



One of the SAAF Museum's airworthy Alouette in action

## Alouette III

**Country of Origin:** France

**Manufactured as:** Sud-Aviation / Aérospatiale SA 316 B Alouette III

**First flight:** 28 February 1958 (SE 3160)

**Service period with SAAF:** 1962 until 2006

**Served with:** 16, 17, 19, 22, 31 Sqns, and 87 HFS (Helicopter Flying School)

**Role:** Air-to-sea rescue, light troop transport and CASEVAC.

**Power plant:** 1 × Turbomeca Artouste IIIB turboshaft rated at 425kW (570 shp)

**Max take off mass:** 2,200 kg (4,850 lb)

**Max speed:** 210 km/h (130 mph; 113 kn) at sea level

**Max range:** 540 km (336 mi; 292 nmi)

**Armament:** Unarmed or 4 x 0.303 guns or 2 x 0.50" guns or 1 x 20mm cannon

**Accommodation:** Pilot & flight engineer + 5 passengers or 2 stretchers + medic

## Operational history

The Alouette III served for over 44 years in the South African Air Force (SAAF) - it is believed that 121 examples were acquired between 1962 and 1975 for the service from France.

During 1966, by which point the SAAF had some 50 Alouette IIIs already in service, it was decided to dispatch several to support ground troops stationed in South West Africa attempting to contain the emerging South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO). This would be the beginnings of what would become the lengthy South African Border War in which this type saw considerable action. While initially used for more passive operations such as aerial reconnaissance, after July 1967, the Alouette III participated in active combat missions as well. It was frequently employed as a support platform for performing South African counter strike operations inside Namibia (as South West Africa was now usually referred to) and Angola. It was also utilised in the CASEVAC role and could even be fitted with a door-mounted 20 mm cannon. Reportedly, a total of eight Alouette IIIs had been listed as having been lost over the conflict zone by the end of the war.

By 1990, there were a total of 70 Alouette III helicopters remaining in active service. Throughout the course of its service life with the SAAF, the Alouette III fleet was recorded as having accumulated in excess of 346,000 flight hours. During June 2006, the last Alouette III was officially withdrawn from SAAF service at a ceremony held at AFB Swartkop, near Pretoria.

## Further information

Barcode 1: Alouette 3 airshow display



Barcode 2: Alouette 3 air show display (2)



### How to scan and decode barcodes using your iPhone , Android or other smartphone

Point and shoot your mobile camera phone at a mobile barcode to connect directly to a website. All you need is a barcode scanner/reader for your mobile camera phone or tablet. Check whether your mobile phone already has a preinstalled QR code reader or download one from your APP store.



---

Friends of the  
SAAF Museum

---