



Pilatus PC-9 (above)

Since 1991 11 Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-62-powered PC-9s have been in use exclusively with Zielflug Staffel 12 for target-towing duties in support of the five anti-aircraft regiments and single mobile anti-aircraft missile regiment in the country. For this role they received a high-conspicuity colour scheme. The PC-9s are also used for electronic countermeasures training with ground- and air units, employing the Ericsson Eriqammer A-100 (Vista-5) ECM pod, a role previously undertaken by Hunter Mk 68 two-seaters of Flieger Staffel 24. Both unit badges are portrayed on the fuselage of the PC-9.

The PC-9's normal operational base at Samedan in Engadin will be closed for regular military use, and the aircraft will be shared between Payerne and Dübendorf.



Pilatus PC-7 Turbo-Trainer (left and below)

Some 41 Turbo-Trainers were originally procured for use by the Piloten Rekruten Schule (Pil RS) at Magadino, the Flying Training Organisation (FTO) of the Schweizer Luftwaffe which was administered by the Bundesamt für Ausbildung der Luftwaffe (BAALW, or Federal Office of Air Force Training).

Today military and flying training is conducted separately. The first year comprises basic military education, while in the second year the flying course starts and cadets receive their ICAO Joint Aviation Requirement (JAR) – Air Transport Pilot (ATP)-training over a 16-month period. This training is outsourced to the civil Swissair Aviation School (SRAS).

After this civil training, military flying continues on the PC-7 at the Pil RS. The course traditionally starts around the end of August and over a period of 70 weeks 125 hours are flown on the PC-7 and F-5F Tiger (or Alouette III for helicopter pilots). The Hawk is no longer part of the course. Annually some 1,000 19-year olds present themselves for the FVS course to become a military pilot. Between 35 and 42 men and women start their course at the Pil RS. Only a quarter will eventually complete the course successfully. As the fourth and final step of the three-year training the newly trained pilots are further trained as instructors.

Some 18 PC-7s have been selected to receive a cockpit upgrade, to conform their instrumentation to JAR standard. In 1987 a nine-aircraft formation display team made its show debut. In 1989 the 'PC-7 Team' was officially formed.

