



Historical images

Key data and features

The collection comprises a total of about half a million images.

Glass negatives (black and white)

The collection of glass negatives encompasses approximately 200,000 original negatives and is divided into three sections.

Period	Approx. no. of negatives	Format	Content / purpose
1926–1954	45'000	13x13 cm 10x15 cm 13x18 cm	Aerial photos for updating the Siegfried Map.
1915–1947	80'000	10x15 cm 13x18 cm	Terrestrial photos for producing the 1:50,000 National Map and the 1:10,000 fortification maps (mountain regions).
1927–1952	75'000	12x15 cm 10x15 cm 13x13 cm	Aerial photos for producing master plans (Directorate of Cadastral Surveying on behalf of municipalities).

18 x 18 cm aerial photos (black and white)

These are in the form of negatives on nitrate and acetate film. As in every other photo archive, they are the main cause of concern because they are highly susceptible to deterioration. In view of this, locating and digitising them was declared a priority in 2008.

Period	Approx. no. of negatives	Format	Content / purpose
1946–1972	44'000	18x18 cm	Aerial photos for producing and updating the Siegfried Map and the 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 National Map.

23 x 23 cm aerial photos (black and white)

Acetate film was subsequently replaced by much more robust polyester film, and the new camera produced 23 x 23 cm images.

Period	Approx. no. of negatives	Format	Content / purpose
1967–2003	62'000	23x23 cm	Aerial photos for updating the complete 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 National Map.
	30'000	23x23 cm	Photos taken on behalf of the Aerial Photography Flying and Coordination Service.
	50'000	23x23 cm	Aerial photos for the production of master plans (Directorate of Cadastral Surveying on behalf of municipalities).

23 x 23 cm aerial photos (colour slides)

23 x 23 cm colour slide film has been used since 1998. This is suitable for producing a comprehensive colour orthophoto mosaic.

Period	Approx. no. of negatives	Format	Content / purpose
1998–2008	70'000	23x23 cm	Colour aerial photos for updating the complete National Map and for SWISSIMAGE (the digital colour orthophoto mosaic of Switzerland). Since 2008, single analogue images have only been produced for special requirements.

23 x 23 cm colour infrared and false-colour images

Thanks to their special sensitivity in the infrared range, colour infrared images can be used for visualising ground cover and vegetation. Other false-colour films depict vegetation in reddish shades, and developed areas or waste land in blue, and thus yield useful information for a variety of scientific purposes.

Period	Approx. no. of negatives	Format	Content / purpose
1981–2009	45'000	23x23 cm	Photos taken on behalf of clients and for special requirements of the Aerial Photography Flying and Coordination Service.

Digital aerial film strips, black and white, colour (RGB), infrared

With the ADS40 and ADS80 digital cameras, instead of individual images, seamless strips of images are recorded over an entire area. The high resolution and diversity of the images permit a broad variety of professional uses. These images are stored on a hard disk.

Period	Approx. no. of negatives	Format	Content / purpose
2008 onwards		Digital seamless strips (12,000 pixels)	Images for a broad variety of purposes.