; photos of the wreck can be found in the Oren Harnage collection preserved at TTU; List "Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed" in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List "Aircraft destroyed or lost", in: UTD/ CIA/B49F2; List "Total number of company employees killed in aircraft accidents" in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List in UTD/CIA/B19F1; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 28 Jan. 69, in: UTD/CIA/B8F3; Memorial; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3).

The original Lease Agreement (Contract no. AF33(600)-40818) of 16 January 1960 covered only C-47s "147" and "994", to which 5 C-47s ("083", "084", "559", "607", and "949") were added by Supplemental Agreement No.11 of 6 April 1966. This agreement expired on 15 March 70, so that after the loss of "607" and "949", the agreement covering the remaining 5 C-47s was extended to 30 November 70. Then a new Lease Agreement – Contract no. F333657-71-L-0494 – was signed effective 1 December 70, which was extended several times.

AIR AMERICA, INC.
100 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

6 April 1966
Ref: WC46-1836
REC'D WAS APR 22 1966

Headquarters, Aeronautical Systems Division
Air Force Systems Command
United States Air Force
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio 45433

ATTN: ADWES - Mrs. Blackman

Re: Lease of Five Additional C-47 Aircraft
under Supplemental Agreement No. 11 to
Contract No. AF33(600)-40818

Continues:

Enclosed are four copies of Supplemental Agreement No. 11 to Contract No. AF33(600)-40818, each of which has been executed on behalf of Air America, Inc. Kindly return one fully executed copy to this office.

We interpret Contract No. AF33(600)-40818 as permitting the ferry of the above C-47s from the Continental United States to the Far East by an independent aircraft ferry company under contract to Air America, Inc. and you have verbally confirmed that this interpretation is correct. Kindly confirm in writing the above interpretation of Contract No. AF33(600)-40818 by signing the enclosed extra copy of this letter, in the space provided, and returning it to us.

Please advise when the above five aircraft will be made available to Air America or the ferry company.

Sincerely,
Richard G. Borch

RM/1k
Enclosure
Interpretation of Contract No. AF33(600)-40818
As stated above is correct
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

W. H. Borch
17 April 1966
Copied For SIC (in MCM) 6/2/66 JIM JOHNSON

Page 3 of 4
Supplemental Agreement No. 11
to Contract No. AF33(600)-40818

5. Clause 5, Initial, is hereby amended by adding the following sentence thereat:

"The Lessee shall not include in any contracts with the United States Government any charges or costs in connection with the use of the aircraft leased hereunder, except as may be expressly set forth in said AID Contract"

6. Paragraph (e) of Clause 7, Liability for Leased Property, is hereby deleted and the following paragraph is substituted in lieu thereof:

"(a) The Lessee shall not be liable for any loss, damage, or destruction of the leased aircraft or related property except as the Lessee may be expressly made liable therefor under the provisions of said air transportation services contract, or except for gross and willful failure on the part of Lessee's Officers or Directors to comply with said contract. For the purpose of ferrying of the aircraft from the continental United States to the Far East, any company selected by the Lessee to ferry said aircraft shall likewise be relieved from liability for any loss, damage or destruction of the leased aircraft or related property to the same extent as the Lessee."

7. Clause 9, Marking of Leased Property, is hereby deleted in its entirety and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

"The Lessee, at its sole cost, shall remove all United States Air Force markings, insignia and numbers from the leased aircraft prior to any use thereof as set forth under said AID contract; however, nothing contained herein shall prevent the Lessee from operating the leased aircraft with USAF markings, insignia and numbers thereon for the purpose of ferrying same to the Far East prior to use thereof as set forth in this lease."

8. Paragraph (d) of Clause 14, Definitions is hereby deleted and the following paragraph is substituted in lieu thereof:

"(d) The terms 'Services Contract', 'air transportation services contract', and 'AID Contract' mean contracts between Air America, Inc. and the United States of America acting through the Agency for International Development."

9. Schedule A to subject Contract is amended as follows:

a. To Paragraph 1, Aircraft, add the following thereto:

- C-47 Aircraft, AF Serial No. 42-73607
- C-47 Aircraft, AF Serial No. 43-15559
- C-47 Aircraft, AF Serial No. 43-15949
- C-47 Aircraft, AF Serial No. 43-16066
- C-47 Aircraft, AF Serial No. 43-48084

AMERICAN AIR AMERICA, INC. CONTRACT

MAILING DATE: 170 JUN 66

(c) Clause 2, Term of Lease, as heretofore amended, is further amended to extend the term of lease for the following C-47 Aircraft (from 15 March 1970 through 30 November 1970):

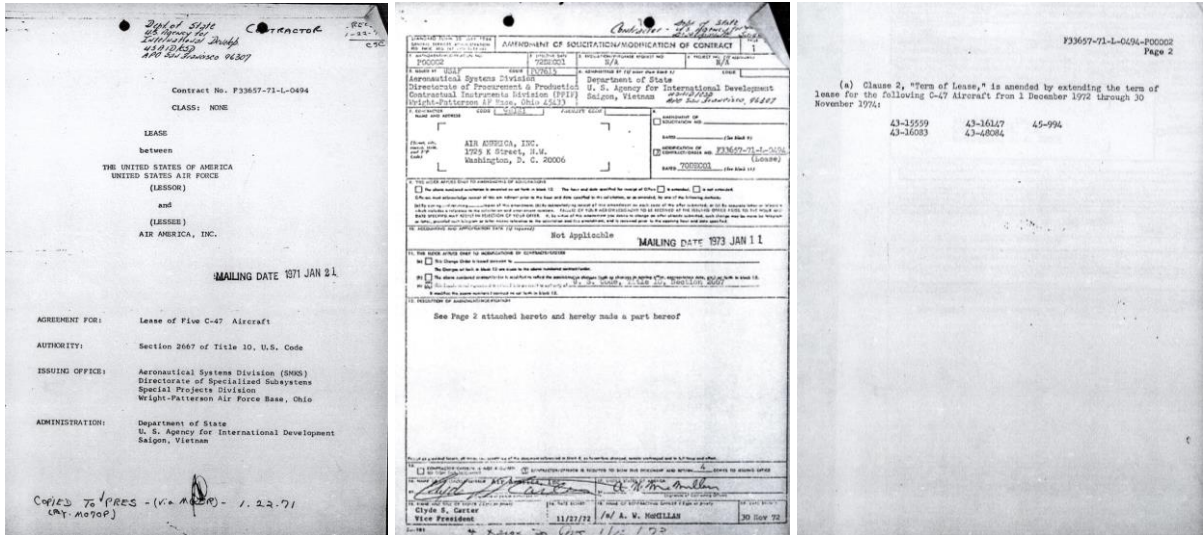
43-15117	43-16083
43-994	43-48084
43-15556	

(d) This Supplemental Agreement shall be subject to the written approval of the Secretary of his duly authorized representative Approved until so approved.

George A. Borch, Jr.
Executive Director

MAR 28 1966

Lease Agreement Contract no. AF 33(600)-40818,
Supplemental Agreement no.11 of 6 April 66,
and its extension from 15 March 70 to 30 November 70
(all in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 20)



Lease Agreement no. F333657-71-L-0494 effective 1 December 70 and its extension from 1 December 72 to 30 November 74 (all in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 20)

III) C-47s of Continental Air Services leased to Air America:

Douglas C-47A	XW-PFT	12539	June 69?	leased from Continental Air Services, Vientiane; previously 42-92708, then A65-40 / "VH-CUM", then VH-TAW, then VH-SBE
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Service history: used for Air America on 24 June 69 on flight from Udorn (T-08) to Long Tieng (LS-20A) and Moung Soui (L-108) (Udorn daily flight schedule of 24 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1).

Fate: returned to Continental Air Services in June 69; current with CASI on 26 May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); sold to J. M. Garfinkle, Tarzana, CA, as N83AC on 5 November 73, trading as South East Asia Air Transport, Phnom Penh; the registration was cancelled in October 81.

IV) China Air Lines C-47s operated for Air America:

Douglas C-53D	"EM-3"	11729	April 73	leased from China Air Lines B-1531; previously 42-68802, then N49554, then JA5050
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Service history: operated by China Air Lines under subcontract for Air America (Contract no. 70-34; see Memorandum of 2 February 72, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10); camouflaged; added to the list of aircraft operating for Air America Saigon in April 73 (Saigon monthly base report of April 73, in: UTD/CIA/B41F7). It seems that the same identity, that is "EM-3", was also used as a call-sign by 2 China Airlines Beech 18s: by C-45 B-1529 und later by E18S B-1530 (e-mail dated 12 December 2009 kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu).

Fate: crashed on landing at Dalat / Cam-Ly (V-08), South Vietnam, on 29 December 1973; as the pilot was unable to safely stop the aircraft prior to reaching the end of the

Service history: regd. as XW-PFA on 22 September 67; not current with Air America on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2) or ever later; probably only imported into Laos with the help of Air America; believed to be one of the two C-47s delivered to General Vang Pao's Xieng Khouang Air Transport in 1967/8 (Conboy / Morrison, *Shadow war*, p. 170).

Fate: sold to Lao United Airlines, Vientiane, in 1969 (?); ceased operations before May 72; without engines in May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); sold to Lao Air Charter in 72? (current to 1975).

Douglas C-47A	XW-PFX	13529	6 Feb. 68	Aviation Sales NZ, Auckland, ZK-BYE; previously USAF 42- 93599, then VH-IND
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Service history: possibly only imported into Laos with the help of Air America; believed to be one of the two C-47s delivered to General Vang Pao's Xieng Khouang Air Transport in 1967/8 (Conboy / Morrison, *Shadow war*, p. 170).

Fate: not current with Air America on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2) or ever later.

VI) Air America and VIAT's C-47:

In the early sixties, the official presence of the United States was still rather thin in South Vietnam, but, since 1961, Air America had very close relations with a South Vietnamese company called VIAT, which it helped to build up. Indeed, Air America's contract 61-119 with VIAT was for call-type personnel services in South East Asia including Air America's flight, ground, supply and maintenance personnel, as may be called by VIAT ("List of Air America's contracts", Memorandum of 27 July 62, in: UTD/Fink/B2F16). VIAT or Vietnamese Air Transport had been created by the CIA in the spring of 1961, in order to insert agents into North Vietnam, using a single unmarked C-47, that is former Air America C-47 B-809. The official Vietnamese name of VIAT was "Biet Kich So Bac - Nha Ky Thuat" or "Special Branch - Strategic Technical Directorate" (Ngo Xuan Hung, "A life for Freedom and Democracy. Special Branch – Northern Service [So Bac] and the Secret War against Hanoi", in: <http://ngothelinh.tripod.com/Tribute.htm>). Already on 9 March 61, President Kennedy had urged the CIA and the Department of Defense to launch guerilla operations into Viet Minh territory. So, some twenty Vietnamese aviators, pilots of the 1st Transport Squadron of the South Vietnamese Air Force led by Major Nguyen Cao Ky, were trained by Air America pilot Al Judkins and Air America navigator Jim Keck to fly extremely long missions at treetop level at night to precise drop zones. In chapter 5 of his memoirs, former Air America navigator Jim Keck recalls that the entire operation was run by the South Vietnamese (p.2). As the ICC, made up from Poland, Canada, and India, watched all US moves in South Vietnam, Al Judkins and Jim Keck officially were newspaper reporters. They used several South Vietnamese Air Force C-47s for training four complete crews, each consisting of two pilots, a navigator, a radio operator, and two kickers (p.8). These C-47s did not have radar nor large tail insignia (p.18) (The manuscript of these memoirs was kindly supplied to the author by Jim Keck). On 27 May 61, a team of four agents, code-named "Castor", was flown from Saigon to Danang, where the C-47 was refueled, and was then dropped in Ninh Binh Province in central North Vietnam. On 2 June 61, the same VIAT C-47 B-809 was used to drop a second team, code-named "Echo" into the hills north of Trooc in North Vietnam's Quang Binh Province. And on 16 June 61, the C-47 piloted by Major Ky dropped team "Dido" in Lai Chau Province, after having dispersed leaflets near the Tinh Tuc

tin mine in Cao Bang Province. But on its forth mission, VIAT C-47 B-809 was shot down in Ninh Binh Province on 1 July 61 (Conboy / Andradé, *Spies and commandos*, pp.33-41 and 317, note 2). The remains of the aircraft were picked up by the Government of North Vietnam, and the tail surface of VIAT's C-47 B-809 is exhibited at the Air Defense Museum at Hanoi, where it was photographed by Pedro Fuster in October 2005.



The remains of C-47 B-809, photographed at the Air Defense Museum, Hanoi, in October 2005 by Pedro Fuster (with kind permission from Pedro Fuster)

VII) Errors and mis-sightings:

Several publications mention the following C-47s, none of which appears in official Air America fleet lists. So all of them are believed to be errors and mis-sightings:

999 (reportedly c/n 34261): This was probably an error for **994** (c/n 34259); on the photo in Love, *Wings of Air America*, p. 75, which probably caused this error, the serial cannot be read with certainty.

B-112: This C-47 was reported to have crashed en route Vientiane-Luang Prabang, 20 miles from Luang Prabang, on 25 July 67; this aircraft was officially owned by Taiwan Aviation Corp; it does not appear in Air America's list "Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed" (in: UTD/CIA/B1F10) nor in the list "Total number of company employees killed in aircraft accidents" (in: UTD/CIA/B1F10); so it had probably nothing to do with Air America.

B-808: This was probably an error for B-809 (c/n 15437/26882).

B-811 (c/n 19932): This C-47 was never with Air America, as it was already destroyed in October 54, when CAT had not yet been renamed Air America.

B-819: This was not a C-47, but a PB5Y-5A.

B-828: This was probably an error for B-829 (c/n 17033/34298).

XW-PAD (c/n 15251/26696): This C-47 was probably never operated by Air America, but by Air Laos since March 60 and possibly by Bird & Sons; it was destroyed at Vientiane on 15 December 60, while flying with Air Laos; photos of the wreck can be found in the color slide collection of E.C. Kirkpatrick preserved at the Air America Archives.

XW-PDE (c/n 10160): It cannot be excluded that this C-47 of Continental Air Services also flew some missions on behalf of Air America, but as it was based at Udorn (Memorandum "Competitive aircraft" of 18 June 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2), Air America pilots and kickers sometimes used it as passengers ("dead heads") to fly to the places where their own missions started, that is to places like Sam Thong or Vientiane - as did, for example, Air America helicopter pilot Duane Keele on 12 October 68 and 17

December 68 according to his log book (in: UTD/Keele/B1F6)

XW-TDK: There is no evidence that this aircraft ever flew with Air America; it may have been imported to Laos with the help of Air America, but it is known to have been with Laos Air Charter and was at Vientiane without engines in May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C)

B-147, B-559, and B-994: These C-47s were bailed from the USAF and simply bore the last three digits of their USAF serials, but no B- country index, as photographic evidence proves: A photo of **147** is in UTD/Hickler/B29, a photo of **559** in: Love, *Wings of Air America*, p. 39, and a photo of **994** in UTD/Hickler/B28: The addition of a B- is the same type of incorrect hyper-correctness - coming from people who knew that B-registered Air America aircraft dropped their B- when flying in Laos - which also “created” the mysterious Beech 18 B-500 (see that).