Air America's Laos Base is located at Wattay Airport, Vientiane, Laos, the country's Administrative Capital; Luang Prabang, the Royal Capital, is 145 miles to the north.

AAM operates in Laos to meet contractual commitments with such organizations as the International Control Commission (C.I.C.), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

To meet these commitments, AAM performs these services in Southeast Asia:

1. Maintains C.I.C. helicopters based at Wattay Airport and provides ground services to the organization's four-engine Boeing Stratoliners transiting Vientiane. AAM also supplies weather information for C.I.C. flights into and out of Wattay.

2. Provides airlift throughout Laos under contract with USAID. (Note: The Air Transport Operations Group—ATOG—is a cargo and traffic handling function which AAM performs under contract with USAID).

Of AAM's Laos airlift operations, 85% are cargo flights, 15% personnel flights. Cargo delivered in Laos is mostly rice and related commodities which are both free air-dropped without parachute or landed on-site. AAM also parachutes commodities which would not withstand the impact of a free fall—such as drums of kerosene. Air-dropping accounts for over 80% of the deliveries; the rest is landed. AAM air-delivers over 8-million pounds of commodities a month.

In addition to its Main Base at Vientiane, AAM operates stations at these far-flung Laotian localities—going from north to south: Ban Houie Sai, Luang Prabang, Sam Thong, Savannakhet and Pakse.

AAM operates flights on a regular schedule between Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Savannakhet, Pakse and Attopeu, Laos, and a regular twice-a-week commissary flight to Bangkok, Thailand.

AAM planes also fly throughout Laos non-scheduled. They operate off of all kinds of strips—ranging from Wattays 6,000 ft. concrete runway to 600 ft. dirt strips perched on mountain ridges, carved out of hillsides or snuggled in remote valleys.

A total of 43 planes are based at VTE: Helios, Porters, Valpars, Ten-twos, Caribous, C-47's, C-46's and C-123's. VTE employs over 1,100 personnel who, by passport check, cover the astonishing range of 13 nationalities. The large majority, however, are Lao.

Air America's aircraft operate seven days a week year-round. And this is done in the face of such harassments as a 21-day flood (which, in 1966, covered Wattay with 5 ft. of water), actions by unfriendly forces, tornados and the like.

"PROFESSIONALISM THROUGHOUT"