

In constant contact

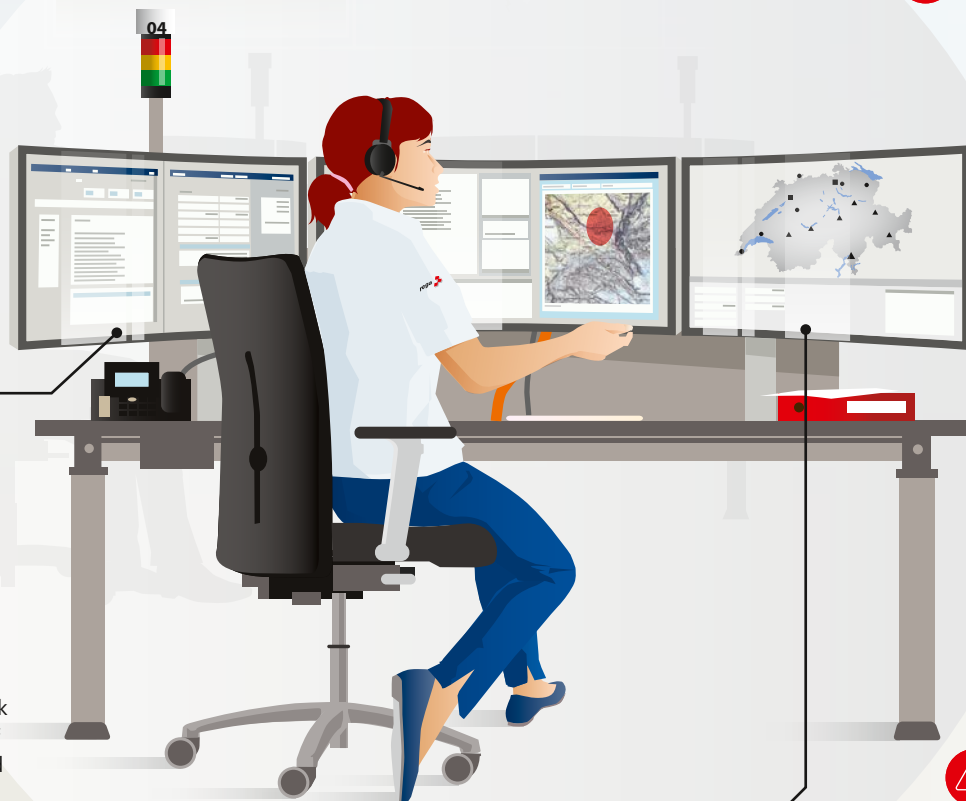
Rega's Helicopter Operations Centre coordinates all the Rega helicopters throughout Switzerland. However, the coordination activities do not simply involve mobilising the crew members; during missions, too, the flight coordinators continually supply the helicopter crews with information. A look inside the Operations Centre provides an insight into how they support the crews.

Helicopter Operations Centre

This is where the flight coordinators take the emergency calls that come in via the Rega emergency number 1414. Taking into account all the ongoing missions, they call out the nearest suitable crew. However, this does not mean that their job is then finished: from this point on, they support the crew, provide them with a constant supply of relevant information and coordinate the person raising the alarm, the operational partners and the hospitals. To do this, the Operations Centre has various communication channels at its disposal, including Rega's own nationwide radio network with 42 stations, via which the crews can be contacted at any time.

Close cooperation with the ambulance call centres 144

Every second rescue mission carried out by a Rega helicopter is the result of Rega's Operations Centre being contacted by one of the cantonal ambulance call centres (SNZ). This teamwork is correspondingly close, well-established and proven: whenever a SNZ requests a rescue helicopter, computer interfaces interlinking the two organisations ensure a seamless and delay-free collaboration. This enables the SNZ dispatcher to transmit the information from the alarm call directly to the Rega Operations Centre at the click of a mouse. Here, taking into account the activities of all the rescue helicopters, the weather conditions and other such factors, the Rega flight coordinator mobilises the most suitable crew. This ensures that the best helicopter is deployed and that medical assistance can be brought to the patient as quickly as possible.












Rega's communication system



For contact with the person raising the alarm, the crews and the operational partners, the flight coordinators have various communication channels at their disposal, including radio, telephone and mobile phone. To avoid having to constantly switch between devices and channels, the various communication technologies have been combined in one easy-to-use system. This solution, which was specially developed for Rega, is seamlessly integrated into the helicopter dispatch system, which is used to coordinate all the missions. This allows the flight coordinators to fully focus on their task of supporting the crews during the missions.

How the flight coordinators support the missions:

-  **Mobilisation** of the nearest suitable crew, which then confirms this via a smartphone app.
-  Transmission of **additional information**, such as the contact person on location and the nature of the emergency, to a tablet computer in the helicopter cockpit.
-  Transmission of the **coordinates of the accident site** directly from the helicopter dispatch system to the navigation device in the rescue helicopter.
-  Transmission of **flight weather data** from MeteoSchweiz and from Rega's own weather stations and webcams relating to the meteorological conditions at the accident site.
-  **Coordination with operational partners**, such as police, SAC mountain rescue teams, etc.
-  **Deployment of additional resources**, if necessary.
-  **Registration of the patient** at the destination hospital, including information about the suspected diagnosis and the estimated time of arrival.
-  **Information about other airspace users** – for example, at hospital landing sites – ensures increased safety, especially at night.
-  **Deployment of the crew on a new mission** directly after the current one has been completed.

Requirement profile Helicopter flight coordinator

Despite state-of-the-art IT solutions tailored to Rega's requirements, people and their skills and abilities are still central to the work at the Operations Centre. Our helicopter flight coordinators are pronounced team players, all speak at least three foreign languages and have specialist knowledge in the fields of, among other things, medicine, geography, meteorology and aviation.



Communication in the rescue helicopter

Each Rega helicopter is equipped with numerous communication devices, which enable it to keep in touch at all times with the Rega Operations Centre, operational partners, other airspace users and air traffic controllers.

Directly integrated into the cockpit are redundant radio modules, a mobile radio connection with an antenna on the helicopter's fuselage, a Polycom radio for encrypted communication with the police and army, and a satellite telephone. Also on board are various handheld radios and one mobile phone per crew member, which is usually used to call out the crew.



Raising the alarm in an emergency

Rega's Operations Centre can be called out via emergency number 1414, the Rega app or an emergency radio. Further information about raising the alarm can be found at www.rega.ch/raising-the-alarm