LOOKING TO THE FUTURE FOR OVER 75 YEARS
PROUD OF OUR HERITAGE
1939 The company is founded by Emil Georg Bührle on 16 December in the conference room of the “Nidwaldner Kantonalbank”.

1940 Early March: construction work starts on the production buildings.

1941 Early June: workshop opens with 65 employees performing assembly and overhaul work on the C-35, and repairs to the Bf 108.

The five-day week is introduced, a novelty in Central Switzerland.

Approval of a project for a single-seat training aircraft, the P-1, for the Swiss military. The project is abandoned. The proposed aircraft remains a “bird on paper”.

1942 Official company inauguration on 5 February in the presence of General Henri Guisan.

The Swiss Aviation Office orders the planning and construction of a five-seat slow-flying aircraft designed by the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. The aircraft is called the SB-2 “Pelican”.

1943 Development of a two-seat training aircraft, the P-2.
1944  Military authorities order the new assembly of 17 Morane D-3801 and checks, modifications and overhaul work on the D-3800/01 and Me-109.
The Pilatus fire department is established.
First flight of SB-2 Pelican (HB-AEP) on 30 May. No series production follows.

1945  First flight of the prototype P-2 (HB-GAB) on 27 April.

1946  Production of 53 P-2, which are delivered to the Swiss Army in two stages.
Development and construction of a civilian five-seat small transport aircraft, the P-4, with a takeoff weight of 1,450 kg.

1947  Construction of three gliders, the WLM-1, for military training purposes.

1948  Construction of the two-seater glider, Spyr V (timber construction).
Pilatus Service Stations are set up in Geneva and Kloten.
First flight of the P-4 prototype (HB-AET) on 22 March. No series production follows.
1949 Military authorities order under-license construction of fuselages and tail booms for the DH-100 Vampire and later for the DH-112 Venom. A total of 250 units were produced until 1957.

1950 The Air Force orders modifications, checks and repair work on the AT-16 Scallion aircraft. This is performed on a total of 55 machines until 1958.

1951 Design of an aircraft for artillery observation, the P-5, for the military authorities. Project is abandoned.

1952 Launch of the company’s own pension plan with 63 members.

1953 Development of a training and exercise aircraft, the P-3, to meet air force needs. A total of 78 P-3s were produced for the Swiss Air Force up until 1958.
1954 | Construction of a technical administration building in Stans.

1955 | Production of a test series of twelve P-3.03s for the air force.

1956 | Construction of Hall 2 for aircraft overhauls in Stans.

   Emil Georg Bührle, the founder of Pilatus, dies in November. His son, Dieter Bührle, takes over the management of the group.

1957 | Development work starts on the Pilatus Porter PC-6 – an all-metal civilian transporter aircraft with short takeoff and landing characteristics.

1958 | An extra storey is added to the technical administration building in Stans.

   Start of assembly work on the five PC-6 pre-series machines.
1959 Through to 1975: production of 1,250 radar screens (grid reflectors) on behalf of Contraves.

First flight of Pilatus Porter PC-6 (HB-FAN) on 4 May.

1960 Through to 1969: overhaul work on the DC-3 for Swissair.

The Pilatus Porter with the inscription YETI flies to Nepal and takes part in the Swiss Dhaulagiri Expedition. Landings at 5,500 metres above sea-level set a new world record.

The military authorities order the Mirage III S and RS. Between 1964 and 1968, Pilatus builds various components for 54 machines, and assembles all fuselage fittings.

1961 S. Wien, the aviation entrepreneur from Alaska, is the first non-Swiss customer to buy a Pilatus Porter PC-6.

1962 First export of training aircraft: six P-3s go to the Brazilian marine.

1963 Order from sister company Contraves to produce a total of 1,400 power supply trolleys.
1964  Collective health insurance contract signed on 1 January with Konkordia and sick pay insurance with SUVA.
Construction of hall for custom production and metal cutting/shaping.
PC-6 production license granted to the American company, Fairchild Hiller.

1965  Construction of a twin-engine PC-8D proof-of-concept aircraft using the main Porter components. Two piston engines mounted above the wing sections produce 290 horsepower each.
The first edition of “Pilatus Post”, the employee magazine, is published in December.

1966  A P-3 is modified by fitting a gas turbine engine (Pratt & Whitney PT6A-20, 550 SHP) and is renamed the P-3 B. First flight on 7 April.
22 September: Pilatus becomes general agent for the MU-2 business aircraft made by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd.

1967  First flight of the Twin Porter PC-8D (HB-KOA) on 15 November.
Construction of the commercial administration building.
CIBA Pilatus Aerial Spraying Company is established as a subsidiary to participate in various crop spraying projects worldwide. A total of 15 Pilatus Porter PC-6s and other types were deployed until 1983.

1968  On 15 November the Pilatus Porter PC-6 fitted with an Astazou XIV turbine flies to a height of 13,485 m – a world record for aircraft in this weight category!
Pilatus completes and presents the first fully automatic Pilatus brand car wash.
Factory’s own water purification plant goes into operation.
1969 Pilatus closes its maintenance base for Swissair DC-3 aircraft.

1970 
Introduction of individual working hours.
License production of 66 Alouette III helicopter fuselages for military requirements.
Project for a PC-10, a twin-engine transporter with rear hatch door and space for 16 passengers, driven by two piston engines of 500 hp each or equivalent propeller turbines. The aircraft was never produced.
Pilatus acquires the manufacturing rights for the all-metal B-4 glider. Redesigned for rational production, weight is reduced and compliance with stricter construction regulations ensured: model name B-4/PC-11.
Pilatus service stations in Geneva and Kloten are sold to Jet aviation.
The Pilatus aviation club (MFGP) is established.

1971 Pilatus introduces monthly salaries for all employees.
Through to 1973: production of 12 air inlet fairings for the French Dassault “Mercure” aircraft, on behalf of the Eidgenössische Flugzeugwerke in Emmen.

1972 The Employer and Employees’ Councils merge to form the Employee Commission (BK).
Military authorities order the production of 1,572 lorry trailers, production continues until 1975.
First flight of series model B-4/PC-11 glider (HB-1101) on 5 May.
Equipping and conversion of Hunter fuselages. Overhaul work performed on these aircraft from 1973 onwards.

1973 The 1,000th Venom to be overhauled by Pilatus leaves the servicing hall.
Sale of “airliner washing project” and design to Schweizerische Industrie-Gesellschaft (SIG).
1974  Manufacture of the two-seat ZISCH 74 boat with a 265 hp 4-disc rotary-cylinder engine on behalf of Dr. Wankel. Successful trial run on Lake Lucerne in the summer of 1975. Experiment was not pursued further.

Master Porter PD-01 project is presented to the public in Munich, Germany, but abandoned shortly afterwards.

Construction of a second prototype known for the first time as a Pilatus PC-7, a conversion of a P-3.05, for flight trials and presentation. Complete redesign of the serial model.

1975  Pilatus acquires a servicing license from the French company Aerospatiale for its Alouette and Lama helicopters.

Pilatus takes part in the construction of Ariane, the European space rocket: various tests with the payload fairing, definition and production of the heat shield.

Construction of 17 cells (fuselage, wings and tail) for the “Flamingo” MBB-233 aircraft on behalf of the company Farner in Grenchen.

Maiden flight of the PC-7 prototype on 12 May.


1977  1 April: introduction of mandatory unemployment insurance.

Installation of a test workshop.

1978  Rights to manufacture the B-4/PC-11 sold to the Japanese company NIPPI. Pilatus produced a total of 322 units in Stans.
1979
Delivery of the first three series production PC-7 Turbo Trainers.

Construction of CIBA Pilatus operations building (workshop and administration).

Takeover of Britten-Norman, the British aircraft manufacturing company. Company operates under the name Pilatus Britten-Norman, producing twin-engine transport aircraft in the 3,000 to 4,000 kg weight range.

Company-wide workforce of around 250.

1980
Order from British Aerospace for the construction and manufacture of undercarriage covers for the Airbus A310.

1981
Construction of the new warehouse with forwarding department and mailing office.

Introduction of flexitime.

Swiss Air Force orders 40 PC-7 Turbo Trainers in mid-May.

1982
The PC-7 Turbo Trainer is redesigned as the Pilatus PC-9: new fuselage, enhanced engine performance, improved aerodynamics, ejection seats and contemporary cockpit design with mainly digital instruments.

1983
Construction in Stans of the building for chemical-physical surface treatment with materials testing facility, workshop for composite technology and offices.
1984 First flight of PC-9 (HB-HPA) on 7 May.

1985 The Australian government orders 63 PC-9s, manufactured under license.

1986 The 750th helicopter, an Alouette II, is serviced by Pilatus.

1987 Handover of three PC-7s to the “Martini” team, famous for its professional formation flying.

Start of development work on the single-engine Pilatus PC-12.

1988 The 250th Hawker Hunter Mk 58 to be overhauled by Pilatus leaves the servicing hall.

Start of license work (outfitting of fuselage segments) on the BAe HAWK jet trainer chosen by the Swiss military.
1989
Partnership-based involvement in the British Aerospace (BAe) Jetstream 31 and Jetstream 41 projects.

Working together with the French firm Aerospatiale, Pilatus manufactures the cockpit structure and doors of the Super Puma heavy-lift helicopter.

Contract with McDonnell Douglas to manufacture boarding stairs for the MD-80/90 airliner. 245 sets of stairs are made until the end of 1999.

1990
Delivery of ten PC-9s to the Federal Republic of Germany with specially developed target-tow system.

Agreement with Beech USA about involvement in the JPATS program for over 700 PC-9 training aircraft for the US Air Force and US Navy.

Production of various components for Jetstream, Super Puma and subcontractor work until 1995.

1991
Critical order volumes in early 1991 necessitate restructuring and other measures. 200 jobs lost and cost-cutting plans introduced.

The first PC-12 prototype (HB-FOA) completes its maiden flight on 31 May. This aircraft is taken out of service at the end of 1996 after 644 flying hours.

1992
Development of the PC-7 MkII starts on 17 August; first flight of HB-HMR on 28 September after just 42 days.

1993
South Africa places an order for 60 PC-7 Mklls.

The contract for transferring PC-12 cell construction work to Portugal is signed.

Pilatus leaves the Jetstream and Eurocopter subcontractor programmes.

Signing of an important subcontractor agreement for the production of F/A-18 “outer wings”. The planned take-over of Piper fails due to the product liability risk.
1994 Pilatus introduces employee profit-sharing and performance-related bonuses.

The PC-12 is approved by the Swiss Federal Office for Civil Aviation (FOCA) on 30 March, and by the American Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on 15 June.

The Pilatus Porter PC-6 is equipped with a four-blade propeller.

1995 Strict export regulations prevent an important business deal to provide training aircraft for the Mexican Air Force.

The US Air Force and US Navy opt for 711 Beech Pilatus PC-9s (JPATS programme) in what is the success story of the year. The deal generates license fees for Pilatus.

1996 The Swiss National Council decides that training aircraft do not come under the War Materials Act.

The American sales company, Pilatus Business Aircraft Ltd, is set up in Broomfield, Colorado, on 1 May.

Pilatus Maintenance becomes a separate business division with integral aircraft and helicopter overhauls and component maintenance.

The modularisation of the PC-7 MkII and PC-9 M improves flexibility and delivery capacity.

1997 Swiss voters deliver a resounding “No” to the arms export initiative. This clarifies the framework conditions for the export of training aircraft once and for all.

After 26 years, Pilatus returns to Geneva Airport with the acquisition of Transairco SA – TSA (now RUAG).

Rollout of the 100th PC-12 in November.

“RENOVE” reorganisation project: Pilatus reorganises itself into independent Business Units: Government Aviation, General Aviation and Maintenance.

1998 Pilatus sells Pilatus Britten-Norman, its British subsidiary.

The PC-12 sales and service network is expanded around the world.

The sales company Pilatus Australia Pty Ltd is set up in Canberra, Australia, on 7 August.

The company’s many years of consistent efforts for the environment are rewarded: Pilatus wins the “Albert Koechlin Stiftung” environmental award on 24 September.

Start of the PC-21 development project in November, aimed at delivering the world’s most modern turboprop trainer ever built.
1999
Pilatus celebrates several anniversaries: 60 years of Pilatus, 40 years of the PC-6 and 20 years of the PC-7.
Pilatus wins an important order from Oman for twelve PC-9s, including simulator and training package.

2000
The Royal Malaysian Air Force buys nine PC-7 MkII training aircraft plus training systems, logistics material and spares.
Pilatus announces that a Swiss investor group has signed a contract to take over 100 percent of the Unaxis share capital (formerly Oerlikon-Bührle).

2001
The workforce exceeds 1,000 for the first time.

2002
Rollout of the new PC-21 training aircraft, on 30 April. First flight on 1 July.

2003
Pilatus takes over FFA Aircraft Maintenance AG in Altenrhein as of 1 January. Altenrhein Aviation Ltd is founded.
The Irish Air Force signs a purchase contract for eight PC-9 Ms on 16 January. The order includes a complete training system, logistics material and spare parts.
The Bulgarian Air Force purchases six PC-9 M training aircraft, one PC-12 as a transport and liaison aircraft, plus training systems, logistics material and spare parts. Deliveries take place in 2004.
2004  Re-certification of our Quality Management System: the new standards are known as EN 9100 and ISO 14001, and will always be renewed together in the future.

The Royal Australian Air Force signs a major PC-9 upgrade contract.

The PC-21 receives type certification in December, opening the way for series production.

The 500th PC-12 leaves the production hall in December. At the same time, Pilatus reaches one million PC-12 flying hours – a further anniversary to celebrate.

2005  Optimisation of the PC-12: increased maximum takeoff weight, improvements to the ailerons, new PC-21 style wing tips, new pilot seat and other more minor modifications. Type certification for the new PC-12/47 model is obtained from the FOCA on 14 December and from the FAA on 23 December.

Successful completion of work to upgrade the cockpits of the 18 PC-7s for the Swiss Air Force, in service for 25 years.

2006  The Malaysian Ministry of Defence signs a contract for ten further PC-7 MkIIs on 20 February. Deliveries are to take place in 2007.

In November, Pilatus is selected to supply the PC-21 Training System to the Republic of Singapore Air Force. Pilatus will supply nineteen PC-21s and a 20-year engineering and logistics support programme.

2007  On 22 January, an agreement is signed with armasuisse for six PC-21 training aircraft, associated logistics and engineering services, plus mission planning and debriefing systems for the PC-21 Jet Pilot Training System (JEPAS) used by the Swiss Air Force.

On 11 April, Pilatus announces the sale of its fully-owned subsidiary, TSA Transairco SA, for strategic reasons.

First appearance of the PC-12 NG with new avionics in September at the 60th NBAA. The new model proves extremely popular, and sells out – until the end of 2009 – shortly after its launch.

2008  Contract for the conversion of ten further Swiss Air Force PC-7s is signed with armasuisse on 29 February.

The PC-12 NG is certified by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the FAA on 28 March. After turning out 788 PC-12s, production now shifts to the PC-12 NG.

The new timber Assembly Hall is officially opened on 20 September.
2009

A decision is made to introduce short-time working in Stans from 1 September onwards. The production-related areas of Manufacturing and Aircraft Assembly are the most directly affected. Normal working hours are resumed six months later.

In mid-November the United Arab Emirates Air Force & Air Defense opt for a fleet of 25 Pilatus PC-21 turboprops to meet training needs for their future military pilots. This major order also includes simulators and comprehensive logistics support. Delivery is scheduled for 2011 onwards.

2010

Delivery of the 1,000th PC-12 in July.

The South African Air Force commissions Pilatus to equip its fleet of Pilatus Astra PC-7 MkIIs (35 aircraft) with a new, modern cockpit.

The Swiss Air Force expands its Jet Pilot Training System (JEPAS) and signs an order for a further two Pilatus PC-21 training systems and a simulator. Deliveries go ahead in 2012.
2011  The Botswana Defence Force opts to buy five PC-7 MkII training aircraft. The order also includes training support, spare parts and logistics assistance. Pilatus now offers a choice of ten different apprenticeship courses, and, for the first time ever, has as many as 100 apprentices in training at the same time.

2012  The last three of a total of 25 PC-21s are officially handed over to the United Arab Emirates on 30 January.

On 24 May, Pilatus concludes a major order with the Indian Air Force for 75 PC-7 MkIIs. The maiden flight takes place just five months later.

Successful certification of a smoke system for the PC-21 for future use by our display teams.

Pilatus introduces a company-wide Safety Management System.

The Royal Saudi Arabian Air Force signs a contract for the purchase of 55 PC-21s on 25 May.

The third big order in a row arrives on 23 July: 24 PC-21s for the Qatar Emiri Air Force.
The formal handover ceremony of five PC-7 MkIIs to the Botswana Defence Force takes place on 8 February.

On 21 May, Pilatus unveils the PC-24, the “Super Versatile Jet” at the “European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition” (EBACE) in Geneva. The PC-24 is the first business jet worldwide with the ability to use very short runways, paved or unpaved, and a cargo door as standard.

In May, the global fleet of PC-12s reaches a major milestone by accumulating four million flight hours.

Pilatus Aircraft Industry (China) Co Ltd opens for business on 5 August in the Chinese metropolis of Chongqing. Pilatus aims to establish itself with the PC-6 in the Chinese market through the joint venture.

Sales revenue surpasses the one billion Swiss franc mark for the first time in the 75 year history of the Pilatus Group.

Pilatus delivers the 1,200th PC-12 in August.
Pilatus first opens its PC-24 order book at EBACE in Geneva on 20 May and sells 84 PC-24s in just one and a half days – that is all the PC-24s scheduled to come off the production line during the first three years!

A brand new four-storey car park with over 1,000 spaces opens in Stans on 29 September.

Production of PC-21s for Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and of PC-7 MkIIs for India, is in full swing. The aircraft are delivered as they come off the production line.

The PC-24 rollout celebration goes ahead at Buochs Airport on 1 August. 35,000 visitors from Switzerland and beyond arrive in Stans to party with Pilatus!

The new PC-12 NG demonstrator with special livery by Hans Erni, the renowned Swiss artist, is unveiled on 16 December to mark the company’s 75th anniversary.
First flight of the PC-24 Super Versatile Jet on 11 May. Prototype P01 was airborne after a takeoff roll of just 580 metres, climbed to 3,627 metres in three minutes and landed back in Buochs 55 minutes later.

The 100th PC-21 – also the 1,000th turboprop trainer – emerges from the production hall in February. It will be operated by the Royal Saudi Air Force.

The global fleet of PC-12s accumulates five million flight hours in May.

The new logistics building – featuring a 24 metre fully automated high-bay storage facility, powerful computer centre and summer canteen – goes into operation.

In December, the Royal Australian Air Force signs a major order for the purchase of 49 PC-21 training aircraft. In addition to the PC-21s, the contract includes simulators, training materials and a long-term maintenance package.
Pilatus sees out the year on a successful note with the sale of 21 PC-21s in December: 17 to the French Armée de l’air, two to QinetiQ, the British company which operates the Empire Test Pilots’ School, and a further two to the Royal Jordanian Air Force.

Pilatus Business Aircraft Ltd in Colorado, USA, celebrates its 20th anniversary on 1 May.

July: maiden flight of the first of 49 PC-21s operated by the Royal Australian Air Force – just seven months after the purchase contract is signed.

Start of building the new 10,000 square metres assembly hall and the new surface treatment centre in summer.

The PC-24 prototype P02 is unveiled to the US public for the first time in October, at the NBAA-BACE in Orlando, Florida.

The PC-12 NG is the world’s best-selling business turboprop in its class – 91 aircraft have been delivered to their new owners.
The third and final PC-24 prototype, representing the series production standard, takes off on its maiden flight on 6 March.

Pilatus trains over 120 apprentices for the first time in its history. The addition of two new subjects in the summer means Pilatus now offers instruction in a total of 13 different disciplines. Pilatus wins the National Training Prize in November.

Type certification becomes a reality! The Super Versatile Jet PC-24 is certified by EASA and the FAA on 7 December.

Readers of Professional Pilot magazine ranked Pilatus as the worldwide best customer service provider for the 16th consecutive year.

Handover of the 1500th PC-12 to our loyal customer, Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia, in June. This month also sees the worldwide PC-12 fleet accumulate six million hours in the air, of which 1.5 million for the PC-12 NG.

Pilatus Defence Solutions Australia Pty Ltd, a new subsidiary, is created in mid-December. It is responsible for provision of local support to the PC-21s operated by the Royal Australian Air Force.

The subsidiary, Pilatus China Aircraft Industry (China) Co Ltd in Chongqing, which was opened to produce PC-6 components, is shut down as of September.

The new assembly hall with space for some 200 workplaces is commissioned in August. It accommodates all pre-assembly operations and systems integration work for our entire range of aircraft. The solar plant on the roof is connected to the grid at the end of September. It is by far the largest in canton Nidwalden and amongst the five largest in Central Switzerland.