

- (b) In wartime military transport aircraft would be employed where they would have the most effect: what counts is to have a powerful, flexible force which can be deployed to different theatres of operations as needs arise.
- (c) Air Transport Group would not operate in isolation either in crisis periods or in wartime. It would be assisted by civil aviation, land transport, maritime shipping and allied air forces. The best possible legislation and arrangements are needed to enable the Department of National Defence (DND) to draw on civil resources as necessary, and to encourage the civil sector to participate in the national defence effort.

Air Transport Group today: an overview

Air Transport Group is one of the six¹ major components of Air Command and accounts for about one-quarter of the Command's total strength. It is a vital part of this country's entire military structure, having responsibility for "providing operationally ready military air transport forces capable of operating anywhere in the world."² It is also charged with providing operationally effective search and rescue forces for Canada and surrounding waters.

The duties flowing from ATG's roles were described to the Committee by senior officers on 2 May 1985. They are to:

...provide airlift support for the defence of North America; airlift the Allied Command Europe, ACE, mobile force....contingents to the NATO north flank; provide logistic resupply and personnel reinforcement for the ACE Mobile Forces; airlift augmentation forces to Canadian Forces Europe; withdraw and redeploy Canadian Forces peacekeeping forces; deploy forces for internal security and post-strike operations; evacuate Canadian nationals, noncombatants and casualties from overseas areas; provide for and support search and rescue, humanitarian and medical evacuation operations; and provide secure airlift to senior government and military personnel.

In addition the transport force has the following peacetime tasks: maintenance of capability for wartime and emergency tasks; provide services of 'state aircraft' for state visits...; logistic support of northern outposts, such as Alert in the North-West Territories; airlift in support of national defence and other government activities...; national disaster responses...; and international humanitarian assistance...³

The functions flowing from these roles include the following:

First, for air transport: strategic airlift; air-to-air refuelling; tactical airlift; VIP [administrative flight services] airlift; scheduled airlift or service flights...; air ferry; aero-medical evacuation; and training. Secondly, for search and rescue:

¹ The six groups of Air Command are: Fighter Group; Ten Tactical Air Group; Maritime Air Group; Air Transport Group; Fourteen Training Group; and Air Reserve Group.

² *Defence 84*, (Ottawa, Department of National Defence), p. 57.

³ Senate of Canada, *Proceedings of the Special Committee of the Senate on National Defence*, (First Session, Thirty-third Parliament; hereafter referred to as *The Proceedings*), 2 May 1985, p. 2:7.