

167th Airlift Wing Flying Operations FAQs

Why are the C-17s flying in the local area more than the C-5s did?

The C-17 training requirements are very robust. The noise output of the C-5 required crews to fly to other airports to compete training maneuvers. The C-17 is a quieter aircraft, which allows us to train here in the local area. This is a huge advantage to our unit and all tax payers since we do not have to burn fuel and waste aircraft hours flying to another airport.

Why are the C-17s required to fly at night?

Military aviation begins with domestic and international flight rules and requirements as a baseline and then adds on additional rules and requirements to ensure assigned missions have the highest probability of success within a defined safety margin. A large portion of these additional military requirements involve training at night. Air Force aircrews must be ready to perform their duties anywhere in the world, 24/7. We practice exactly how we fight to build consistency; consistency leads to safety. Our aircrews must be proficient at performing all aircraft maneuvers day or night. Some of the more challenging aspects that must be practiced at night are aerial refueling, low level flying, tactical departures/arrivals, and assault zone landings (very short, narrow runways that may be dirt or matted). Each crew member must learn to use different visual cues at night, perform some tasks differently, and this must become second nature to ensure a safe, successful mission. As you can probably imagine, some areas of the world become very hectic in the departure and arrival phases of flight. The actual flying of the aircraft should be second nature at this point while managing the flow of information, threats, other aircraft, terrain, and weather. In the local training environment, we control (to an extent) the level of information flow, simulated threats, other aircraft, terrain, and weather to build each crewmember's situational awareness and flying skills.

Why can't you reroute flights to avoid residential areas?

Each noise complaint is logged, charted, and addressed individually by the wing. Where feasible, operations have been adjusted to accommodate trouble areas. At this point, there are no published "no-fly areas," but mitigation is actively taking place to include pattern adjustments and increased altitudes. Please keep in mind that this airfield has been here for many years, and the runway was established long before much of the residential development in the area. Each type of aircraft requires pilots to line up with the runway at a specific distance for safe landing. The C-17 requires pilots to maneuver the aircraft to line up with the runway at a distance of 2 miles out from the airfield. This is standard procedure for C-17's when landing at any airfield around the world. It could become a safety issue if the aircraft were to deviate from this procedure to avoid residential areas.

What other actions are being taken to help residents?

The FAA is in the process of conducting another noise study that will identify noise impact areas and make recommendations if any noise hazards are identified. There will be advertisements at certain times during the 18-24 month study whereas the public will have an opportunity to have input.

How do I file a noise complaint?

Write down the time, date, location, direction of flight, and a description of the aircraft. Call in or email the information to the 167th Public Affairs Office at 304-616-5240 or 304-616-5251 or usaf.wv.167-aw.list.PA-Public-Affairs@mail.mil . 167th Airlift Wing officials log noise complaints into a database and review each complaint for deviations from standard flight operation procedures. If anything out of the ordinary is detailed in the complaint, the Wing will investigate the incident. If it is determined that a violation of directives did occur, steps will be taken immediately to prevent a reoccurrence. Most noise complaints come from areas directly in the flight path of our C-17's and where our routine training flights take place.