

1414

The Rega magazine

Severe storms in Switzerland

How Rega helps in
natural disasters

Page 6





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“Thank you for your loyalty.”



David Müller
Editor-in-Chief

As a patron, in 2024 you once again supported Rega with your patronage contribution. On behalf of the Management Board and all our employees, I would like to thank you most sincerely for your support. Your loyalty and commitment to Rega strengthen our resolve to do our best day after day and to continually improve our services.

With your patronage contribution or donation, you not only ensure that in an emergency Rega will provide you with swift medical assistance by air around the clock. No, your financial support also contributes towards us developing technologies that enable our helicopter crews to fly to practically any location in Switzerland, no matter what the weather. Or employing medical consultants who can give you advice if you suddenly become ill abroad. Your donations also allow us to operate a specially equipped search helicopter with a team of specialists who, in collaboration with our mission partners, are able to locate and rescue missing, injured or sick people from the air – just like we did during the devastating storms earlier this year.

To ensure that you and your loved ones can continue to benefit from this unique “Rega service” in future, I would be very grateful if you would remain loyal to us in 2025, too, and support us with your patronage contribution. The relevant correspondence will be sent to you in January.

I wish you a peaceful Advent, an enjoyable festive season, and a happy and healthy New Year.

Takeoff



Groundbreaking ceremony for the new Mollis base

The groundbreaking ceremony for the new Rega base in Mollis took place on 3 August 2024. The modern, spacious timber building, comprising an office, a hangar, and sleeping and living quarters, will replace the temporary container that has housed the crew for the past eight years. The new helicopter base is scheduled to be finished in time for the 2025 winter season and will provide the crew members with an ideal infrastructure to be on standby around the clock, ready to provide swift, professional medical assistance by air. Initially operated as a seasonal base during the summer and winter months, since 2019 the Mollis crew have been on call all year round to help people in distress. In 2021, operations were expanded to provide a 24-hour service. The range of missions performed by the Mollis base is broad, and extends from mountain and winter sports accidents to road accidents, and from acute illnesses to transfer flights from peripheral hospitals to central ones. The Mollis helicopter crew fly around 900 missions per year.



Many thanks for your donation

We receive numerous donations – after a guided tour of a Rega base, after a rescue mission, and also in memory of a deceased relative or friend. Many of these donors do not wish to be named or thanked individually. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you. Your contributions help to keep Rega in the air and enable it to continue to provide independent, professional air rescue services for people in distress. The entire Rega team thank you for your trust in and high regard for our organisation and wish you all the best for 2025!



► Further information:
rega.ch/donations

Visit us online

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regaclub.ch

Rega on social media

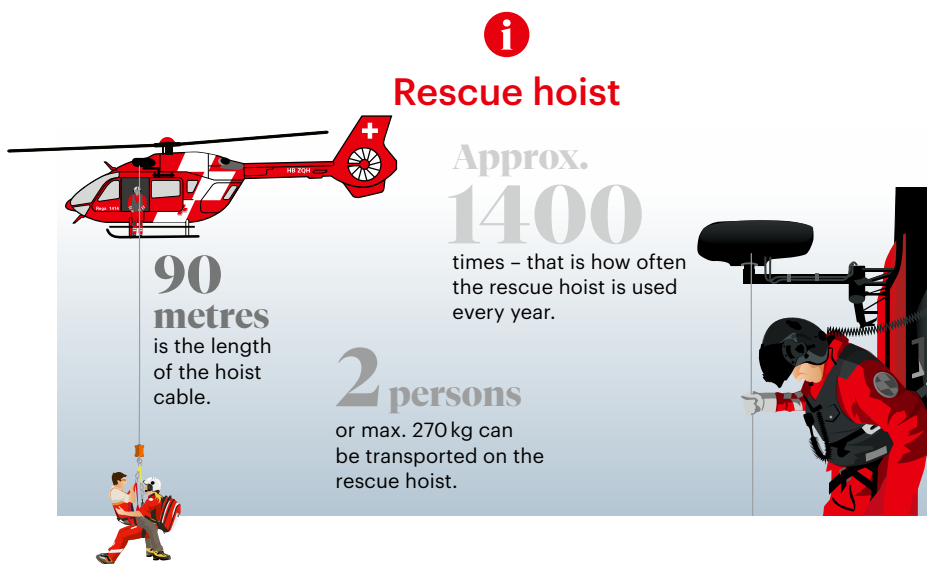
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Worldwide milestone in helicopter aviation

Rescuing people in all weathers – this has been Rega's vision for many years. Now we are another step closer to realising it. Rega is the first helicopter operator in the world to be granted authorisation to use a new instrument flight procedure at a hospital. The new RNP-AR (Required Navigation Performance Authorisation Required) procedure, for which certification has now been granted to Rega for Interlaken Hospital, in combination with the ultra-modern navigation equipment in the helicopter is considerably more accurate than that currently deployed, thus allowing even greater precision in navigation. This in turn enables approach flights to be performed safely in highly confined spaces in poor visibility using the autopilot – a huge advantage in mountainous or adverse terrain.

► Further information: [rega.ch/media](https://www.rega.ch/media)



Stunning views for 2025

This year, our employees have once again captured unforgettable moments and moods for you with a camera during Rega missions at home and abroad. The wall calendar takes you on a journey through our operational activities.

5

Order via the Rega Shop:

Shop phone no: 0848 514 514

Online: [rega.ch/shop](https://www.rega.ch/shop)

Thank you for taking part in our reader survey

Around 25,000 readers took the time to complete the survey in the last Rega magazine and gave us their opinion on various issues. Many thanks! We were delighted with the positive feedback relating to the content, design and quality of our magazine. The evaluation of the survey showed that readers are very satisfied with the choice of topics and enjoy reading the magazine in print form. This positive feedback is an added incentive for us to continue to present the 1414 magazine in a varied and interesting way.



Nature unleashed



During the severe storms in Italian-speaking Switzerland, several Rega crews were deployed to evacuate the population or search for missing persons. The Rega crews were the first to arrive on the scene in the Val Mesolcina, as well as in the Val Lavizzara and Val Bavona, and were thus able to help gain an overview of the situation.

On Friday, 21 June at 8 pm, an alarm comes in at the Locarno helicopter base: flooding in Sorte, a district of Lostallo in the Val Mesolcina (Canton Graubünden). A number of people need to be urgently evacuated after a devastating avalanche of mud and debris has hit several houses in the village centre and swept away a holiday home. The Riale Molera stream has overflowed its banks and triggered this massive landslide.

Evacuated with the rescue hoist

When the crew of Rega 6 arrive at the incident scene with a helicopter rescue specialist on board, they encounter a surreal landscape: here and there, a house or car can be seen protruding from between huge piles of rocks, boulders, tree trunks and mud. On the balcony of a house surrounded by rubble, six people

In Lu Bósc, near Fontana, Rega sets down mountain rescuers from the Swiss Alpine Club SAC with the rescue hoist.

are waving to the rescue helicopter in order to attract the crew's attention. The Rega crew precisely set the helicopter rescue specialist down on the balcony with the rescue hoist and airlift the six people, all of them uninjured, to safety. However, Rega's assistance is still needed. Therefore, the crew discuss the further course of action with the police, who in the meantime have searched all the houses and apartments for any injured or trapped inhabitants. The Rega crew return to the base to refuel the helicopter. Back in Lostallo again, they fly out more people who are cut off from the outside world due to the flooding. In just over two hours, Rega evacuates 22 people: six in Sorte and 16 in three other districts of Lostallo. These are cared for by paramedics from the Graubünden and Ticino rescue services in a temporary medical outpost. Despite an extensive search, four people remain missing.



Woman freed from rubble and evacuated

In the meantime, in Sorte, ground-based rescue teams, search dogs with their handlers and a Swiss Air Force Super Puma are also carrying out a joint search for further missing persons. On Saturday morning, shortly after 5 am, the Rega Operations Center at Zurich Airport receives a call for help via the Rega app. The flight coordinator immediately mobilises the mountain rescuers from the Swiss Alpine Club SAC. An elderly woman is trapped under the rubble of a house; she is successfully rescued at around 6 o'clock in the morning.

The search continues with the help of the army, which is equipped with thermal imaging cameras and GPS location devices. But the longer the search lasts, the more the hope

of finding the three other missing people alive dwindles. It later transpires that the floods in Sorte had cost these three people their lives.

More heavy rainfall

Just eight days after the forces of nature wreaked havoc in the Val Mesolcina, the upper Vallemaggia and the Val Bavona are hit by torrential rain. This time, the conditions for the rescue services are even more difficult; the Visletto bridge has collapsed, severing the road link to Cevio and the upper Vallemaggia. At 2.15 am on Sunday morning, the Rega Operations Center receives another emergency call: in Fontana, in the municipality of Cevio, a landslide had claimed one life, one person has been injured and another is missing. As both the landline and mobile networks had been disrupted shortly after the alarm was raised, the caller can no longer be contacted. The helicopter crew prepare for the night mission, but the violent storms prevent them from taking off.

4

Rega helicopters were in operation in Ticino at the same time.



Left: After the landslide in Fontana, the rescue services searched for missing persons. Right: Mountain rescuers from the Swiss Alpine Club spent days combing the banks of the Maggia river, from Fontana to the mouth of the river, in search of survivors. The specialists were flown by Rega into the affected area.

Aerial photos reveal the extent of the disaster

At around 3 am, the heavy rainfall subsides somewhat and the crew are able to take off. Once again, a helicopter rescue specialist is on board. In Cevio, the crew contact the Rega Operations Center to request a second rescue helicopter and immediately begin to evacuate people with the rescue hoist. Shortly afterwards, the Rega crew from the Samedan base arrive to assist with the evacuations. Numerous emergency calls follow from various villages in the Val Lavizzara and Val Bavona. Thanks to the photos and videos taken by the two Rega crews, who had been the first on the scene, the rescuers have a good overview of the situation. The regional crisis team under the leadership of the Ticino cantonal police is activated; it is responsible for coordinating the operations of the various rescue organisations. Early in the morning, the full extent of the devastation becomes apparent: “In 25 years of working in this profession, I’ve never seen anything like it,”

says Rega paramedic Boris Bottinelli, who had previously been in action in Sorte. And his colleague, Giorgio De Ambroggi, adds: “You could see the fear and great despair on the faces of the people who were evacuated in the night.”

Large-scale evacuations and search flights

In Piano di Peccia alone, around 300 people are waiting to be flown to safety. The following day, private helicopter companies and the army help with the evacuations. The two Rega helicopters search for missing persons in the rivers and in the weather-ravaged surrounding area. At around 11 am, Rega 18 also arrives to support the search operations. Thanks to the Low Flight Network (LFN), the crew from Sion had been able to fly to Ticino despite the adverse weather. Rega 18 is carrying three police officers on board, who are equipped with satellite phones so that, if necessary, they can raise the alarm from three strategic points in the disaster area – Piano di Peccia, Fusio and



Rescue in all weathers

You can find further information on the LFN here:

rega.ch/ifr



Left: In Sorte, the Riale Molera stream overflowed its banks. The extent of the devastation can be seen from the helicopter. Right: Prato-Sornico in the Val Lavizzara was also flooded and the sports centre destroyed.

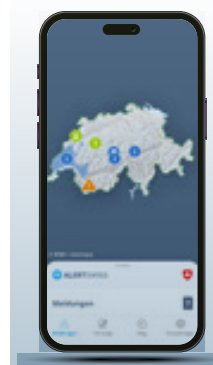
San Carlo. At the request of the police, Rega also calls out its search helicopter. This is stationed in Wilderswil and is equipped with a high-tech search system with a thermal imaging camera and numerous sensors. As a result, the Rega crews are able to search large areas for missing persons from the air, both during the day and at night. This helicopter, too, follows the predefined LFN routes.

After several days of intensive searching and extraordinary effort by everyone involved – various rescue services, including the army, mountain rescuers from the Swiss Alpine Club SAC and civil protection helpers – the rescue teams have to accept that seven

people have lost their lives and two people could not be found. This devastating natural hazard event has caused profound damage to both people and landscape.

Federica Mauri

Important information in emergencies



Alertswiss compiles the relevant information relating to the necessary precautions and behaviour during disasters and emergencies in Switzerland.

alert.swiss

“In natural disasters, too, Rega is a reliable partner.”

Ernst Kohler

61, CEO of Rega



We can all still vividly recall the images of the devastating floods, mudflows and landslides in the cantons of Graubünden, Ticino and Valais, as well as in the Bernese Oberland, at the end of June and the beginning of July and August. They caused enormous damage in the affected areas and blocked or destroyed key infrastructure, such as bridges and roads. Often the only way to rapidly gain a comprehensive overview of the situation and provide swift assistance was by air.

Rega's help was in great demand, and the flooding in Italian-speaking Switzerland powerfully demonstrated the many ways in which Rega can come to the aid of the local population, municipalities and cantons in times of exceptional natural disasters, too. Rega immediately helped to evacuate people, search for missing persons and fly specialists to the affected areas. Rega does this because it is its core task. But

it also does it because it can. It is precisely in such extreme situations that the targeted investments we have made in recent years pay off: investments in a dense network of 14 helicopter bases, which enable us to reach any location in Switzerland within 15 minutes' flying time; in a 24-hour Operations Center, which coordinates rescue missions beyond the cantonal borders; in state-of-the-art technology and highly trained staff, always ready for action, for rescue or search missions; in our modern, twin-engine rescue helicopters, which make flights at night possible; and finally in the Low Flight Network (LFN) initiated by Rega, which also allows us to fly in poor visibility.

It is only thanks to pioneering achievements such as these that we were able, for example, to fly over the Gotthard Pass in the middle of the night in the worst of weathers, and within a very short space of time to provide emergency assistance in

Ticino with four rescue helicopters.

As you can see, Rega is not only useful in the event of accidents and illnesses, but also provides the population and the authorities with highly professional support in natural disasters – when Rega is often the only fast option.

We are happy to do this and are highly regarded for what we do. I hope that in all regions of Switzerland, people will realise that the “Rega service” is not just so readily called on when the going gets tough. But instead that professional collaboration on an equal footing, coupled with mutual esteem between all those involved, and without unnecessary bureaucratic and political hurdles, will also establish themselves in everyday rescue operations.

Assistance in natural disasters

Find out what tasks Rega carries out in the case of natural hazard events and what it does to be at the service of the Swiss population at all times.

Whether floods, rockfalls or mudslides: extreme natural hazard events often leave behind destroyed infrastructure and impassable access routes. When entire valleys and villages are cut off from the outside world, assistance by air is the only way to rescue people and evacuate them from the danger zone. Thanks to its network of 14 helicopter bases spread throughout Switzerland, which are on standby around the clock, Rega's Operations

Center can, within a very short space of time, call out the necessary helicopter crews, coordinate the assistance from the air, and dispatch additional rescue teams and specialists from all over Switzerland to the incident site.

The primary response to a natural disaster can be divided into separate phases. In each phase, Rega assumes different tasks, which can vary depending on the incident (see diagram on the right).

Rega is there whenever it is needed

In the event of a natural disaster, Rega is a reliable partner for the Confederation, the cantons and the general public. It goes to great lengths to achieve this. The fact that this is possible in the first place is thanks, among other things, to the support of its patrons. This unique connection between Rega and the Swiss population shows just what can be achieved with solidarity.

Adrian Schindler

Bridge back home



Rega also helps the Swiss population after natural disasters abroad. An example: in the aftermath of the tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2004, Rega teams flew to Thailand and

Sri Lanka to establish contact with local hospitals and prepare patients to be transported home. All three Rega ambulance jets were deployed. Within the space of one week, more than 60 patients were flown back to Switzerland, cared for by a total of 16 medical crews.

As part of its disaster relief activities abroad, Rega also serves as a link in the Swiss Rescue Chain managed by the Swiss Confederation. For the Rescue Chain, it organises and coordinates the transport of a reconnaissance team to the disaster area and places its Operations Center and its aircraft at the organisation's disposal to perform other tasks.

Primary management of a natural hazard event



4th phase

"After the incident is before the incident"

After the disaster, processes are analysed and optimised together with the operation partners in order to learn from the experience gained. Methods of collaboration are improved. Joint exercises enable those involved to practise the appropriate procedures so that everything runs smoothly in an emergency.



1st phase

"Rescue and evacuation"

The first emergency calls come in at various call centres. The focus now is on rescuing injured persons and evacuating people from the danger zone. It increasingly becomes apparent that this is a major incident. The Rega Operations Center calls out various helicopter crews, as well as mountain rescuers from the Swiss Alpine Club SAC. The rescue hoist, a standard piece of equipment on all Rega helicopters, is often deployed. Thanks to Rega's 24/7 standby service, its twin-engine helicopters and the appropriate training of the cockpit crews, rescues can also be performed at night.

3rd phase

"Search for missing persons"

Search and rescue dogs belonging to Swiss Alpine Club SAC mountain rescuers and Rega's search helicopter are used to search for missing persons. The helicopter is equipped with a thermal imaging camera and a mobile phone location device. In liaison with the competent authorities, Rega's specially trained search specialists narrow down the search area and draw up a grid for the helicopter to follow.



2nd phase

"Overview and risk situation"

To support the authorities, Rega flies specialists, such as geologists or members of crisis teams, to the incident area. This enables the authorities to obtain an overview of the extent of the damage from the air and to assess the risk situation – of further rockfalls or mudslides, for example. This phase also includes coordination with other rescue partners in the incident area. In the background, the Rega Operations Center calls out additional rescue teams of its own in order to be able to maintain the mission over several days.



WENN SICH AUCH DAS HERZ EINE KURZE AUSZEIT NIMMT.

Dann sind wir mit unseren
modernen Ambulanzjets auch
im Ausland für Sie da.

*Danke für Ihre
Unterstützung.*

Wenn, dann
rega



MAGAZINE



Photo story

Accompany our flight physician Nadine to America.

TESTING, TESTING
1 2 3

Become a two-way radio expert

Make a tin can two-way radio and learn how to use it.

Win

Enter our competition and win a great prize!





"Roger, over"

Pilots can talk to other people over a two-way radio. If you want to fly when you're older, you also need to learn how to communicate in this way. Make a tin can two-way radio and use it to practise the rules of radio communication (see next page) with your friends. Does our flight physician Nadine know how to operate a two-way radio? We

asked her! You can find the answer at regaclub.ch/flugaerztin. At any rate, she didn't have to do so during our repatriation mission to the USA. She was caring for a patient and making sure that she wasn't in any pain. You can accompany Nadine on her mission with the Rega jet in the photo story.

Your Rega



WOULD YOU LIKE ONE TOO?

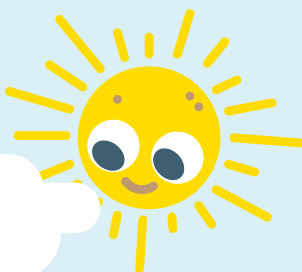
Become a member of RegaCLUB and get a cool reflective badge. Scan the QR code and order it now. Welcome to the Rega family!

Scan the code and get your free badge



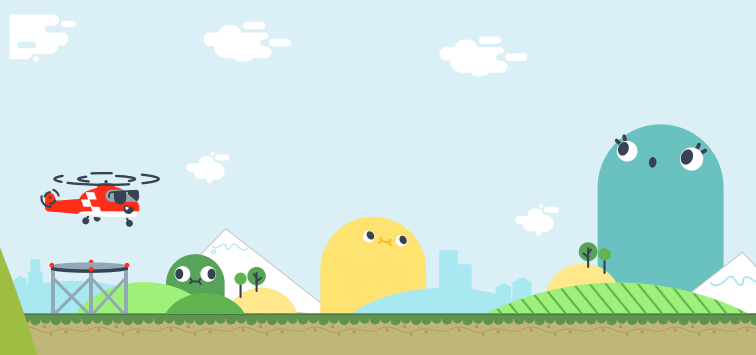
regaclub.ch/regaclub-badge

HAVE A GO NOW!



Attention all puzzle fans!

Would you like to test your knowledge about Rega? Then take part in our new quiz and win a great prize! You can find out how to enter the prize draw here: regaclub.ch/quiz-im-einsatz. Good luck!





TALK OVER THE RADIO LIKE THE PROS

We show you step by step how to make a tin can two-way radio. If necessary, ask someone for help. It's easier and more fun with two people.

READY-SET-GO!

How to make a two-way radio



Fetch 2 empty tin cans and a long piece of string.



Using a hammer and a nail, make a hole in the bottom of each can. Be careful not to injure yourself. Ask an adult to help you.



Poke the end of the string through the hole in one can and knot on the inside so the string can't slip back through the hole. Do the same with the other end and the second can. Your two-way radio is now ready.



It's best to test your radio outside. You and your friend should each take a tin can and move apart until the string is taut. Make sure that the string isn't touching anything.



Now hold your tin can to your ear and ask your friend to speak directly into their can. Can you hear anything?

What you need

- 2 tin cans
- 1 nail
- 1 hammer
- 1 long piece of string (e.g. for tying parcels)



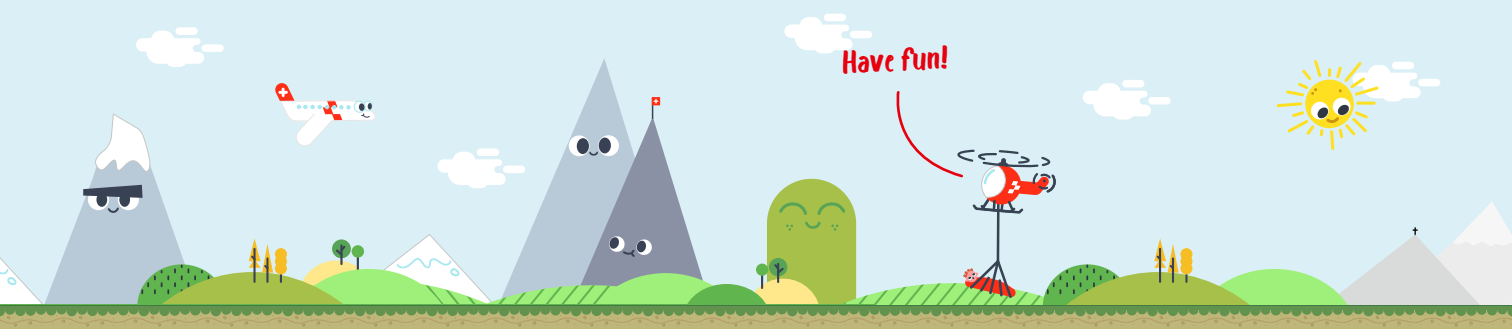
READY FOR TAKEOFF?

The basic rules of radio communication

Take your tin can two-way radio and practise with your friends the basic rules for talking over the radio. Only one person can speak at a time. Off you go!

- 1 Speak clearly and in a normal tone.
- 2 Speak and answer in short sentences.
- 3 When you've finished saying something, you should end with "over". This lets your friend know that it's their turn to talk.
- 4 When your friend has said something, you should answer with "roger that" to show that you've understood them – provided, of course, that you have understood everything.
- 5 If you haven't understood something, say: "Say again, over".

Have fun!



rega  **CLUB**

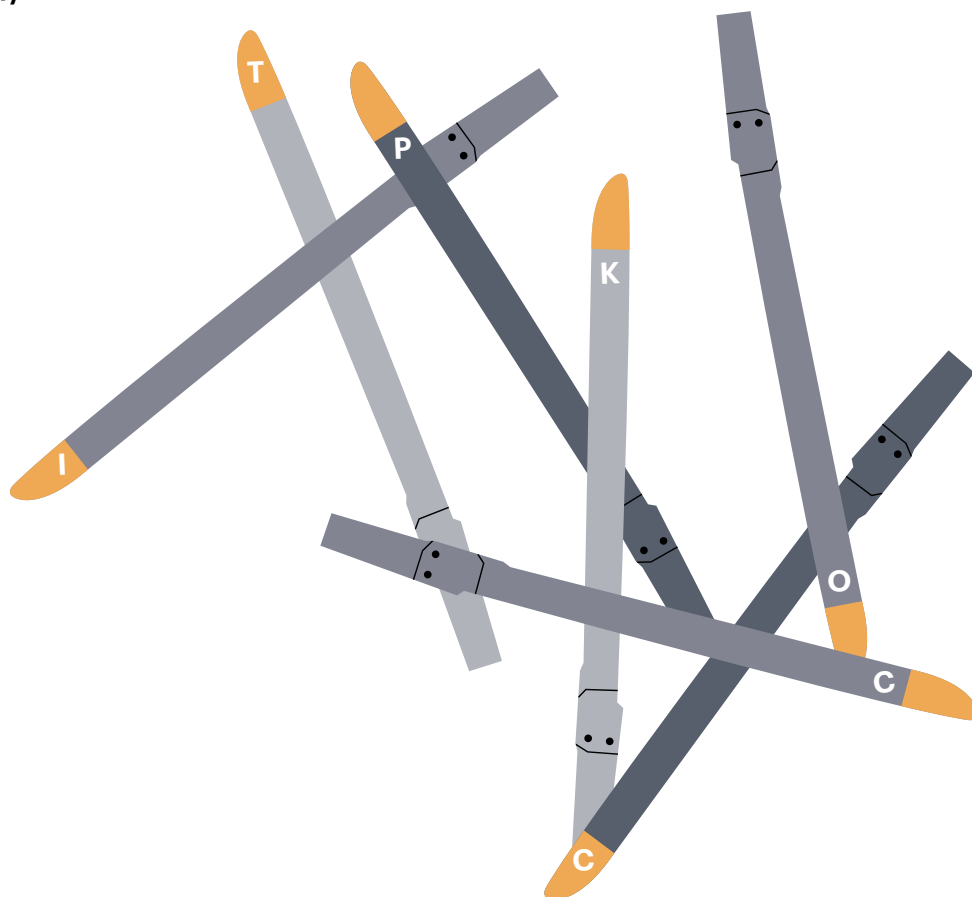




PUZZLE COMPETITION

Take part

For this puzzle, you need a steady hand! Write down the letters in the order in which you need to pick up each rotor blade without moving any of the others.



Solution: _ _ _ _ _

Competition

Write the solution together with your name and address on a postcard and send it by 31 December 2024 to:

Swiss Air-Rescue Rega
"Competition RegaCLUB"
PO Box 1414
CH-8058 Zurich Airport

Ten winners drawn from the correct answers will each receive a Rega gym bag worth CHF 10.-. **Good luck!**



Solution from issue no. 102: B
Each of the following has won a Rega purse:

A. Mesot, Villargiroud | E. Hentsch, Corbeyrier | T. Jacquier, Genthod | L. Gugger, Hinterforst | A. Keiser, Stans | M. Merky, Winterthur | M. Hunziker, Giswil | L. Hodler, Bürglen | D. Poncini, Ascona | G. Jacmolli, Ponto Valentino

Congratulations!



PHOTO STORY

IN THE REGA JET WITH FLIGHT PHYSICIAN NADINE

MISSION IN AMERICA



Do you have any questions for the flight physician? Then write and let us know!



THE END

FOR THE YOUNGEST FANS REGA SHOP



Rega helicopter base playset 129.–

Build your own Rega hangar. Once it is completed, it is time to play. With a total of 13 parts, such as helicopter, jet and crew, you are ready for action. Dimensions: 67×23×31 cm (L×B×H). Made of wood (includes a few plastic parts). **Article no. 40050**

Coloured pencils 15.–

Draw a Rega helicopter or jet on a rescue mission with these six coloured pencils from Caran d'Ache.

Article no. 40065



Wall clock 39.–

Always have Rega and the time in good view.

Jet, article no. 40063

Helicopter, article no. 40064



Pencil case 35.–

Pencil case created from tarpaulin, made in Switzerland.

Article no. 40058

Teddy bear 35.–

Rega teddy to play with, cuddle and love.

Article no. 40037



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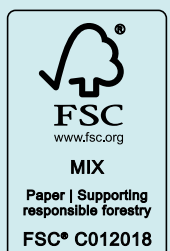
0848 514 514

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regaclub.ch



“I check all the helicopter functions.”

Marcel Amrhein

56, works pilot

Marcel Amrhein, who comes from Kerns (Canton Obwalden), is a mechanic qualified to work on cars, trucks and helicopters, as well as a mechanical engineer. He holds a licence to fly both helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft.

In his role at Rega, Marcel Amrhein draws on his extensive specialist knowledge on a daily basis. As a works pilot, he liaises between the mission pilots on the Rega bases and the helicopter mechanics at the Rega Center at Zurich Airport. After the rescue helicopters have been partially or completely dismantled for maintenance and subsequently reassembled, Marcel Amrhein inspects them right down to the smallest detail. For example, a “major service” is extremely comprehensive, takes 5–6 weeks, and is performed once a year. “Afterwards, for instance, I calibrate the compass, check together with the helicopter mechanic that the rescue hoist is working properly, carry out a check on the underload capacity with an attached weight, or test various approach procedures, such as an IFR approach flight,” explains Marcel Amrhein. He works in close collaboration with

the helicopter mechanics. Only after all the tests have been satisfactorily completed and the helicopter has been approved by the responsible mechanic does Marcel Amrhein fly the aircraft back to the appropriate Rega base. The crew then know that they have an impeccably maintained and precisely checked machine to use for their rescue missions.

Where did Marcel Amrhein get his enthusiasm for flying helicopters? “Helicopters have always fascinated me and I thought: that would be something for me,” he relates. He took up flying at the age of 30. He later gained flying experience in, among other places, central Asia, where he worked as a helicopter pilot and mechanic for a relief organisation. His job was to put the newly

purchased AgustaWestland AW 139 helicopters into operation and train local pilots and mechanics. When a major earthquake rocked Pakistan, these helicopters were required for rescue missions and transport flights; Marcel Amrhein flew missions and also kept the aircraft in good working order. As there was still plenty of work following the earthquake, Marcel Amrhein remained in the country as a pilot and helicopter mechanic for seven years. After returning to Switzerland, he applied for a job at Rega and started as a works pilot in 2011. Since then, his task has been to check all the rescue helicopters that undergo maintenance in the hangar at the Rega Center. Not one leaves here without first being checked by Marcel Amrhein.

Karin Zahner



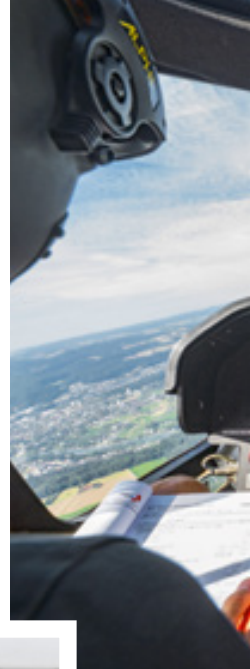


07:30

► Start to the day: Marcel Amrhein gets a picture of the upcoming tests.

08:00

► Helicopter mechanic Timo Inauen discusses the maintenance carried out on the Da Vinci with Marcel Amrhein.



“I work in close collaboration with the helicopter mechanics.”



09:30

► Ground run in preparation for the test flight: two helicopter mechanics are also on board to measure the vibrations. Depending on the result, the rotor must then be correctly balanced again.





09:50

◀ Point by point: the pilot and mechanic inspect all the instruments using a checklist.



09:00

▲ Back in operation: Marcel Amrhein has thoroughly checked the helicopter and now hands it over to pilot André Müller at the Erstfeld base.

15:00

▲ Underload check: every Rega helicopter is equipped with a rescue hoist. The hoist is also tested with the helicopter carrying a weight to ensure it is functioning properly.



Leisure time

◀ Recharging his batteries surrounded by nature: Marcel Amrhein likes to recover from his demanding job by hiking in the mountains.

Waking up in intensive care abroad

A wall at the side of the road brings Frank Lüem's motorcycle tour in southern Italy to an abrupt end. He is seriously injured and is admitted to the intensive care unit in the province of Salerno. Read his story, told from three different perspectives.

26





The patient
**“The first thing
 I noticed was all the
 tubes around me.”**

Frank Lüem

“We’d regularly been going off on motorbike trips in a large group for many years. This year, there were 10 of us on a tour in southern Italy. On the day of the accident, shortly after midday, we were no longer far from our hotel. Earlier it had been raining lightly, but now the road was drying. I can’t remember the accident any more. There are only pictures of the scene of the accident and speculation about what happened. The marks on my helmet and motorcycle gear indicate that I evidently skidded across the tarmac before crashing into the edge of a stone wall on the other side of the road with the upper right side of my body.

I woke up in the windowless intensive care unit in hospital. The first thing I noticed was all the tubes around me. The medical staff had, for example, inserted a central venous catheter into a vein in order to administer the necessary drugs. Fortunately, three fellow motorbike riders, including one of my best friends, had accompanied me in the ambulance that took me to hospital. He was allowed to visit me in the intensive care unit even though this was not really permitted. The visiting times were very short and my time in hospital was limited to waiting, lying in bed and sleeping. Communication was also a problem – many conversations with the doctors were held using a translation app on a mobile phone.

As soon as I got my own mobile phone back, I was able to telephone my wife in Switzerland, even though that was actually also against the



Working together with doctors and ambulance staff abroad is part of the Rega jet crew’s everyday work.

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rules. They presumably turned a blind eye here, too. My wife had already been informed by my friend about what had happened and I also knew that she had already contacted Rega. After that, I was always kept well informed about how the planning of my repatriation was progressing. It was a huge relief when the Rega crew were finally standing at the foot of my hospital bed. I felt really well looked after; the transport was very comfortable and I was virtually pain-free.

When you go travelling, you always expect it to be a positive experience. You don’t plan in advance for something as drastic as this to happen. I’m extremely grateful and glad that everything went so professionally and smoothly.”

Handover to the Rega crew: in the Italian intensive care unit, Frank Lüem is being prepared to be transported home.

The wife

“The flight coordinator was able to reassure me and help stop me from worrying.”

Katrin Lüem, wife

“The first phone call I received was from Frank’s friend, directly from the accident site. I realised immediately that it was serious. Being hundreds of kilometres away was very unsettling and I was extremely worried. Shortly afterwards, I picked up the phone and rang Rega. The flight coordinator gently informed me about the next steps and immediately opened a case file, which greatly reassured me. I was in regular contact with Rega over the next few days. A Rega medical consultant explained to me that due to his injuries, Frank could not be flown back home straight away because it would be too risky, and that he would therefore have to stay in hospital a little longer. I was constantly kept up to date by the medical consultants and they clearly explained the diagnoses to me, which was very important and immensely valuable to me.”



The flight physician

“Frank’s diagnosis clearly spoke in favour of repatriation with the Rega ambulance jet.”

Philippe Lasser, Rega flight physician



“On the evening before the repatriation, we were called out by the Jet Operations Center. I immediately studied Frank’s patient file on the computer. Frank’s diagnosis clearly spoke in favour of repatriation with the ambulance jet. The prerequisite for this is medical necessity – for example, a very serious illness or injury or inadequate care in the foreign hospital.

Frank’s injuries were serious. In addition to traumatic brain injury, the upper half of his body was particularly severely affected. Eight ribs were fractured, some of them in multiple places, as were also the collarbone, the shoulder blade and the spinous process of a vertebra. In addition, Frank’s collapsed lung had been injured by a bone splinter.

One of the main focuses of our work is to anticipate potential problems so that they



How Frank Lüem is doing today

Four days after his serious accident, the Rega crew flew Frank Lüem back to Switzerland. He underwent surgery in a cantonal hospital and then spent several weeks receiving hospital care, inpatient rehabilitation and physiotherapy treatment. Today he has recovered from his injuries and can go about his work as a technical fitter again.



Left: Before takeoff, flight physician Philippe Lasser ensures that Frank Lüem has a pain-free flight.

Right: At the Rega Center, Frank Lüem is handed over to the Protection & Rescue Zurich team.

don't arise in the first place. When preparing for the flight, it was important to have all the medical equipment with us that would enable our patient to have a comfortable and pain-free flight back home. In this particular case, this included the appropriate painkillers. Patients are not always in a suitable physical condition for a flight. Unstable injuries or medical conditions, air trapped in the body or freshly operated wounds are all reasons for delaying a repatriation flight.

Once we arrived in southern Italy, our first challenge was to locate the patient in the hospital. It's actually not always easy to find your way around a foreign hospital straight away. Challenges like this also make my work as a flight physician at Rega interesting. It enriches my everyday work when I'm confronted with other languages, structures or even cultures abroad. The information or tips provided by our colleagues at the Operations Center, who also support us during the mission, are very helpful in such cases.

We found Frank to be in good shape given the circumstances. The infrastructure is not comparable to that in Switzerland, but the

local specialists had taken good care of him. We concentrated on relieving Frank's pain during his transport to Switzerland. Shortly before we arrived at the hospital, he had been x-rayed again – he was in a lot of pain because he had received hardly any painkillers. Fortunately, we were able to manage this pain quickly and he was virtually pain-free for the next few hours before landing in Zurich."

Mathias Gehrig



Repatriation

You can find further information on the topic of repatriation at regach.ch/repatriation



A man in a dark blue suit and striped tie stands in front of a yellow and blue TCS Ambulance. The ambulance has "TCS AMBUL" and "ANCE RESCUE" written on it. The man is holding his glasses in his hands.

“TCS on the road, Rega in the air.”

Jürg Wittwer
General Manager, Touring Club Switzerland

TCS General Manager Jürg Wittwer talks about the collaboration with Rega and the similarities between the two non-profit organisations.

What do you associate with Rega?

First and foremost, a personal experience: 14 years ago, Rega flew me to hospital with a broken back. So I have in part Rega to thank for the fact that I can walk today. Every time I see a Rega helicopter in the sky, I know that help is on the way to someone in distress and I hope that the person will soon be on the road to recovery.

In what way do Rega and TCS work together?

We work together in connection with the TCS ETI-Schutzbrief, which is by far the most widespread travel insurance in Switzerland. If a TCS member has a health problem abroad, we want to bring them back to Switzerland by the best means possible, which is why we most frequently use Rega's ambulance jets.

What does this collaboration involve?

When a TCS member calls us from abroad, our own team of doctors clarifies the medically appropriate means of transport. An ambulance jet is not always necessary. However, if an ambulance jet is the best option, we contact Rega. From this moment onwards, a highly complex, well-rehearsed collaboration is set in motion. Rega clarifies availability,

looks at the possibility of flying several patients at the same time, organises flight routes and overflight and landing permits, and arranges for the transport between the hospital and airport on location. We undertake all the logistical measures to enable the patient to be treated in Switzerland.

Are there any similarities between TCS and Rega?

Both are tradition-steeped, non-profit organisations. They both not only look after their members or patrons, but are also at the service of the whole of Switzerland. The yellow TCS patrol vehicles characterise the streets just as much as the red Rega helicopters do the skies and they complement each other perfectly. Both TCS and Rega are an integral part of our country and epitomise Swiss values such as reliability and willingness to help.

TCS now also operates its own ambulances and is the largest private rescue service in Switzerland. What strategy are you pursuing?

For over 60 years, TCS has been active in the field of medicine, saves lives and comes to the aid of its members. With our ambulances, we are continuing this tradition. Today, we offer standardised, high-quality ambulance services throughout

Switzerland. We are also active in the area of emergency rescue in four cantons.

You have launched a new TCS Notfall-Schutzbrief for emergencies. What does this cover?

In Switzerland, there is a gap in insurance when it comes to financial cover after an emergency. Many people are not aware that their compulsory health insurance only covers a maximum of half of the ambulance transport costs, including in the event of illness-related emergencies, such as heart attacks. We have closed this gap with our new emergency assistance insurance, which pays the uncovered costs of ambulance transport and supports those concerned during their recovery phase. The aim is to prevent people from being reluctant to call an ambulance for cost reasons, as well as to enable those affected to remain mobile and to make everyday life easier for them while they are recuperating.

Is it necessary to have a Rega patronage in addition to the TCS Notfall-Schutzbrief?

The TCS emergency insurance does not include air transport, so a Rega patronage is always necessary to supplement it. The rule of thumb is simple: TCS on the road, Rega in the air. Anyone who is a member or patron of both TCS and Rega is doing something good – for themselves and for other people.

Karin Zahner



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Take CRP to heart

When someone suffers an acute cardiac arrest, every minute counts. Resuscitation with chest compressions can save lives. We explain how it is done.

Around 8000 people in Switzerland suffer from sudden cardiac arrest every year. A person will die within a few minutes if, in addition to raising the alarm, resuscitation measures are not immediately initiated and maintained until the emergency services arrive on the scene.

It is important to know what to do if a person's heart stops beating, as the lack of blood supply to the brain can lead to severe brain damage within a matter of minutes. However, many people have an unfounded fear of doing something wrong and refrain from taking any action.

Most importantly: provide assistance until medical help arrives

What are the symptoms of a cardiac arrest? The two most important warning signs: a person suddenly becomes unconscious and stops breathing. When this happens, there is no time to lose and you should immediately call emergency number 144 or alert Rega via emergency number 1414 or the Rega app. Do this yourself or explicitly ask a passer-by to do so.

Chest compressions must be commenced immediately and continued until the patient responds or medical professionals arrive. Chest compressions are physically demanding: it is therefore advisable to call for people nearby to help so that you can take turns and someone can fetch a defibrillator.

Corina Zellweger



Bystander resuscitation

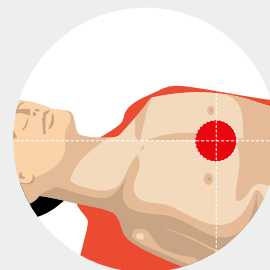
Resuscitation carried out by an untrained helper is often referred to as “bystander resuscitation”.

Resuscitation is the act of reviving someone who has become unconscious – in most cases after suffering a sudden cardiac arrest. Medical professionals also talk of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). CPR involves performing rhythmic compressions on the centre of the chest to a depth of 5–6 cm. The chest compressions pump blood around the body and thus transport oxygen to the brain to prevent the brain cells from dying.



How to perform a resuscitation (CPR)

- Ask someone nearby to fetch a **defibrillator (AED)** (► see Defikarte.ch)
- If you are on the line to an emergency call centre: switch your phone to loudspeaker so that they can **guide you through the steps over the phone.**
- Lay the person **flat on their back** on a firm surface.
- **Kneel beside** them at chest height.
- Place the **heel of your hand in the centre of the person’s chest**, then place your other hand on top of your first hand. Keeping your arms straight, push straight down on their chest to a depth of 5–6 cm at a fast and steady rate: 2 compressions per second or 100–120 per minute. The song, “Stayin’ alive”, by the Bee Gees provides the correct beat for doing the compressions.
- If **other helpers** are present: take it in turns and **relieve** each other every 2 minutes. Keep the interruption as short as possible.
- When the defibrillator arrives: switch it on and follow the instructions. Keep doing compressions until the emergency services arrive.



Questions and answers about resuscitation (CPR)



What if the ribs break?

During resuscitation, a considerable amount of force needs to be applied to the patient’s chest to ensure that blood is pumped to the brain. This can result in fractured ribs. But don’t worry: a broken rib is not life-threatening – but a heart that is not beating is.



Should you also give mouth-to-mouth (rescue breaths) during resuscitation?

It is easier to focus just on the chest compressions. This has proved to be a simple and extremely effective

measure. However, ventilation is also important during resuscitation. If you have the confidence to ventilate the patient, then do so through the nose at a ratio of 30 to 2 – that is, 30 compressions followed by two breaths through the nose – preferably without any interruptions in between.



Why is the defibrillator so important?

An automated external defibrillator (AED) treats cardiac arrhythmias by delivering an electric shock to the heart to “reset” it and get it beating

again on its own. AEDs can be operated by untrained persons and are available in many public places, such as train stations or shopping centres.



Further information:

- Locations of all public defibrillators: Defikarte.ch
- Schweizerische Herzstiftung: swissheart.ch
- Swiss Resuscitation Council SCL: resuscitation.ch

Rega Shop

NEW Solar wristwatch 350.–

The Explorer and Mission solar watches were designed and manufactured exclusively for our patrons by a family business in Langenthal. The energy from the solar cell powers a Swiss quartz movement. Water-resistant to 50 metres. Unisex. 2-year warranty.

Explorer watch, article no. 60017

Mission watch, article no. 60016



NEW Calendar 2025 22.–

Twelve spectacular photographs of the Rega fleet and crew members accompany you through the year 2025.

Dimensions: 48×33 cm.

Article no. 90001



Cuddly blanket 79.–

This velour blanket by Eskimo guarantees cosy hours at home. Dimensions: 150×200 cm.

Article no. 30061



Beanie 29.–

The knitted beanie from Mammut with a windstopper lining keeps your head and ears warm. One size, unisex. **Article no. 30056**



Exped backpack 99.–

Waterproof backpack from the Exped brand with a roll-top closure. Oeko-Tex 100. Volume: 15 litres.

Article no. 90098



NEW Victorinox Classic SD pocket knife 29.–

Small Victorinox pocket knife with 7 functions. Printed with the Rega fleet. **Article no. 90104**



NEW Coffee to go mug 19.–

Sustainable: double-walled, insulated mug made of stainless steel for a hot drink on the go. 370 ml.

Article no. 90102



Headlamp 59.–

Multifunctional, waterproof Spot headlamp from the Black Diamond brand.

Article no. 90079



Challenger 650 29.–

Collector's model, scale 1:100, plastic. Not suitable as a toy.

Article no. 50020



Airbus Helicopters H145 35.–

Collector's model, scale 1:48, metal. Not suitable as a toy.

Article no. 50026



AgustaWestland Da Vinci 35.–

Collector's model, scale 1:48, metal. Not suitable as a toy.

Article no. 50027

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BESTSELLER Outdoor first aid kit 89.–

The most important first aid items for outdoor use, compiled by Rega doctors. The set comprises top-quality material from IVF Hartmann and contains more than 35 products. **Article no. 90080**



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► Register for the patron portal at: rega.ch/login

Rega contacts

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