DEFENCE

refuelling probe is on the port
side of the nose. This aircraft
has a metal nose and no radar.
Although a radar may be fitted
later, the chined nose shape
could cause radar propagation
problems.
The Su-27IB is intended to
replace early-model Su-24 Fenc-
ers. Production of Fencers at
Novosibirsk is to cease shortly,
but it is not clear if the Su-27IB
will survive proposed cuts.
Although the CIS air force
has announced that it will adopt
a "one type in the inventory"
policy, Platypus might not be
counted as a modified Su-27.
Aircraft number 155 is the
prototype fly-by-wire MiG-29M
Fulcrum Plus, with glass cock-
pit incorporating two multi-
function displays. The aircraft
has used the TV-guided version
of AS-14 Kedge. The anti-
foreign object damage intake
doors of early variants have
been replaced by lighter, re-
tractable grids and the top-
mounted auxiliary* intakes
removed, extra fuel taking their
place. On aircraft 155, the in-
takes are painted on, to mask
the aircraft's exact model, and
extra agility, from~ opponents.
Fulcrum Plus has a new infra-
red search-and-track (IRST) sys-
tem, similar to that on the naval
MiG-29K, with better sensor
cooling, increasing detection
range from the 15km (8nm) of
the early MiG-29's IRST for a
fighter target.
The eight-hardpoint wing,
with two "Amraamski" out-
board, has a sharper strake lead-

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The Su-271B is Russia's equivalent of the F-15E Eagle

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BHU

The new "Amraamski" is on the Su-27TB's outboard underwing pylon

ing-edge and the aircraft has
uprated RD-33 engines with a
5% thrust increase. The proto-
type lacks the fin leading-edge
projections over the wing for
chaff/flare dispensers. The MiG-
29M, which has completed
flight tests, has apparently fallen
victim to defence cuts.
The next MiG-29 in the line,

with wings folded, does not
have doors, painted or real, and
also has a new single-curvature
profile radome for the new
Zhuk radar of the naval Ful-
crum. The aircraft reveals its
dual role with X-31 ARMs car-
ried on the inboard pylons and
R-73 AAMs situated on the out-
board pylons. D

to upgrade F-5
system for the single NASA T-38
Talon astronaut-training aircraft.
The team will offer a range of
updates, depending on customer
requirements, and work will be
done On site, in Fokker's
Woensdrecht site or Sierra's Buf-
falo headquarters.
Sierra is being sold to a pri-
vate investment group, sepa-
rately from the Martin Marietta
and Lockheed purchase of LTV's
aerospace and defence business.
LTV and Lockheed/Martin Mari-
etta have agreed the terms of the
$355 million purchase of LTV's
Aerospace and Defense Group,
which will be named Vought. •

Switzerland to procure Israeli UAVs
BY ARIE EGOZ1
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he Swiss armed forces plan
to purchase five Ranger un-
manned aerial vehicle (UAV)
systems developed jointly by Is-
rael Aircraft Industries (IAI) and
the Swiss Federal Aircraft
Emmen (FWE). Procurement of
the systems is scheduled for
1993 or 1994.

The Ranger's airframe was
developed jointly by the two
companies while the optical-
sensor payload and ground sta-
tion are of Israeli design.
IAI's UAV plant is prime con-
tractor, while FWE is participat-

ing in the development and
production of the twin-boom
composite airframe.
The Swiss authorities demand
that the UAV be equipped with
a recovery parachute while fly-
ing over populated areas. The
parachute is housed in the rear
compartment of the fuselage.
The Ranger's payload has
been developed by Tamam, the
precision-instruments subsidiary
of 1AI. The multi-mission
optronic stabilised payload' has
a day and night capability. FWE
and other Swiss companies will
participate in the series produc-
tion, according to an offset
agreement with IAI. •

French air force

to buy 30 Alphas
T

he French air force is to go
ahead with a plan to buy 30
German air force Dassault/
Dornier Alpha Jets to replace the
Alpha Jets used by Escadrille
02/08 in the weapons and tactics
training role at Cazaux AB.
The plan had originally been
shelved because of budgetary
constraints, a move which
threatened the combat-training
programme. The purchase was
re-instated on 26 February after
a high-level appeal by the
French air force.

France operates some 160
Alpha Jets but the 40 aircraft
based at Cazaux use up their
fatigue life faster than the air-
craft operated in less-demanding
flying training at Tours AB,
hence the search for replace-
ments. The French air force does
not rotate its aircraft between
Cazaux and Tours.

In an effort to preserve
airframe fatigue life, Alpha Jets
have had a 5g limit imposed
recently and air-combat training
is now at high altitude.
France will only be able to
purchase 30 of the German air-
craft without breaking the Con-
ventional Forces Europe arms
limits. The Cazaux aircraft will
probably be refurbished for
overseas sale.

Germany and France were the
original customers for the Alpha
Jet; Germany bought the close-
support A-model and France the
trainer/light-attack E-model.
German force-reduction plans
call for the retirement of all 166
surviving Alpha Jets of the 175
bought, by mid-1992. Portugal
has also expressed interest in
buying some of the German
Alpha Jets to replace its 50
ageing Fiat G.91s, also bought
from the German air force. •

CASUALTIES

CHILE

A Chilean Army CASA IPTN
CN.235 crashed while landing
at Chile's Teniente Marsch
base in the Antarctic on 25
February. The aircraft
ground-looped on the snow
runway and 11 people on
board were injured.

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