

Located near the city of Mendoza, close to the Andes mountains and the Chilean border, Base Aérea Militar El Plumerillo is home to IV Brigada Aérea, whose Grupo 4 (Escuela de Caza) is the main combat training unit for the Fuerza Aérea Argentina.



Escuadrón II – IA-63 Pampa

Future Argentine fighter pilots arrive at El Plumerillo from the Escuela de Aviación Militar at Córdoba, where they fly the Beech Mentor andEMB-312 Tucano. Combat training is then given by Grupo 4's Escuadrón II, the heart of the Escuela de Caza (fighter school). Students fly the Pampa during the Curso de Estandarización para Aviones de Combate (CEPAC – fighter standardisation course). Having successfully completed the course, they are then posted to operational conversion units, with most beginning their combat careers flying the Pucará with Grupo Aéreo 3 de Ataque at BAM Reconquista.

Fábrica Militar Argentina (FMA) built 15 IA-63 Pampas for the FAA, the first prototype flying on 10 October 1989. The first service aircraft was delivered to El Plumerillo on 9 May 1988 to begin the reformation of the Escuadrón II, which also became known as the Escuadrón Pampa. The final aircraft was handed over on 28 September 1999. A further 12 IA-63s have been ordered from Lockheed Martin Aircraft Argentina SA (LMAASA – the successor to FMA). They will feature a new 'glass' cockpit, and the earlier batch will be upgraded to this new standard.

