



# HUNTER 80

PART 2

## THE AGM-65B MAVERICK

Using declassified and previously unpublished official documents, **PETER LEWIS** concludes his two-part article on the Swiss Air Force's "Hunter 80" upgrade programme — in which the air arm's venerable Hawker fighters were adapted for the ground-attack role — with the type's introduction to the state-of-the-art Maverick air-to-surface missile

**W**HEN THE SWISS government ordered the Hughes AGM-65B Maverick air-to-surface missile in 1982, it was the most technologically complex weapons system ever to have equipped the Hawker Hunter. The missile was designated Flz Lwf LB 82 (Aircraft Missile Air-to-Ground 82) in Swiss service, with reference to the 1982 budget acquisition of 160m Swiss Francs (CHF).

In total, 381 Mavericks were purchased, 19 of which were broken down for spares. Included in the purchase were an additional 20 Training Guided Missiles (TGMs) which were coloured white and cleared for flight, while 18 beige Missile Loading Trainers (MLTs) were used for ground-handling simulations, including the theoretical replacement of the missile's thermal battery. Each missile weighed 210kg (465lb), measured 2.48m (8ft 1½in) in length with a diameter of 30.5cm (12in) and cost the Swiss CHF300,000 per unit.

The B model of the Maverick incorporated "scene magnification" in the missile's analogue TV-camera view, as experience with the A model had shown that pilots had to



*In 1993 Fliegerstaffel 15 Hunter J-4040 was painted in a distinctive "newspaper" colour scheme to reflect the unit's "paper aeroplane" motif and had serial "J-4015" applied to mark the type's retirement from Flugwaffe service. Given the civil registration HB-RVS, the "Papyrus" Hunter still flies regularly today.*

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