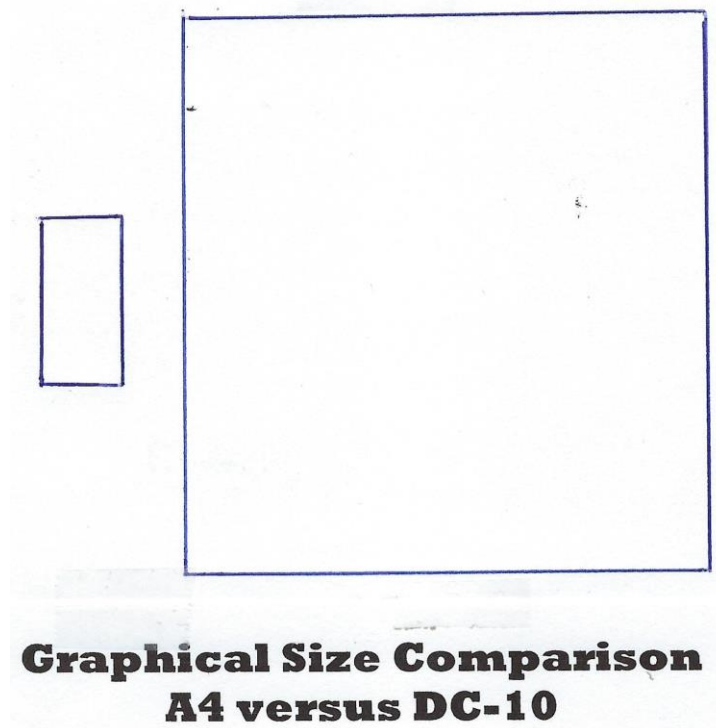


THE LARGE & SMALL OF IT!®

by Dan Pemble, Kissimmee, Florida – January 1, 2024-

During my 40.5-year career at McDonnell Douglas and Boeing, I have many great memories from the 9.5 years I spent in-house at the Douglas Aircraft Company facility in Long Beach, California prior to spending the rest of my career permanently at off-site Customer locations as a Field Service Representative. During the period of time I was in house, I was first a Publications Writer and then a Customer Service Representative in the Flight Guidance and Navigation group; in both disciplines I needed to become intimately involved & knowledgeable in all things DC-10. As such, I spent many hours “crawling around” in DC-10’s on the production line trying to self-educate myself about just “what makes them tick”. That is, where are the components, wiring bundles, terminal strips, & electrical connectors located and how can they be accessed for maintenance and troubleshooting purposes, and how do all the related systems operate; this was an “extensive menu” of things to learn for sure! Most all of this was as related to procedures to be contained in official Company Maintenance Manuals, but also to gain competency such that I could personally provide credible on and off-site support to our airline Customers.

During my many treks to the DC-10 production line, while making my way through various aisle and passage ways in the enormous Douglas facility, it was necessary to pass by the notorious Douglas A4 “Skyhawk” assembly line which was still going strong! Just so you know, over the period of 1954-1979, a total of 2960 of these aircraft in all versions were produced for the U.S. Navy, Marines, and others at the Douglas-Long Beach site. I must say that after spending time on the DC-10 production line, each time I walked by the A4 line, the A4 literally looked like a toy airplane! The following is a reasonably-accurate depiction of the A4 and DC-10 size differences.



A toy airplane the A4 WAS NOT! It was a formidable airplane designed for specific combat missions in which it excelled! In addition to its role in the U. S. Navy and Marines, the airplane populated the inventory of many foreign air forces including those in: Israel, Argentina, Kuwait, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brazil. For some years, the A4 was also successfully flown by the Navy’s Blue Angels.



The mighty Douglas A4 Skyhawk

Given the popularity of the A4 and its long production run, it's little wonder that Douglas employees and fans of the A4 proudly wore the following patch and displayed similar decals on their cars and trucks!

