



### Eurocopter AS 332M Super Puma

Part of the Air Force Rüstungsprogramm 1966 was the procurement of three Eurocopter AS 332M1 Super Pumas, locally known as TH86 (Transport Helicopter 86, the latter referring to the budget year). The first was delivered on 14 August 1967. Swiss experience with the Super Puma in the difficult mountainous terrain was highly satisfactory, encouraging the air force to enlarge the fleet in Rüstungsprogramm 1989 by purchasing 12 additional Super Pumas (now called TH89) to boost transport helicopter capacity. The three earlier Super Pumas were modified to TH89 standard.

Both militia ('miliz') and professional ('profi') air force crew operate the fleet of Super Pumas.

### Sud-Aviation Alouette III

The Swiss Air Force took its first nine Sud-Aviation SA 316B Alouette IIIs into service in 1964. Coincidentally, that same year the second batch of 20 Alouette IIs was delivered, the helicopter type it would later entirely replace.

Two additional batches followed: in 1966 a total of 15 was delivered directly from the factory in Marignane, France, and between 1972 to 1974 a further 60 were locally produced under licence by F+W at Emmen.

Being the most numerous helicopter in service, the fleet of 84 Alouette III helicopters was for a long time the backbone of all Air Transport Squadrons, at its peak equipping Luftransport Staffel (LT St) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8.

Army XXI specifies a significant reduction in the Alouette III force, downsizing from 60 to a fleet of 35 by 1 January 2004, coincidentally exactly 10 years after the last Alouette IIs were withdrawn from use. The remaining mixed Luftransport Staffels continue to operate out of Dübendorf, Payerne and Alpnach. A small detachment remains at Locarno. Current planning calls for the replacement with two squadrons of possibly armed helicopters.

