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## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

28 FEB 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Robert B. Oakley  
Acting Ambassador at Large for Counterterrorism  
Department of State

FROM:

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Director of Global Issues

SUBJECT:

Libya: Composition and Use of Civil Air Fleet 

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1. The attached memorandum responds to a request for information concerning the organization, maintenance, and uses of Libya's civil air fleet. Particular attention has been given to the ways Tripoli uses its civil aircraft to support military, terrorist, and intelligence operations as well as ways Libya has found to evade the US embargo on aircraft trade.

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2. This memorandum was prepared by   
International Security Issues Division, Office of Global  
Issues.

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3. Your comments and suggestions on this memorandum are welcome and may be addressed to the Chief, International Transportation Branch, OGI,

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Attachment:

Libya: Composition and Use of Civil Air Fleet   
GI M 86-20057, 20 February 1986

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## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

21 February 1986

## Libya: Composition and Use of Civil Air Fleet

Summary

Libya's two civil airlines--Libyan Arab Airlines (LAA) and Jamahariya Air Transport (JAT)--have been used to support Tripoli's revolutionary policies abroad in addition to their broad use as scheduled and chartered passenger and cargo carriers. JAT, and its predecessor United African Airlines (UAA), have been noted ferrying military cargo and personnel, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The large civil air fleet is adequately maintained although the US trade embargo has hindered full use of the half of the aircraft that are of US origin. [REDACTED]

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Organization

Libyan civil aviation is controlled by the Chief of Civil Aviation under the jurisdiction of the Secretary for Communications. Both the Civil Aviation Department (CAD) and the Secretariat for Communications are headquartered in Tripoli. Two Libyan air carriers--Libyan Arab Airlines (LAA) and Jamahariya Air Transport (JAT)--provide domestic and international passenger and cargo services with major transport aircraft. [REDACTED]

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Libyan Arab Airlines is the government owned national flag carrier. It provides scheduled passenger and cargo service over an extensive domestic route network and from Tripoli to points in Eastern and Western Europe, northern and western Africa, and the Middle East. LAA uses a fleet of 10 Boeing 727 and three Fokker F-28 jets for its scheduled international routes and about 20 Fokker F-27s on domestic flights. LAA also has several American- and French-made executive jets and at least one VIP-configured Boeing 707 for use as directed by the Libyan government. LAA also shares several 707s with JAT and leases at least two cargo 707s, one from Icelandic Eagle Airways and one from West Coast Airlines of Ghana. [REDACTED]

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This memorandum was prepared by [REDACTED] the International Transportation Branch, International Security Issues Division, Office of Global Issues, with contributions from [REDACTED] Maghreb Branch, Arab-Israeli Division, Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis. Information as of 20 February 1986 was used in its preparation. Questions and comments should be addressed to Chief, International Transportation Branch, [REDACTED]

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[redacted]

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Jamahariya Air Transport is the most recent of several successive charter carriers organized and owned by the Libyan government. JAT was formed in late 1982 as an all-cargo subsidiary to LAA, taking over the fleet of United African Airlines (UAA), a previous Libyan charter operator. JAT operates 21 Soviet-made IL-76 jet cargo aircraft; at least one, and possibly four, Lockheed L-100 turboprop cargo aircraft (the civilian version of a C-130); and most of the 17 Boeing 707 passenger and cargo aircraft in the Libyan inventory. Many aircraft, including the IL-76s and Boeing 707s, have been noted flying some times on flights for LAA and at other times for JAT. [redacted]

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#### Fleet Maintenance

[redacted] Libya's airlines have faced substantial problems in maintaining their fleets, but have kept most aircraft operational. Since a substantial portion of the inventory consists of American-made aircraft, the US embargo has denied Libya direct access to essential parts and forced Tripoli to seek ways to circumvent the embargo.

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[redacted]

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- o Libya uses leased 707s--from such operators as Icelandic Eagle Airways and Ghana's West Coast Airlines--to avoid the sanctions by having the owners provide maintenance. [redacted]

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- o An Italian firm maintained Libya's C-130s until 1983 when US diplomatic efforts persuaded them to cancel the contract. [redacted]

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o [redacted]

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- o According to press reports, a Libyan Boeing 707 cargo aircraft was repaired in mid-1984 in Istanbul by THY Turkish Airlines. [redacted]

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- o [redacted] two Libyan Boeing 707s were undergoing repair at Surcin Airfield, near Belgrade, Yugoslavia in May 1984. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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- o The Libyans may be cannibalizing some Boeing 707s to provide spare parts for operating aircraft. [redacted]

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- o Minor maintenance may be performed on an ad-hoc or emergency basis at several of the international airports LAA frequents. [redacted]

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[redacted] we believe that at least six of the 17 Boeing 707s in the combined LAA and JAT inventories are in good repair and perform regularly on international flights. Another six have not been observed in flight status since 1984 and probably have maintenance-related problems. We believe the five other 707s, observed only in their delivery flights to Libya in 1983 and early 1984, have serious maintenance difficulties or are being cannibalized. LAA's ten Boeing 727s all appear to be kept in suitable repair for international scheduled flight service as a result of their arrangements with Air France. Embassy reporting indicates that Belgium's Sabena Airlines may provide some maintenance services by receiving Libyan engines for repair from Air France. Sabena denies direct dealing with Libya. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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The leased Icelandic Eagle Airways 707 is in good repair since Icelandic Eagle Airways is not affected by the US embargo. The 707 on lease from Ghana's West Coast Airlines flies frequently between Ireland and Libya to transport mutton, and is probably in an adequate state of repair. We believe that Libya may own an interest in West Coast Airlines, based on reports of a Qadhafi proposal made to several African nations a few years ago to assist them in setting up airlines in return for 30 percent Libyan ownership. West Coast Airlines has two cargo-configured 707s in its inventory. These aircraft were acquired in 1982 from a Luxembourg firm that has a long history of dealing with Libya.

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Tripoli's maintenance experience with its Dutch and Soviet aircraft is mixed.

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the airlines have little difficulty maintaining the fleet of Dutch-made Fokker F-27 turboprops. These aircraft are used mainly on domestic routes and do not have significant American content. The Fokker F-28 jets, however, have US-manufactured engines and Libya is reportedly experiencing maintenance difficulties due to the US embargo, although the aircraft have been in Libyan inventory for less than two years. Libya has 21 Soviet-made IL-76 jet cargo aircraft in its civil fleet--the largest inventory of these planes outside of the USSR. Two of these IL-76s may be non-operational due to maintenance problems. Moreover, the IL-76 has a reputation of being a very difficult aircraft to maintain and the excessive dust in Libya's climate is hard on aircraft jet engines.

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#### Military Use of Civil Air Fleet

The Libyan government has consistently used its civil air operators to augment its military airlift capacity and as instruments of its foreign political and military policies. While active primarily in providing logistical support to Tripoli-backed forces in sub-Saharan Africa, Libya's airlines have also been used to aid friendly governments in the Persian Gulf and Central America.

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- o In 1978, during the Tanzania-Uganda conflict, Qadhafi decided to intervene in support of his friend and ally, Idi Amin. LAA Boeing 727 aircraft assisted Libyan Air Force transports in an airlift of troops, arms, and ammunition.
- o Civilian transport aircraft were employed in the Libyan evacuation from Chad in 1981. LAA and UAA aircraft were used extensively to withdraw men and material from N'Djamena. Military and civilian aircraft were both used to airlift troops, armored personnel carriers, and light aircraft. In the current Libyan-supported build-up of rebel forces in northern Chad, JAT aircraft have been used to airlift supplies into several locations.
- o In 1982, civil aircraft delivered several loads of military supplies to the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. one Boeing 707 in October carried four Italian-made SF-260 light attack/training aircraft. a C-130 delivered at least two MI-2 (HOPLITE) helicopters. However, in an incident that brought world-wide attention to Libyan arms transfers, three JAT IL-76s and one L-100, with flight manifests listing the cargo as medical supplies, were impounded in April 1983 by the Brazilian government when it found that the aircraft were, in fact, carrying military equipment to Nicaragua. The aircraft and cargo, which included an L-39 jet trainer/attack airplane, multiple rocket launchers, and ammunition, were eventually returned to Libya.

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- [redacted] 25X1
- o From 1982 through 1984 [redacted] one Libyan civil C-130 was stationed in Ethiopia to provide arms transport services for Ethiopian military and Somalian rebel troops in-country. With short and rough field landing capabilities, the C-130 was used to ferry arms close to the fighting front. [redacted] 25X1
  - o During 1985 [redacted] Libyan civil IL-76 and 707 aircraft assisted Iranian Air Force Boeing 747 and 707 aircraft in the transfer of SCUD missiles and surface-to-air (SAM) missiles from Libya to Iran. [redacted] 25X1
  - o Arms deliveries to various west African states have been reported over the years. [redacted] used civil transports to deliver SF-260 aircraft to Burkina Faso in 1984. Press reporting on several occasions tell of Libyan arms deliveries to Ghana and Benin. [redacted] 25X1

- [redacted] 25X1
- [redacted] 25X1
- o The assassin of a Libyan dissident in Athens in June 1984 was an LAA employee assigned to the Athens office.
  - o In April 1985, Muhammed Ali Al-Ati, the chief of the LAA office in London, was expelled from the UK for harassing Libyan students there. Later that year, Al-Ati was appointed chief of the LAA office in Khartoum, Sudan [redacted] He was quietly expelled in November 1985, but may have returned. 25X1
  - o Two Libyan civil aircraft carrying Libyans to the Hajj were denied entry into Saudi Arabia in August 1984 as the result of their refusal to either turn over the 90 weapons found in their luggage, or permit the search of other luggage. [redacted] 25X1

The Libyan airlines have also been used in more conventional intelligence collection roles. An LAA aircraft conducted photo-reconnaissance flights over the Cairo area while ostensibly carrying supplies to the Hajj in 1984, [redacted] 25X1

- o In another incident, [redacted] one JAT IL-76, with an all-military crew, stopping in a position to see F-14 fighters in a USN hanger at Naples airport. The IL-76 stayed in position for 2 to 5 minutes, delaying other incoming aircraft for no apparent reason other than to observe the US aircraft. [redacted] 25X1

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Libyan Arab Airlines International Service and Offices

<u>City/Country</u>	<u>Flights per Week</u>	<u>Office</u>
Algiers/Algeria	1	Yes
Amman/Jordan	1	Yes
Amsterdam/Netherlands	1	No
Athens/Greece	5	Yes
Beirut/Lebanon	None	yes
Bucharest/Romania	1	Yes
Belgrade/Yugoslavia	2	Yes
Damascus/Syria	5	Yes
Casablanca/Morocco	4	Yes
Frankfurt/Germany	5	Yes
Geneva/Switzerland	None	Yes
Istanbul/Turkey	5	Yes
Jeddah/Saudi Arabia	2	Yes
Karachi/Pakistan	2	Yes
Kuwait/Kuwait	1	No
Larnaca/Cyprus	1	No
London/UK	3	Yes
Madrid/Spain	2	Yes
Malta/Malta	6	Yes
Milan/Italy	2	Yes
Moscow/USSR	1	No
Paris/France	1	Yes
Rome/Italy	5	Yes
Sofia/Bulgaria	2	Yes
Tunis/Tunisia	2	Yes

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Vienna/Austria	1	No
Warsaw/Poland	1	Yes
Zurich/Switzerland	2	Yes

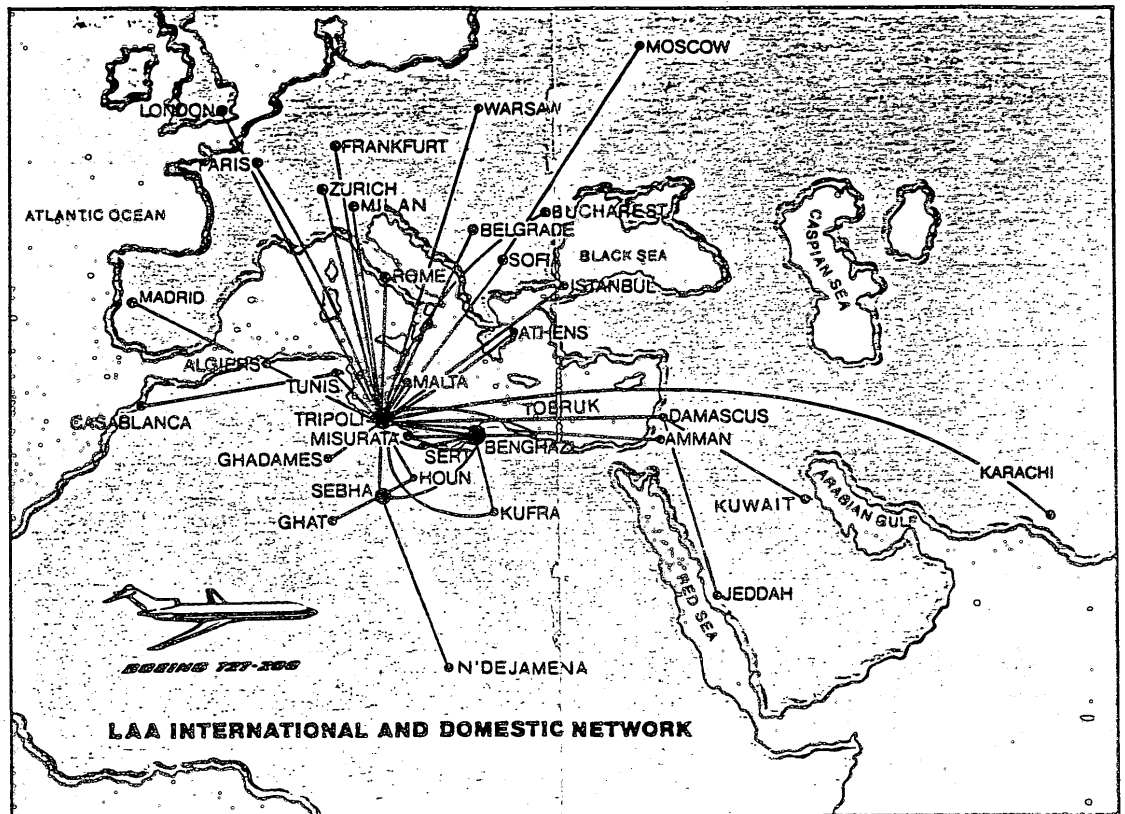
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Libyan Civil Aircraft Inventory

<u>Type</u>	<u>Quantity /Airline</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Boeing 727	10/LAA	US	Purchased prior to 1982 from the US. Used on regular international service. Maintained by Air France.
Boeing 707	3/LAA 14/JAT	US	At least two configured as VIP transports. Eight purchased prior to 1982 embargo. At least five obtained from Air France via TRATCO (Luxembourg) in 1983.
C-130/L-100	3-4/JAT	US	Libya purchased two L-100s in 1985--evading the US embargo. Several more in air force inventory.
Fokker F-28	3/LAA	Netherlands	Partial delivery in 1984 of an order for 10. Contract was cancelled by Netherlands due to US embargo.
Fokker F-27	18/LAA 3/JAT	Netherlands	Acquired prior to 1982.
IL-76	21/JAT	USSR	Libya has been taking delivery of three to five of these large cargo aircraft per year. Can carry APCs but not tanks. Five more in air force.

FREE man is to be happy, he must be free, and to be free, man must possess his own needs.  
*The Green Book*

THE industrial establishment is based on raw materials, machines and workers.  
*The Green Book*



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SUBJECT: Libya: Composition and Use of Civil Air Fleet

OGI/ISID/IT/ (20 Feb 86)

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