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HISTORICAL REPORT
OF THE ACQUISITION AND CONVERSION OF OKLAHOMA
CITY DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT FACILITIES TO CCAMA ACTIVITIES
OKLAHOMA CITY AIR MATERIEL AREA
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to record in detail the acquisition and move of certain divisions of the OCAMA to the Oklahoma City Douglas Plant, which is located on the east boundary of the Government reservation in Oklahoma County, Oklahoma, known as Tinker Air Force Base.

SECTION II

PRELIMINARIES

In August of 1945, machinery was set in motion by the Commanding General of OCAMA whereby studies were made and recommendations submitted to Headquarters, AMC, setting forth the advantages that would be derived from the acquisition of the Douglas Plant thereby making it a part of OCAMA.

A committee consisting of

Colonel Carl J. Crane, 015936, USAF, - Maintenance

Colonel William R. Johnson, 0267796, USAF - Supply

Colonel Joseph B. Jiskra, 0117111, Adjutant General's Office

Lt. Colonel Ray S. Morgan, 0104915, USAF - Air Installations

was appointed by OCAMA, Headquarters, and Special Orders No. 196, dated 17 August 1945, was issued directing this committee to study and submit recommendations as to the feasibility of adapting the Douglas aircraft buildings for use of this depot. Authority was granted this committee to use any and all personnel of this command necessary to expedite this study.

SECTION III

VISITATION

On August 21 and 22, 1945, Benjamin W. Chidlaw, Major General, USA, Deputy Commanding General, Engineering (T-3), accompanied by General Isaac J. Ott visited the Douglas aircraft plant for the purpose noted above. The Douglas plant was inspected in company with General Fred S. Borum, Commanding General, OCAMA, Mr. C. C. Pearson, Plant Manager, and Mr. E. A. Johnson, Plant Superintendent of the Douglas Aircraft Corporation. The inspection included shop equipment, utilities, layout, rail facilities, and grounds.

It was learned during this inspection that the present location of the Douglas plant was arrived at as a result of careful original planning by the Air Corps Site Board. The committee was advised that other locations for the factory had been considered, such as Bethany, Oklahoma, but that the board felt that there would be obvious advantages in locating the factory in the close vicinity of Tinker Air Force Base in order that it could be utilized by the depot in the post-war period. It was also learned that the Douglas plant would add approximately 2,225,000 square feet of floor space to the present Tinker Air Force Base area. The Maintenance Division at that time utilized approximately 1,183,000 square feet. The acquisition of the Douglas plant provided additional space for such orderly expansion as would be required in the event of an emergency in the future. It was also considered after complete planning and transfer to the Douglas plant, these facilities could be operated more effectively and efficiently along modern lines than could now be accomplished

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in the large scattered group of buildings presently being used.

On 7 December 1945, a committee representing Maintenance Division, Headquarters, AMC, viewed the Douglas building with the intention of utilizing sections of this building for overhaul of all turbo-jet and gas turbine engines. The committee was composed of

Colonel Paul B. Jackson, Chief, Maintenance Division, OCAMA

Lt. Colonel Brown, Chief, Air Installations, OCAMA

Lt. Colonel A. T. Economy, Chief, Methods and Procedures, OCAMA

Lt. Colonel John Hildabot, Headquarters, AMC

Major R. E. Duket, SBAMA

Major H. F. Helbig, Maintenance Division, Headquarters, AMC

Mr. V. J. Myers, Maintenance Division, Headquarters, AMC

Mr. F. Thurman, SBAMA

Mr. E. Lund, SBAMA

Mr. C. S. West, Maintenance Division, OCAMA

The 250,000 square feet of floor space necessary for the overhaul, storage of all O2Q parts, and storage for reparable and serviceable turbo jet and gas turbine engines would be available in this building. The location selected in the Douglas aircraft building would economically and easily lend itself to expansion when the jet overhaul program so justified.

SECTION IV

ACHIEVEMENTS

After many exchanges of letters and telephone conversations, authority was received from Headquarters, AMC, directing this Command to assume accountability by the deadline date of 15 March 1946 for the

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property in the Oklahoma City Douglas Aircraft Company plant which had been designated for retention by the Maintenance Division. Accountability was to be assumed subject to spot check, and discrepancies to be adjusted as inventory was actually accomplished. Authority, TT-TSGEN, dated 11 March 1946, filed in the Adjutant General's Office, Tinker Air Force Base. CCAMA assumed command jurisdiction of the Douglas Aircraft Assembly Plant as of 0001, 1 November 1945. Immediately, the Property Section of the Air Installations Office began to incorporate the Douglas plant on the real property records of this Command.

It was tentatively decided that Maintenance Division and the Headquarters Administrative Offices would occupy the Douglas plant. Tinker Air Force Base, CCAMA, was designated accountable for standby equipment in letter from Headquarters, AMC, subject: "Transfer of Command Jurisdiction," dated 5 November 1945.

Maintenance prepared a listing of equipment and material they would need for the immediate future and ensuing years of post-war operations. Plans, T-5, prepared a listing of the requirements of the various sections of this Command. These requests were submitted to the AAF Plant Representative, Douglas Aircraft Corporation, 27 November 1945. Plant Clearance Officials and Contractor Representatives honored these requests and prepared proper shipping documents.

In April 1946, a Douglas Move Committee was formed consisting of

Colonel D. B. Cullinane - Chairman

Lt. Colonel V. J. Brown, - Member

Captain J. D. McSweeney - Member

Lt. John F. Hohl - Member

W/O J. Eyberse - Member

Captain H. R. Underwood - Member

Mr. W. V. Gullette - Member

to manage, study, and approve the various locations and requirements in connection with the Douglas facilities move. A field office was established and located at Column O-65 in the Douglas building shop area. Mr. Redmond was placed in charge of the field office.

Daily meetings were held by the Move Committee until the move to the Douglas plant was completed. Three architectural draftsmen were assigned to make necessary drawings required incidental to any moves. Mr. Koerner from Air Installations Office, AMC, was assigned to monitor construction details and Mr. Rinor, Electrical Engineer from Wright Field, was assigned to monitor electrical installations. Three draftsmen were assigned to the field office to measure and mark equipment locations, floor pits, etc., from approved drawings.

The canteen was put into operation at Column S-67 and services were expanded as required. It was necessary to completely renovate the main cafeteria.

First Aid in the Main Dispensary was put into operation and additional First Aid Stations were activated as necessities required.

Time clocks were installed on the east wall of the aircraft production line to accommodate employees assigned to Area C.

The rooms located in Lean-to 6 were cleared of all cafeteria fixtures and designated as the carburetor and fuel injection flow test rooms. The activation of these rooms were held in suspense awaiting specification plans from Wright Field.

The location designated Engine Disassembly and Cleaning, Columns 101 and 108 to A and M, was cleared, and preparation of floor for the

installation of multiple stage washers and floor conveyors were begun. The Machine Shop Branch, Woodmill Branch, Aircraft Repair Section, Master Gage Unit, Chemical Laboratory Unit, Equipment Services Branch, Maintenance Administrative offices were moved to the Douglas building during May 1946. A complete schedule of Maintenance move was planned as shown on Drawing No. CH 1002-D attached.

Progress was accomplished as indicated on attached photographs, dated 8 November 1946, showing percentage complete. Personnel were moved to the Douglas plant in accordance with the schedule as shown on Drawing CH 1001-G attached.

A total of \$650,000 was allocated to defray expenses in moving, modification, and installation of equipment in the Douglas building. A \$200,000 allotment was received 18 April 1946, \$300,000 additional was received 31 May 1946, and an additional \$150,000 allotment was received in July 1946, making a grand total of \$650,000. \$416,813.76 was obligated out of the \$650,000, and \$416,818.42 was actually spent. The balance of \$233,181.58 was returned as the result of cancelling several major projects that had previously been contemplated in connection with the occupation of the Douglas aircraft plant by OCAMA. (The above figures were extracted from the records of the Budget and Fiscal Office, OCAMA.)

→ Maintenance responsibilities of the Douglas plant was assumed by Headquarters, OCAMA, on 28 February 1946. Simultaneously, Douglas was released of all maintenance responsibilities. Authority letter from TSBRE4B to Commanding General, OCAMA, dated 31 January 1946, filed in the Adjutant General's Office.

On or about May 1946, the move from Area A to the Douglas plant was begun in earnest, and by November 1946, all divisions, section, and branches were stable and in full operation.

All First Aid Stations and the Main Dispensary were taken over intact by the Industrial Medical Service, i. e., equipment and fixtures including some medical supplies. Considerable medicines were sold by Douglas to the Oklahoma General Hospital.

All fire fighting equipment including fire trucks, chemical carts, fire extinguishers, stations, etc., were taken over intact by Air Installations.

The cafeteria, library and ADT system were taken over intact.

The garage building and all installed equipment previously used by the Douglas Company was occupied by the Station Motor Pool. Only minor alterations were required to make this building conform to War Department standards. All guard facilities were taken over and adequate guards were placed to safe guard effectively life and property at the Douglas plant.

SECTION V

NEWS ITEMS

Brigadier General F. S. Borum, present Commanding General, OCAMA, was the Commanding General preceding and during the Douglas move. General Borum was instrumental and responsible for the acquisition of the Douglas plant which is now a major part of Tinker Air Force Base.

Colonel Carl J. Crane was, at the time of the Douglas move, Deputy for Engineering, T-3. He was later relieved and is now in California.

Colonel Paul B. Jackson was Chief, Maintenance Division, preceding and during the Douglas move. Colonel Jackson was originally assigned on

the Advisory Committee, later being relieved and assigned to the Douglas Move Working Committee.

The Working Committee did a fine job in accomplishing the move with despatch.

Mrs. Virginia Beedle was appointed manager of the cafeterias in the Douglas plant. Efficient management has resulted in excellent food at reasonable prices.

Twenty additional draftsmen composed of Oklahoma University students and employees from SAAMA were employed and assigned to the field office to expedite necessary drawings required to make shop layouts and equipment installations.

The Aircraft Repair Section, Maintenance, was the first section to move and resume full operation.

Immediately after the fire in Building 230, Area A, Production Control, Inspection, and Administration, Maintenance, set up temporary offices on the second floor, Building 240, later moving to the Douglas building along with Headquarters offices, after complete planning and allocation of offices had been made.

SECTION VI

SUMMARY

The Douglas aircraft plant was planned and built for expedient production of C-47 aircraft urgently needed to prosecute the war effort and with the view in mind of converting to depot use in the post-war period.

By converting the Douglas plant into the OCAVA activities, it made possible the establishment of one of the largest AMC Depots in the

United States or its continental limits making it possible to:

1. Accomplish large projects on large aircraft inside of buildings thereby eliminating the necessity of subjecting personnel and equipment to inclement and frigid weather.
2. Consolidate many departments.
3. Achieve better utilization and control of personnel.
4. Achieve closer and more efficient coordination between activities as the result of the close proximity of offices.
5. Provide adequate bulk storage space.
6. Transfer jet and gas turbine engine overhaul from San Bernardino, California, to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Area B, known as the Modification Center, was acquired and occupied by CCAMA prior to the actual move to the Main Douglas plant. The Modification Center afforded space and facilities to conduct the Stoner-Mudge project on AF C-54 airplanes.