

# **Annual Report 2023**

In operation for Switzerland.



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# Well equipped for the future



Michael Hobmeier



Ernst Kohler

Dear Reader

Last year, Rega's Operations Center once again organised more than 20,000 missions and came to the aid of 14,000 people in distress. This cannot be taken for granted in these troubled times, when just a few hours' flight away, thousands of people are dying, living in difficult conditions or fleeing from their homes.

What is happening around us serves as a reminder of how privileged we are in Switzerland – not just in terms of safety and stability, but also health and prosperity. For us at Rega, this privilege motivates us again and again to give our very best each day and to fulfil our core task with pride: helping people in an emergency.

For this to succeed, in addition to a wealth of expertise, a top infrastructure and the Rega pioneering spirit, we need one thing above all: a solid financial foundation. This is the most important prerequisite for operating air rescue services at the highest level for the benefit of the Swiss population without focusing on financial gain.

This financial basis continues to remain firm – thanks to our more than 3.6 million patrons. It is their support that makes Rega what it is today: an air rescue organisation that has been setting standards in Switzerland and all over the world for over 70 years.

Our goal remains unchanged in 2024: together with our partners, to ensure that the Swiss population and our patrons at home and abroad can rely on receiving swift, professional medical assistance by air. Around the clock, 365 days a year.

We would like to thank you most sincerely for your invaluable support.

**Michael Hobmeier**  
Chairman of the Foundation Board

**Ernst Kohler**  
CEO/Chairman of the Management Board



# News 2024







## The new Rega fleet is taking shape

**Rega provides medical assistance by air for the Swiss population around the clock, 365 days a year. A decisive factor for the fulfilment of this task is the helicopter fleet, which in future will comprise 21 Airbus helicopters of the latest generation. Rega is taking advantage of this procurement project to make further improvements based on its past experience with the existing helicopters.**

Between 2024 and 2026, Rega plans to modernise its entire helicopter fleet and in future operate a single-type fleet comprising 21 rescue helicopters in the latest, five-blade configuration of the H145 manufactured by Airbus Helicopters. For just over a year now, an interdisciplinary team have been working on a large-scale project to tailor the cabin to both patients and Rega crews right down to the smallest detail and to prepare everything so that the new helicopters can be

integrated into the fleet during on-going operations.

### **Status quo: a fleet with two helicopter types**

The current helicopter fleet is composed of 20 rescue helicopters. With these, Rega operates a total of 14 helicopter bases distributed throughout Switzerland. This countrywide network enables rapid and professional assistance by

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air – day and night. The “surplus” helicopters are either undergoing maintenance or are being used for training sessions organised by Rega’s own flight school. The ever growing number of missions and constantly increasing training requirements place high demands on the fleet, as well as on the specialists in the background, who are responsible for the maintenance and availability of the rescue helicopters.

In particular, the maintenance and servicing work for the 11 AgustaWestland Da Vinci mountain helicopters, which have been coming to the aid of people in distress since 2009, would continually increase if they were to be deployed beyond 2026. This would not only involve considerable investment, but also compromise the availability of these helicopters and thus their state of operational readiness.

#### **Advantages thanks to a single-type fleet**

Rega’s current fleet also includes eight Airbus H145 helicopters. In future, Rega will solely rely on this helicopter model – albeit one of the latest generation, equipped with a five-blade main rotor, state-of-the-art avionics, an increased payload capacity of 150 kilos and a new rescue hoist. The purchase of the new rescue helicopters means

that the same helicopter type will be used at all of Rega’s operational bases. This simplifies maintenance and saves money in terms of the procurement and management of spare parts. It will also be easier to plan the extensive crew training programmes. By expanding its fleet from 20 to 21 rescue helicopters, Rega is ensuring that it will still be able to fulfil its core task if the number of missions continues to rise.

#### **Long-term and comprehensive project planning**

Rega is investing a total of over CHF 200 million in the modernisation and expansion of its fleet. A procurement and integration project of this magnitude, which lasts several years from the signing of the contract to the delivery of the final helicopter, requires meticulous planning.

After all, the new rescue helicopters are not an “off-the-shelf” delivery, and their procurement involves more than simply ordering them from the manufacturer. The latest version of Rega’s rescue helicopters incorporates valuable experience gained over many decades of air rescue operations, as well as findings from missions using the predecessor models – long before the first of the new helicopters is delivered to Rega.



The H145 with its five-blade rotor is also well suited to missions in high mountain regions due to its high performance levels.





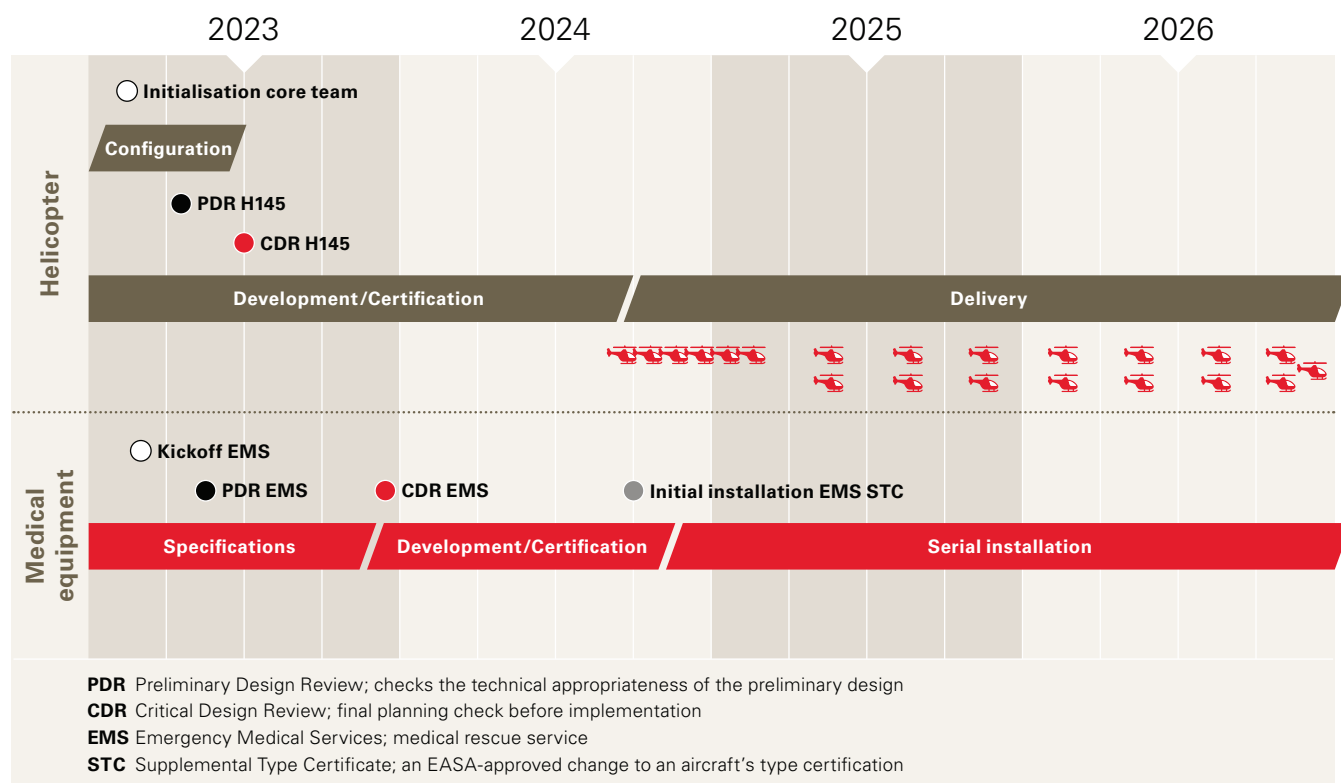
A full-scale wooden model was built to enable adjustments to be made in the cabin.

In addition to the fundamental configuration of the “basic helicopter”, which was developed in collaboration with the manufacturer, Airbus, special attention is being paid to the cabin interior of the Rega helicopter: here the expertise and experience of an interdisciplinary project team of flight physicians, paramedics and engineers flow into the specifications. In order for the crew to make the best possible use of the space in the cabin for providing patients with medical care, optimisation measures were identified, developed, discussed and finalised

together with the Swiss company, Aerolite, over a period of around two years and also tested in a specially constructed replica wooden model of the helicopter cabin. Among the numerous modifications are a newly arranged storage system for medical supplies, which gives the emergency flight physicians an even better overview when attending to patients in the cabin, and a newly designed, secure storage tool for the electronic tablet, which is used for recording information about the mission.

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The various project steps, including the phased integration of the new helicopters into the fleet, extend over several years.

### In-house design organisation closely involved

An integral part of the project team is Rega's in-house engineering department. These engineers are not only the point of contact for complex technical matters within the organisation, but also design and manufacture components for the Rega fleet. As a so-called "Part 21 Design Organisation", the engineering team are certified to do so by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). These specialists are particularly indispensable when it comes to procurement projects of this kind, where innovative improvements can be implemented or changes made to the cabin layout before delivery.

### Retraining Rega crews in its own simulator

Last but not least, the decision to use a single-type fleet in the long term also has an impact from a human operational point of view. Rega crews from seven helicopter bases, in particular helicopter pilots who previously flew a Da Vinci, will need to be retrained. For over 30 pilots, this means a complex retraining process and the acquisition of a new licence entry, a so-called type rating, for the new helicopter type – including Rega's own training

programme, for example for missions with the rescue hoist. The Rega helicopter simulator for the Airbus H145 in Opfikon (Canton Zurich), which went into operation in November 2023, makes the process considerably easier and enables all Rega crews to undergo centrally coordinated training in Switzerland.

### Fleet replacement during ongoing operations

However, finalising the cabin layout and retraining the flight crews is not the end of the story: 20 aircraft also have to be taken out of service. The sale of the "old" fleet must also be planned and implemented. The new aircraft will then be delivered in stages between the third quarter of 2024 and the end of 2026. Putting 21 new helicopters into operation and integrating them into the fleet during ongoing operations will require an enormous amount of work in terms of both organisation and staff. The focus of all these efforts is always on ensuring the availability of the fleet for the welfare of patients.



## The details are decisive

In Ennetbürgen (Canton Nidwalden), the Rega interdisciplinary project team meet for a Critical Design Review with the specialists from the Swiss company, Aerolite, who are working on the modifications to the helicopter cabin specified by Rega. Many of the team members have spent countless hours in the helicopter cabin during missions: with patients, in all weathers, sometimes under time pressure, and on missions requiring the utmost concentration. They are familiar with every corner and every drawer, and know exactly what can be optimised and where. Comments at this meeting usually begin with “During missions, we noticed that...” – which signals that valuable experience is being channelled into the cabin layout of the new Rega helicopter fleet.

In the course of the day, every tiny detail is scrutinised: What happens if the supplier's oxygen cylinders suddenly have different dimensions? How big can a lid of a compartment be so that its weight does not have a negative impact on the overall load

capacity? How many degrees should a drawer containing medical supplies tilt when pulled out so that a seated emergency flight physician can easily see what is inside while they are attending to a patient? Bespoke designs in the cockpit are also discussed: Where are the holders for the night vision goggles and

the tablet mounted and what form do they take? All these details are discussed at great length so that they can be realised, tested and finally officially approved. During a mission, they help to ensure that every movement is perfectly executed for the well-being of the patient.

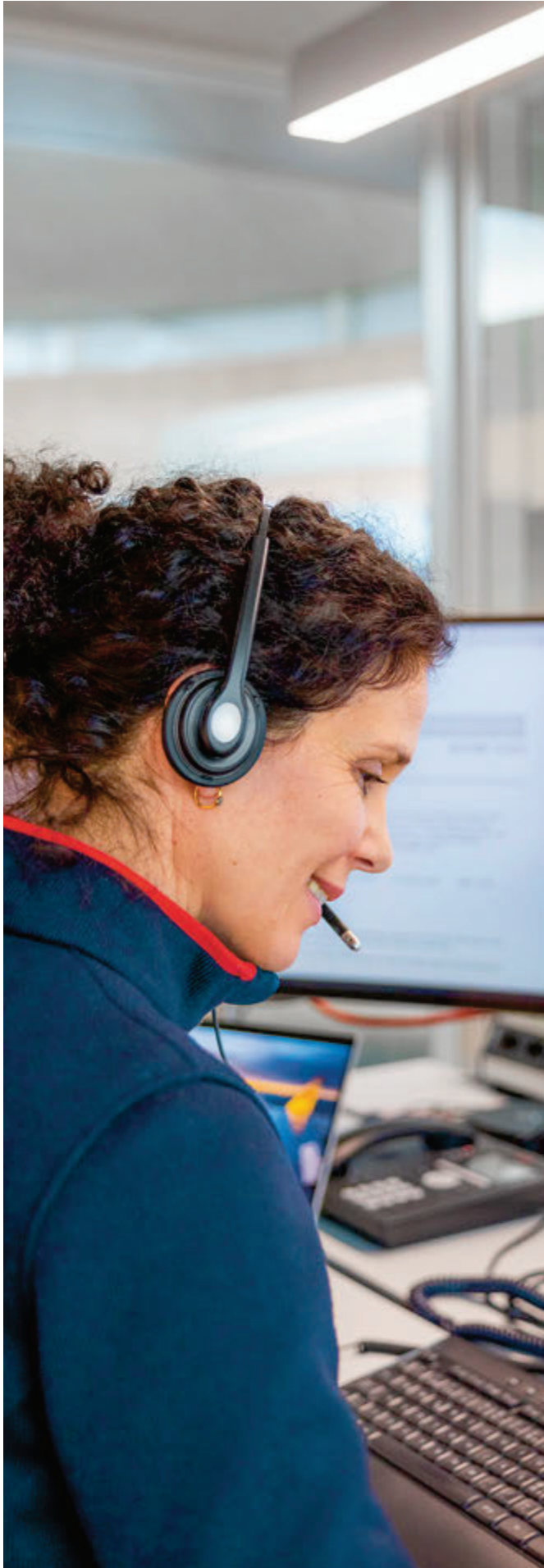


Thanks to the wooden model cabin, the modifications can be extensively tested under the most realistic conditions possible.



The project team brings together experts from various professional groups and can draw on countless experiences from past rescue missions.





## Competent advice around the clock

**Advising patients abroad and making clarifications prior to a repatriation are complex matters. For this reason, these tasks are handled by a broadly trained team of medical consultants. Based on various medical criteria, the Rega specialists decide whether, when and how the patient should be repatriated to Switzerland from abroad.**

In the early morning, a trip halfway around the world is on the checklist of the medical consultant in Rega's Jet Operations Center: Rega patrons in Italy, Norway, Argentina and Thailand are waiting for a return call. As the time difference in Asia means that it will soon be evening, the medical consultant on duty first calls Phuket in Thailand. "Bangkok Hospital, sawadee ka," says the voice on the other end of the line. A Rega patron who has suffered a femoral neck fracture is lying in one of the rooms there. The medical consultant discusses with the attending physician in Thailand how and when the patient can return to Switzerland. Subsequently, the flight coordinator takes over and starts to make all the necessary arrangements so that the patient can be repatriated as quickly as possible.

### **Making sound decisions**

When the Operations Center receives a call from a patron abroad, the flight coordinator first opens a dossier and records the patient's personal details, the name of the hospital, and the circumstances of the accident or the patient's medical history. The medical consultants then evaluate the precise medical situation of the injured or ill person abroad and decide how to proceed. In order to be able to make their decisions remotely, they need as much detailed information as possible from the patients, their relatives and the local doctors. To achieve this, they obtain information about the exact



A team of medical consultants work in the Jet Operations Center.

diagnosis, the examination findings, the treatment options, the medical and nursing care available, and the hygiene conditions in the hospital.

The medical consultants also weigh up how great the risk of transport is and whether repatriation is the best option for the patient. In addition, they take social reasons into account, as sometimes the injured or ill person has no relatives or other people to look after them on location, whereas they would be in a good social environment in Switzerland. The expected length of hospitalisation, possible complications during or after an operation, and the duration of the treatment and rehabilitation also play a role in the final decision. Immediate repatriation is not always the best solution from a medical point of view; often, the first step is to stabilise the patient's medical condition or to undergo surgery.

Communication over the phone is often challenging: sometimes there are cultural differences or language barriers that the medical consultants have to overcome in order to be able to assess a situation correctly. For this, they need a keen

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## Medical advice and assistance

In the event of medical problems abroad, Rega's medical consultants are available around the clock via emergency number **+41 333 333 333**. They give medical advice, provide addresses of suitable local hospitals and doctors, help to translate and explain diagnoses or to procure replacement medication, and also decide whether repatriation is necessary.

**Important:** Rega does not provide emergency assistance abroad. In the event of an accident or serious illness, the person concerned or a relative should first call out the local rescue services or contact a doctor or hospital. Only then should they call Rega.

**Further information:**  
**[rega.ch/repatriation](https://www.rega.ch/repatriation)**



sense of intuition, foreign language skills and a wealth of experience.

Once all the relevant information has been gathered, a meaningful picture of the patient's situation emerges and the next steps can be planned.

All kinds of information is entered here, such as feedback from the Rega crews: after each mission, they report firsthand on the condition of the hospital visited, the hygiene conditions, or the languages spoken by the medical staff. This comprehensive documentation forms a solid basis for assessing whether the patrons are in good hands and what options are available to them.

### **Repatriation is not always necessary**

Sometimes repatriation is not indicated. Often the Rega medical specialists can help simply by explaining the diagnosis of the doctor on location or recommending a suitable hospital nearby. For this purpose, the team maintain a comprehensive, regularly updated hospital database.

## **Question time**

***Gwendolin Zehnder, Deputy Head of the Jet Medical Advisory Service***

### **Rega currently employs 13 medical consultants. What does your work involve?**

We help patients who are confronted with medical problems abroad. First of all, we discuss the diagnosis with the doctor on location and talk to the patient, their relatives and, if necessary, the patient's GP in Switzerland. Once we have collected and evaluated all the necessary information, we can suggest the best solution for them in their particular situation.



### **So you do not always arrange for repatriation by Rega jet straight away?**

Our ambulance jets are intensive care units. Therefore, as a rule, only seriously ill or injured patients are flown back home on board one of our three ambulance jets – particularly if they require intensive medical care. It may also be the case that a stay in hospital on location is sufficient. Certain patients can also be repatriated on a normal scheduled flight, accompanied by a Rega physician or intensive care nurse. If repatriation by ambulance jet or on a commercial aircraft is necessary, our flight coordinators organise the mission from A to Z.

### **What kind of medical problems do people have when they turn to Rega for help?**

Anything can happen to travellers abroad that can also happen in Switzerland. We are often contacted after accidents, but also in the event of illnesses such as strokes, heart attacks or pneumonia. There are also infections with tropical diseases that require medical clarification by us.

### **What professional background do the medical consultants have?**

We come from a wide range of specialist areas: some of us are anaesthetists or internists, while others are intensive care specialists or surgeons. This diversity of professional expertise helps us all when assessing the individual cases. For the more medical backgrounds we can bring to the team, the broader our view and the better we can advise our patients.

# In constant contact

**Communication is of central importance for every rescue mission. Rega invests a great amount of money in infrastructure, equipment and software solutions so that its national air rescue coordination centre can contact a rescue helicopter crew anywhere in Switzerland at any time. The huge effort and expense pays off day after day: the Operations Center is in a position to respond to an emergency call immediately and to always call out the nearest suitable crew.**



A total of 15,695 rescue helicopter missions were organised by the flight coordinators at Rega's national air rescue coordination centre last year. However, their task is not just limited to mobilising a crew: during the missions, the Operations Center also continually provides the helicopter crews with information and coordinates with other operation partners, such as the mountain rescuers from the Swiss Alpine Club SAC. To ensure that communication with the helicopter crews and operation partners is possible anywhere in Switzerland and at any time, a large number of

channels, an appropriate infrastructure, and specific solutions on the ground, in the rescue helicopter and in the Operations Center are required, despite generally good mobile phone coverage.

## Countrywide radio network

At the heart of the communication between crews and the Operations Center during ongoing missions is Rega's own radio network. A total of 42 radio stations, which can be found at

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elevated locations throughout the country, ensure good radio coverage. For depending on the location, radio may be the only way for the Operations Center to make contact with a rescue helicopter crew. This is important, for example, if a crew is already en route to a mission and needs to be “diverted” for a more urgent mission, such as a resuscitation. This shows that being able to contact any of the crews at any time is a prerequisite for being able to call out the nearest suitable rescue helicopter in an emergency.

### Radio communication is still indispensable

Even in the age of smartphones and digitalisation, radio communication still plays a central role. During the approach to the incident site, Rega crews communicate via radio with their operation partners on location, such as a piste patroller or an SAC mountain rescuer. Communication within the crew over the radio is also essential. For example, when the emergency flight physician has been lowered on the rescue hoist to the patient and the pilot and paramedic are waiting at the temporary landing site for the emergency flight physician to report by radio that he is ready to evacuate the patient on the rescue hoist.

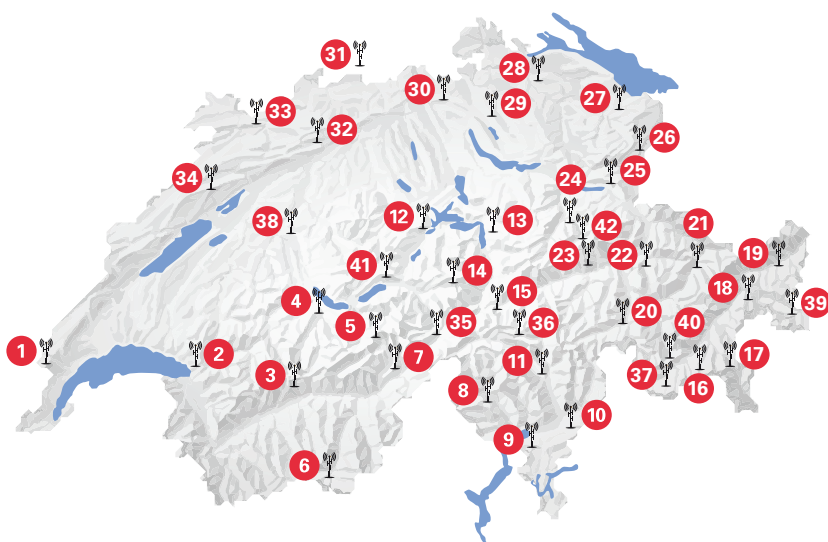
### An investment for Switzerland

Rega’s investment in this national infrastructure is a long-term one and goes far beyond simply setting up the radio network – for example, the fixed stations need to be maintained every year. Everyone benefits from this investment: in addition to its own Rega channel (R channel), which is used for internal communication between helicopter crews, SAC mountain rescuers and the Operations Center, Rega operates the coordination channel (K channel), as well as the emergency channel, which can be used by anyone. On this so-called E channel, anyone with a hand-held radio can request help directly from the Rega Operations Center – for instance, where there is no mobile phone coverage.

### Coordinates via radio into the navigation system

Smaller data packets can also be transmitted via the Rega radio network. On the one hand, the flight coordinators use this to transmit the coordinates of the incident scene directly into the cockpit, where the paramedic can transfer them to the helicopter’s navigation system at the touch of a button. This solution was developed especially for Rega and has been proving its worth for many years. On the other hand, the radio module in the rescue helicopter continuously transmits its

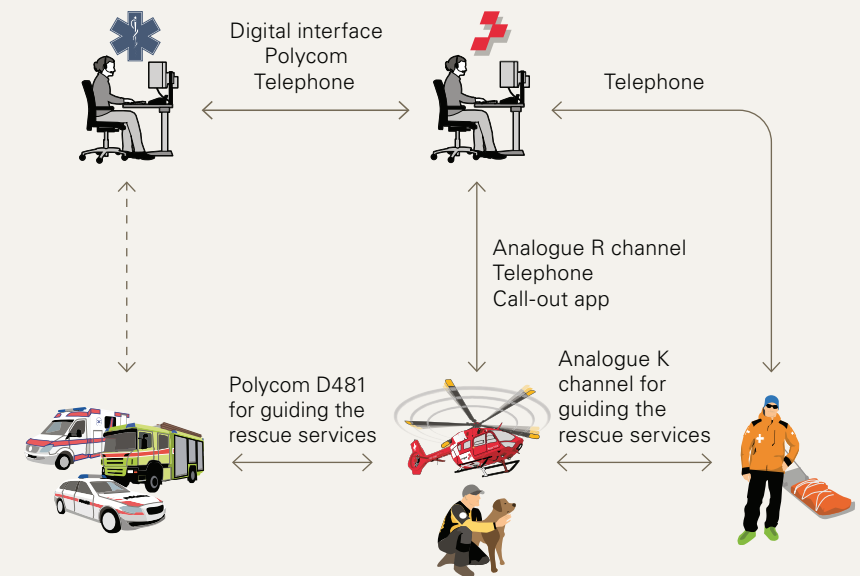
## Rega’s radio stations



1 La Dôle	22 Brambrüesch
2 Rochers de Naye	23 Crap Masegn
3 Plaine Morte	24 Sool
4 Niesen	25 Chäserrugg
5 Jungfrauoch	26 Hoher Kasten
6 Trockener Steg	27 St. Gallen
7 Eggishorn	28 Reutenen
8 Castello	29 Wangener Berg
9 Tamaro	30 Lägern
10 Gesero	31 Wehr
11 Matro	32 Laupersdorf
12 Pilatus	33 Les Ordon
13 Fronalpstock	34 Chasseral
14 Titlis	35 Grimsel
15 Oberalp	36 Lucomagno
16 Corvatsch	37 Bregaglia
17 Lagalb	38 Bantiger
18 Zerne	39 Müstair
19 Motta Naluns	40 Bivio
20 Lai da Vons	41 Brienzer Rothorn
21 Weissfluh	42 Elm

## Optimally networked

For every second rescue mission performed by a Rega helicopter, the Rega Operations Center is called out by a cantonal ambulance call centre (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 Center at the click of a mouse. Here, the flight coordinator mobilises the most suitable helicopter crew for the mission, taking into account the activities of all the rescue helicopters,



the weather conditions and other such factors. This ensures that the nearest suitable helicopter is deployed and that medical assistance can be brought to the ill or injured person as quickly as

possible. Besides the interface, the Rega flight coordinators also communicate with the cantonal ambulance call centres by telephone or via the Polycom digital radio system.

current position to the Operations Center via the radio network. In addition to redundant radio modules, other communication devices are integrated directly into the cockpit of the rescue helicopters: a mobile network connection with an antenna on the helicopter's fuselage, a Polycom radio device with an external antenna for encrypted contact with the ground rescue services, fire brigade, police and army, and a satellite telephone. Also on board are various handheld radio devices and one mobile phone per crew member with an alarm app developed by Rega, which is usually used to mobilise the crew.

### Self-designed solution for easy handling

The large number of communication channels ensures that the crew and Operations Center can contact each other at any time. However, operating these different channels is a challenge – especially in the Operations Center, where swift decisions have to be made and coordination between the various players is of key importance. So that the flight coordinators do not have to constantly switch between devices and channels, the various communication technologies have been combined in one easy-to-use system. The "Mico" software solution, which was specially

developed for Rega, is seamlessly integrated into the mission dispatch system. This allows the flight coordinators to fully focus on their task of supporting the crews during the mission. As they are able to maintain an overview of all on-going rescue helicopter missions, this also helps increase flight safety. They actively inform the crews in uncontrolled airspace via radio about other rescue helicopters that are approaching the same hospital or in the same valley.

### An effort that pays off

Rega goes to great lengths to ensure that it can contact everyone involved in the rescue mission at all times. Besides investment in infrastructure and equipment, regular training is also necessary, so that those participating in the mission can use the available technology efficiently and in accordance with the specifications defined by Rega. Experience has shown that when it comes to patients' welfare, all these efforts pay off day after day. After all, only by being able to set up a connection with all the rescue helicopter crews at any time is it possible to immediately transmit an emergency call or important information anywhere in Switzerland or to divert a crew to an even more urgent mission – something that can save lives.



# In focus 2023





AIR RESCUE SERVICES CONTINUE TO BE GUARANTEED

## Samedan base: construction work in stages

The planning of Samedan Regional Airport in the Engadin (Canton Graubünden) is moving forward. Last year, a joint, realisable solution was worked out between all the parties concerned. It was agreed that the project should be implemented in phases, with the construction of the helicopter base for Rega, HeliBernina and the Swiss Helicopter Group as phase one. Rega is prefinancing the new helicopter base and, in close coordination with the Infrastrukturunternehmung Regionalflughafen Samedan (Infra) and the overall pro-

ject, also taking over the planning and realisation.

The construction project has thus taken a decisive step forward. Only by dividing the project into stages will Rega also be able to continue to provide around-the-clock medical assistance to both the population and tourists in the Engadin beyond 2026. Rega is planning to renew its helicopter fleet by the end of 2026. Because the new Rega helicopter is larger than the one currently stationed in the Engadin, Rega will then need a larger hangar at Samedan Regional Airport.

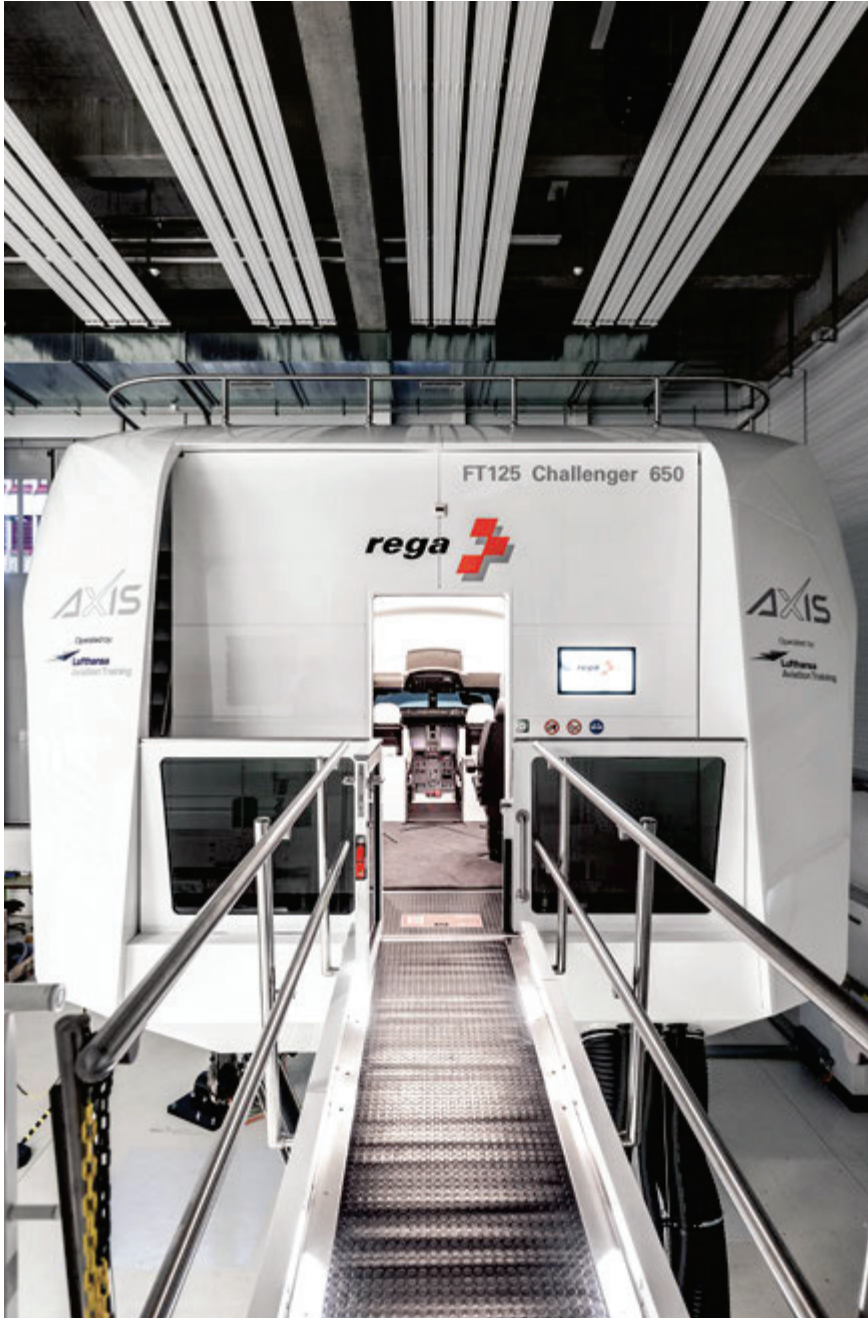


At Rega's highest-lying helicopter base, the over 45-year-old building is being replaced by a brand new one.



TRAINING IN SWITZERLAND

## New flight simulators for helicopter and jet crews



The two simulators (here the jet simulator), which were specially developed for Rega, are standing ready for Rega cockpit crews to train standard situations, as well as emergency procedures that would hardly, if at all, be possible to practise in real life.

Highly trained helicopter and jet crews are fundamental for performing rescue and repatriation flights safely and successfully. In the simulator, Rega's cockpit crews can efficiently train standard situations as well as replicate emergency procedures that would hardly, if at all, be possible to practise in real life. Moreover, on doing so, they neither generate noise nor pollute the environment. The helicopter crews spend a total of around 1000 hours per year in the simulator.

Rega plans to replace its entire helicopter fleet by the end of 2026.

Over the next two years, Rega will therefore have to retrain two-thirds of its cockpit crew members – that is, pilots and paramedics – on the new helicopter type, the five-blade configuration of the Airbus Helicopters H145. Thanks to the acquisition of a self-owned helicopter simulator for this helicopter type, a large part of this retraining can now take place at Lufthansa Aviation Training (LAT) in Opfikon (Canton Zurich). Until now, the crews have had to travel to northern Germany for H145 simulator training.

The new helicopter simulator is a full flight simulator of the highest certification category, which functions with a "roll-on/roll-off" system. This enables replica cockpits of different helicopter types to be used on the same platform. Besides the H145, Rega has procured two other cockpits: an Airbus H125 module in collaboration with Swiss Helicopter AG (see page 19) and one for the helicopter type, Leonardo AW169. LAT is responsible for operating the simulators and also offers free capacities to third parties.

In the past, the 28 jet pilots did their training in Montreal, Canada, which was where the nearest simulator for the aircraft type of Rega's jets – the Bombardier Challenger 650 – was located. By investing in an aircraft simulator of its own, the training exercises can now be conducted in the immediate vicinity of Zurich Airport. This simplifies the duty planning for the crew members and increases their availability for the benefit of the patients. Thanks to the full flight simulator of the highest certification category, the jet crews receive top quality training for their missions all over the world.

## HELICOPTER PILOTS

## Investing in the pilots of tomorrow



From left to right: Martin Keil (CTO Reiser), Heinz Leibundgut (Head of Helicopter Procedures and Training Rega), Ernst Kohler (CEO Rega), Dr Roman Sperl (CEO Reiser), Ralf Walser (CEO Swiss Helicopter Group), Rolf Heuberger (CEO Swiss Helicopter AG).

In 2023, the helicopter firm, Swiss Helicopter AG, and Rega jointly purchased a cockpit module of the helicopter type, Airbus H125, for Rega's new modular helicopter simulator. The two organisations are thus making a contribution towards promoting up-and-coming helicopter pilots in Switzerland. The recruitment of experienced helicopter pilots in Switzerland poses a major challenge and will become even more difficult

in future. One reason for this is the high training costs. The new simulator enables Swiss Helicopter AG and Rega not only to reduce both costs and the negative impact on the environment, but also to increase the quality of the training. With this joint investment in helicopter pilot training in Switzerland, the two organisations are sending an important signal and making a

further contribution towards ensuring that in future, too, a sufficient number of experienced pilots can be recruited for the demanding work in the spheres of commercial helicopter operations or air rescue.

### Rega training programme for young helicopter pilots

Rega supports young pilots who have been selected by Swiss helicopter companies with its own youth development programme. The aim of the programme is to encourage potential candidates to qualify as professional helicopter pilots. It is primarily geared towards young up-and-coming pilots with no previous flying experience. However, licensed helicopter pilots can also be accepted onto the programme as part of their personal flight training. Candidates can apply for selection if they are in possession of an employment contract from a Swiss partner helicopter company.

## EXPERIENCE REGA UP CLOSE

## Various public events

In 2023, there were once again a number of opportunities for people of all ages to discover and experience Rega. In addition to various appearances at trade fairs and events, Open Days and Rega Tour visits also took place. Rega has been at home in the Simmental valley for ten years, an occasion that was marked by the Zweisimmen helicopter base opening its hangar door to the public in May. Rescue helicopters have been taking off on missions from the Rega base in Dübendorf for 20 years – reason enough to invite the public to take a look behind the scenes in July. Furthermore, four cities were visited by a rescue helicopter and its crew over the course of the year. The Rega Tour began in Basel in April. The next stop was Lausanne in June, before heading to Romanshorn on Lake Constance a week later. The final visit of the year took the Rega helicopter to Aarau in September.



Visitors flocked to Rega's Zurich base in July 2023.

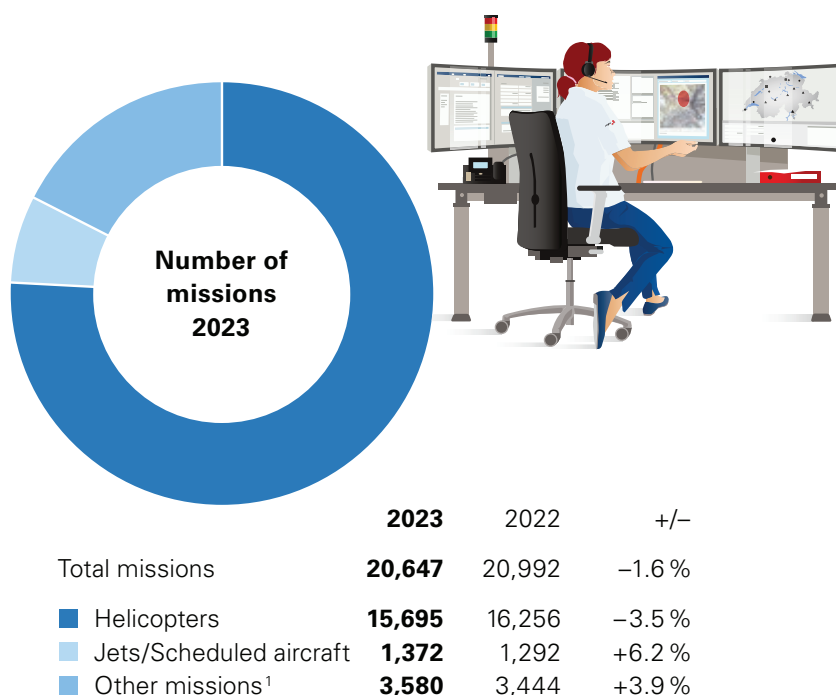


# Activities 2023



## Another busy year of missions

The services of Swiss Air-Rescue Rega were also in great demand in 2023. The Operations Center organised approximately 21,000 missions. That is an average of 57 missions per 24-hour period. Both the rescue helicopters and the ambulance jets were in the air almost as frequently as in the record year 2022.



<sup>1</sup> Transports by ambulance, missions on behalf of the Swiss Alpine Club SAC, Spéléo-Secours, Redog, etc.



## Helicopter missions

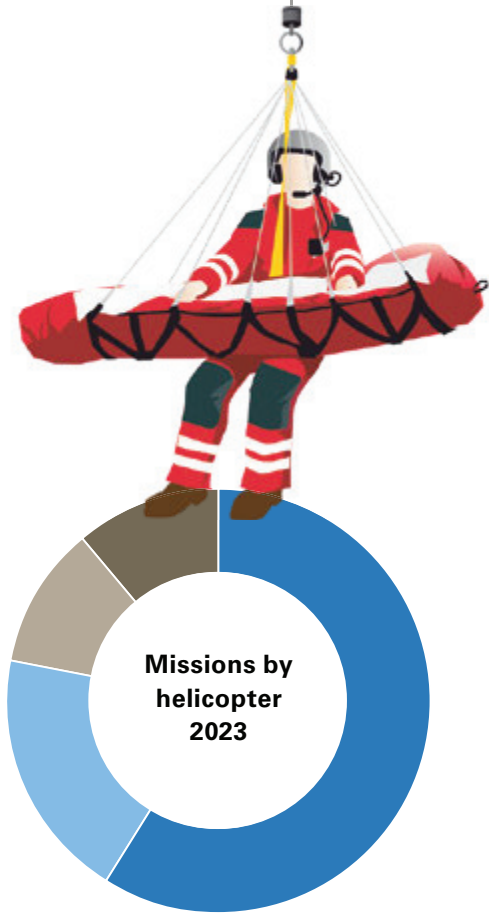
The helicopter flight coordinators at Rega’s national air rescue coordination centre organise the missions carried out by the 14 Rega bases countrywide, as well as those flown by its partner organisations. Last year, they coordinated a total of 15,695 helicopter missions, 3.5 % less than in the record year 2022. A small drop was registered in the number of both the rescue missions by the helicopter crews at the incident site (9282, –5.4 %) and transfer flights from smaller hospitals to central ones (2993, –2.1 %). The Rega helicopters were in the air at night on 3161 occasions (–0.6 %), which means that every fourth primary or secondary mission is performed after dark. The amount of contadino missions organised by Rega’s Operations Center rose to 1719 (+12.1%). These transports of injured or dead live-stock for mountain farmers are carried out by commercial helicopter transport firms on Rega’s behalf or by Rega’s up-and-coming pilots using the training helicopter.

	2023	2022	+/-
Total missions by helicopter	15,695	16,256	–3.5 %
of which are performed at night	3,161	3,179	–0.6 %
■ Primary missions <sup>1</sup>	9,282	9,813	–5.4 %
■ Secondary missions <sup>2</sup>	2,993	3,057	–2.1 %
■ Assistance to mountain farmers	1,719	1,534	+12.1 %
■ Special missions <sup>3</sup>	1,701	1,852	–8.2 %

<sup>1</sup> Emergency missions directly at the scene of the incident

<sup>2</sup> Inter-hospital transfers, neonatology, organ transports

<sup>3</sup> Non-medical Rega missions (search, route securing and reconnaissance flights on behalf of operation partners) and missions performed by other helicopters



Rega is in operation around the clock, 365 days a year, for the Swiss population.

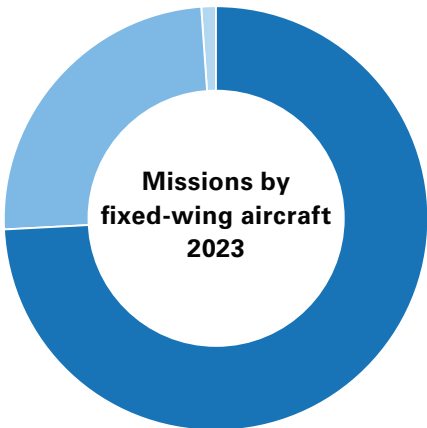


Rega flies patients back home to Switzerland with its three ambulance jets, which are equipped as flying intensive care units.

## Fixed-wing aircraft missions

Last year, the Rega jets took to the air almost as frequently as in the previous year: the Rega crews flew a total of 1021 missions (–2.3 %) and repatriated 1015 patients on board its ambulance jets (–2.9 %). In all, the Rega jets spent 4803 hours in the air (–2.5 %).

The Jet Operations Center also organised a flight on board a scheduled aircraft for 338 persons (+45.1 %). This cost-effective and ecological alternative to the ambulance jet is employed provided that the patient’s medical condition is sufficiently stable, that this form of transport is not expected to have a negative impact on other passengers, and that there are enough seats available on board the plane. In total, 84 patients (+21.7 %) were repatriated on scheduled flights escorted by a Rega flight physician or intensive care nurse. The amount of unaccompanied repatriations totalled 254 (+54.9 %). In such cases, the Rega Operations Center organises the return journey for patients who are able to travel home without a medical escort.

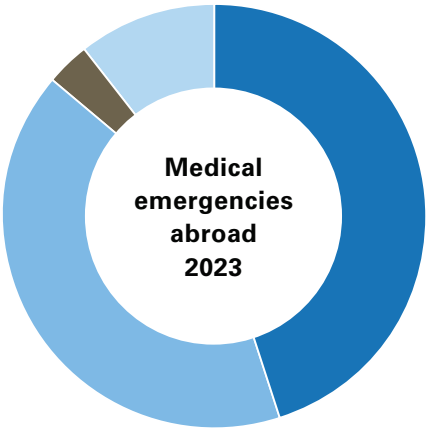


	2023	2022	+/-
Total missions	1,372	1,292	+6.2 %
■ Ambulance jets	1,021	1,045	–2.3 %
■ Scheduled aircraft	336	240	+40.0 %
■ Chartered aircraft	15	7	+114.3 %

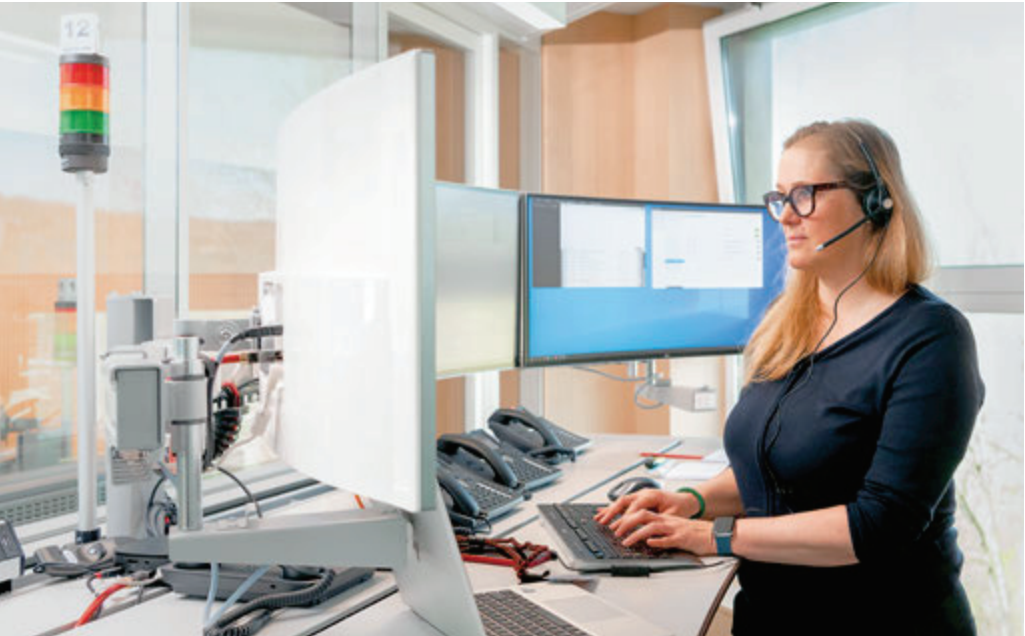


## Medical advice and assistance by Rega physicians

Prior to each repatriation mission, extensive medical clarifications are carried out by one of Rega’s medical consultants. In liaison with the Operations Center, the physician on duty decides whether repatriation of the patient is necessary and sensible, and if so, what form it should take. As with the flight coordinators, the medical consultants work in shifts around the clock. Last year, they provided 1111 people (+2.1%) with competent advice over the phone. In 1353 cases, repatriation on board a Rega ambulance jet or a commercial airline was indicated. Individual insurance companies also ask Rega’s medical consultants to clarify the medical condition of their policy holders who have become seriously injured or ill abroad, even if they are not Rega patrons. Rega makes a recommendation as to whether from a medical point of view the patient needs or is fit enough to be transported, and the insurance company then decides if and how repatriation should take place.



	2023	2022	+/-
Total patients	2,464	2,366	+4.1 %
Medical advice	1,111	1,088	+2.1 %
Repatriation by Rega ambulance jet	1,015	1,045	-2.9 %
Repatriation by scheduled aircraft, accompanied	84	69	+21.7 %
Repatriation by scheduled aircraft, unaccompanied	254	164	+54.9 %

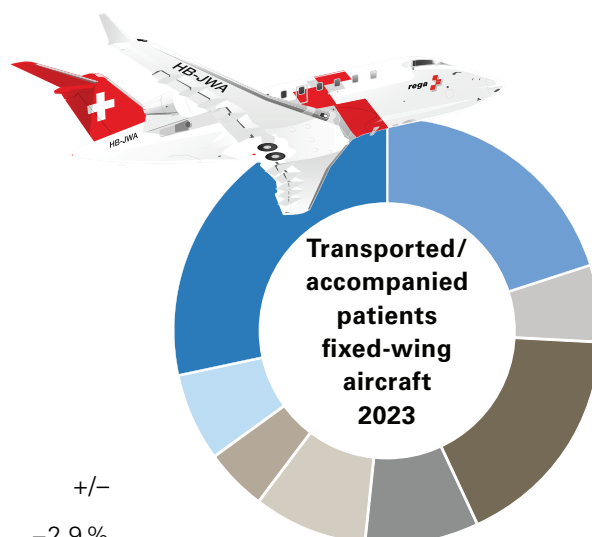


The medical consultants provide people suffering from medical problems abroad with advice over the phone and decide whether repatriation by ambulance jet or on board a commercial airline is indicated.

## Transported patients

The Rega crews transported a total of 13,674 patients (–3.8 %) on board their aircraft. They thus came to the assistance of on average 37 people per day.

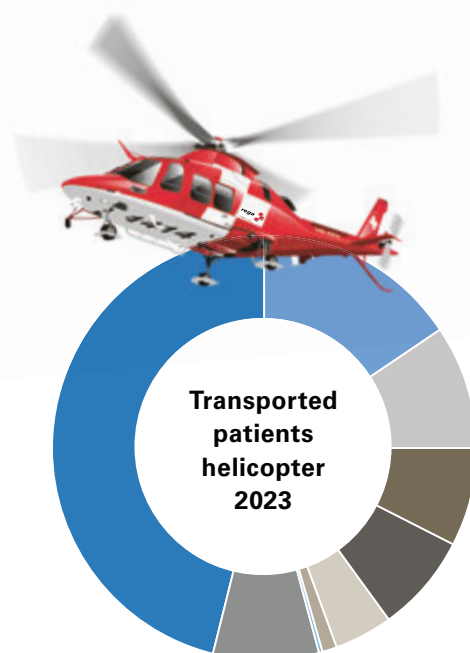
	2023	2022	+/-
Total patients	<b>1,015</b>	1,045	–2.9 %
■ Limb injuries	<b>201</b>	164	+22.6 %
■ Craniocerebral trauma	<b>60</b>	57	+5.3 %
■ Other injuries	<b>174</b>	186	–6.5 %
■ Cardiovascular diseases	<b>88</b>	95	–7.4 %
■ Strokes	<b>88</b>	94	–6.4 %
■ Gastrointestinal diseases	<b>47</b>	55	–14.5 %
■ Malignant tumours	<b>67</b>	86	–22.1 %
■ Other illnesses	<b>290</b>	308	–5.8 %



### Fluctuation in mission and patient numbers

The number of transported patients and missions do not always concur, because either several patients are transported at the same time or flights are performed without any patients at all – for example, if a search flight conducted by a Rega helicopter proves unsuccessful. The mission statistics relating to the Rega helicopters are subject to natural fluctuations and reflect the meteorological conditions, as well as the leisure activities and travel behaviour of both the Swiss population and foreign tourists in Switzerland. The number of repatriations also fluctuates, and the deployment of the Rega jets varies depending on the travel- and work-related activities of Swiss people abroad.

	2023	2022	+/-
Total patients	<b>12,321</b>	12,929	–4.7 %
■ Winter sport accidents	<b>1,944</b>	2,152	–9.7 %
■ Occupational accidents	<b>1,142</b>	1,297	–12.0 %
■ Road accidents	<b>944</b>	1,040	–9.2 %
■ Alpine accidents	<b>908</b>	917	–1.0 %
■ Sports accidents	<b>539</b>	567	–4.9 %
■ Aviation accidents	<b>146</b>	166	–12.0 %
■ Avalanche accidents	<b>31</b>	43	–27.9 %
■ Other causes	<b>1,008</b>	1,174	–14.1 %
■ Illnesses	<b>5,659</b>	5,573	+1.5 %







The ambulance jet flights are organised in the Jet Operations Center.

## National coordination centre

Rega continued to support the Swiss authorities in 2023: since September 2022, it has been acting on behalf of the Swiss Conference of the Cantonal Ministers of Public Health (GDK) as the national coordination centre for the acceptance of civilians from Ukraine in need of medical treatment. It examines the patient dossiers provided by the Ukrainian Ministry of Health, submits its admission suggestions to the Medical Board for a decision, and subsequently coordinates the transport. By the end of 2023, Rega had carried out 19 air-ambulance flights, flying a total of 39 patients from an airport in Poland to Switzerland.

## Base expansion in Wilderswil and Sion

In 2023, two bases were upgraded in terms of their infrastructure. Besides the Rega 10 rescue helicopter, the Rega 11 search helicopter and – at regular intervals – the training helicopter are also stationed at the Wilderswil base. In addition, the drone and the Rega competence centre for the search for missing persons are housed here. This increased utilisation of the base infrastructure was catered for by including additional sanitary facilities with toilets and showers. At the Sion base, the existing living, sleeping and sanitary containers of the previous accommodation unit were replaced with modern, high-quality containers at the beginning of June 2023: each sleeping container now has



The infrastructure of the Wilderswil base has been upgraded.

its own wet room. In addition, the living and kitchen area has been tripled in size, giving the Valais crew more space to relax between missions.

## New hospital helipads



The Da Vinci rescue helicopter on the new helipad on the roof of the Klinik Gut in St. Moritz.

In order to further increase the safety of patients and crews, Rega is contributing towards the modernisation of hospital helipads in Switzerland by providing advice, expertise and in some cases funding. In 2023, several helipads were put into operation that had been realised with the involvement of Rega, including a temporary ground helipad at the GZO Spital Wetzikon (Canton Zurich) and a renovated rooftop helipad at the Zuger Kantonsspital (Canton Zug). In addition, the Klinik Gut in St. Moritz (Canton Graubünden) built a new rooftop helipad for rescue helicopters on top of its new building.

## Fan club for the youngest patrons

Rega has a long tradition of providing information and activities for children. Since October 2023, these services have been combined in RegaCLUB, Rega's new experience world for its young fans, and are presented in an age-appropriate manner. Rega is thus responding to the great demand for content for children. As members of RegaCLUB, children can attend exclusive events, where they can experience the Rega fleet close up and meet the crews in person. On the RegaCLUB website, they can ask the crews questions and take part in competitions. Children under the age of 12 who are Rega patrons are automatically members of the new fan club.



The first RegaCLUB Experience Day took place at the Swiss Museum of Transport.



## Expansion of the Low Flight Network

The expansion of the Low Flight Network (LFN) initiated by Rega and the Swiss Air Force, which allows helicopters to fly on predefined flight routes even in poor visibility conditions, continued to make headway in 2023. However, progress is slow and implementation is lagging: due to the requirements of the Federal Office of Civil Aviation (FOCA), procedural applications have now reached a volume of up to 700 pages per location. In 2023, FOCA approved instrument flight procedures for the following three locations: the use of the existing IFR infrastructure at Les Éplatures Airport (Canton Neuchâtel) and Meiringen military airfield (Canton Berne) also outside of air traffic control operating hours, and the joint use of military procedures at the military base/Cantonal Hospital in Frauenfeld (Canton Thurgau). The use of the IFR infrastructure outside operating hours is very important for Rega because rescue missions can take place at any time of the day or night.

FOCA has not yet approved the applications submitted for seven other locations, including the three University Hospitals in Geneva, Lausanne and Basel. Rega will continue to make every effort to further expand the LFN for the benefit of its



Rega continues to pursue its vision of all-weather air rescue.

patients. Additional instrument flight procedures are planned at, among others, the Cantonal Hospitals in Sion, Lugano and Chur. The Rega bases in Wilderswil, Erstfeld, Mollis and Untervaz are also to be connected to the network. The aim is that all 14 helicopter bases are linked to the LFN.



An emergency doctor vehicle is now stationed at the Rega base in Wilderswil.

## Emergency doctor vehicle at the Wilderswil base

In the event of a medical emergency in the Bernese Oberland, since May 2023, Rega's emergency flight physician can also be transported to the incident scene by road: the emergency doctor vehicle stationed at the Rega base in Wilderswil can be called out by the ambulance emergency call centre 144 in Berne. The crew comprises a Rega paramedic and a Rega emergency physician; the pilot remains at the base during the mission. The ambulance service of Spitäler fmi AG is dispatched at the same time as the emergency doctor vehicle and, after first aid has been administered, transports the patient to hospital by ambulance. This is useful, for example, if the rescue helicopter has to remain on the ground due to poor weather conditions or a person who is in the close vicinity of the helicopter base requires medical assistance. Thus Rega and the fmi rescue service are further expanding their cooperation for the welfare of the population and guests in the region.



The training helicopter has been fitted not only with an adapted cockpit, but also a new searchlight.

## Training helicopter with night upgrade

Rega's H125 helicopter is used for training and instructional purposes. As part of an extensive project, in 2023, its cockpit was adapted for use with night vision goggles, so that the pilots can also train flying at night. Such training is of central importance for Rega crews, as one in four missions take place after darkness has fallen. At the same time, the authorities are imposing ever stricter requirements for performing night flights. In order for a helicopter pilot to be allowed to fly rescue missions in the dark, they must have flown a given number of hours at night, which is determined by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). With the night upgrade now completed, the HB-ZRJ will also become an interesting training helicopter for Rega's partners, as the increasing requirements apply to the entire industry.

## Ultrasound diagnostics in the helicopter

Since the end of 2023, ultrasound diagnostics (sonography) has been used during rescue helicopter missions for patients with the corresponding indications. A few years ago, Rega successfully introduced ultrasound equipment in the ambulance jet. In the meantime, the devices have become smaller and easier to handle and provide images with a higher resolution. This enables Rega's emergency flight physicians to make even better medical decisions during the mission without losing valuable time. A total of 140 Rega helicopter crew members were trained in the use of the new device – not just the emergency flight physicians, but also the paramedics.



Examinations with the ultrasound device are now possible in the rescue helicopter.



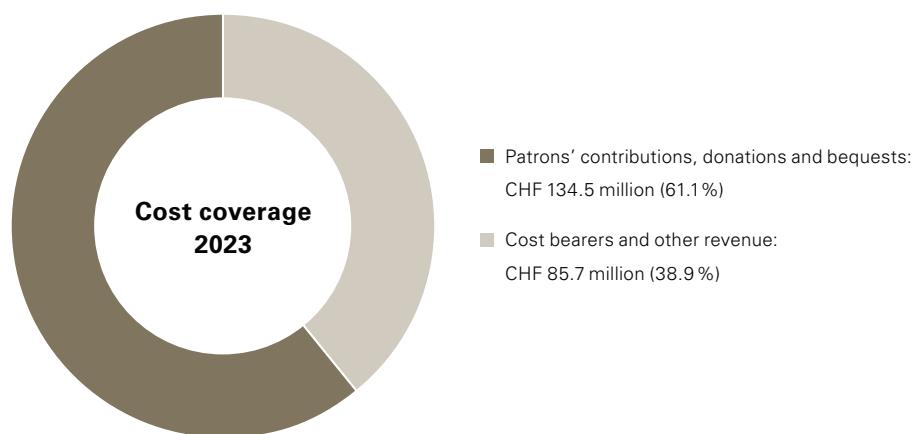
# Key figures 2023

**Rega is an autonomous, privately run, non-profit foundation. With its 3,620,000 patrons, it is deeply rooted in the Swiss population. Rega operates independently of political interests and is not subsidised by the State. It is an integral part of primary healthcare in Switzerland and with its work contributes towards improving the quality of life, the economy and tourism in this country.**

## Patrons

Thanks to the solidarity contributions by its patrons, Rega is able to provide nationwide medical assistance by air – without receiving any subsidies from the State. These contributions allow Switzerland to benefit from an air rescue service that sets standards and is held in great esteem all over the world. Last year, Rega continued to receive enormous support: as of 31 December 2023, a total of 3,620,000 patrons were recorded on Rega's computer system.





## Financial development and investments

In the 2023 business year, Rega's operating income totalled CHF 216.7 million, while the operating expenses came to CHF 188.5 million. This resulted in a positive operating result of CHF 28.2 million. The annual result amounted to CHF 38.9 million. In 2023, Rega's patrons supported Rega with annual contributions, donations and bequests totalling CHF 134.5 million, thus bearing around 61.1 percent of the overall costs. The remaining 38.9 percent is mainly covered by cost bearers, such as health, accident or travel insurers, in the form of payments for the rescue services provided. In line with its strategic goals, Rega is almost 100 percent self-financed and does not need outside capital to finance its investments.

## The key figures at a glance

<b>Total number of missions organised</b>	<b>20,647</b>
Helicopter missions	15,695
Fixed-wing aircraft missions	1,372
Other missions <sup>1</sup>	3,580
Patronage contributions, donations and bequests (CHF million)	134.5
No. of patrons (in millions)	3.62
No. of employees <sup>2</sup>	439
Operating revenue (CHF million)	216.7
Operating expenditure (CHF million)	188.5
Operating result (CHF million)	28.2
Balance sheet total (CHF million)	685.0

<sup>1</sup> Other missions: transports by ambulance, missions on behalf of the Swiss Alpine Club SAC, Spéléo-Secours, Redog, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Equivalent to no. of full-time positions as of the end of December, including subsidiaries



You can find the  
Financial Statements  
(in D/F/I) at  
**[report.rega.ch/2023](https://report.rega.ch/2023)**



# Foundation Board



Michael Hobmeier



Christian Kern



Patrizia Pesenti



Paul Hälgi



Josef Meier



Heidi Hanselmann



Adrian Amstutz



Franz Stämpfli



Thomas Holderegger



Markus Furrer



Thomas von Wyl



Petra Gössi



Gabriele Casso



Richard Brogle

## Foundation Board of Swiss Air-Rescue Rega

Michael Hobmeier, Bäch, since 2007  
Chairman and Member of the Executive Committee

Christian Kern, Prof. Dr. med., Geneva, since 2009, Vice-Chairman and Member of the Executive Committee

Patrizia Pesenti, Zollikon, since 2009  
Member of the Executive Committee

Josef Meier, Wettingen, since 2013  
Member of the Executive Committee

Paul Hälgi, Dr. sc. techn., Wollerau, since 2019  
Member of the Executive Committee

Heidi Hanselmann, Walenstadt, since 2010

Adrian Amstutz, Schwanden, since 2013

Franz Stämpfli, Innertkirchen, since 2015

Thomas Holderegger, Waldstatt, since 2015

Markus Furrer, Prof. Dr. med., Felsberg, since 2019

Thomas von Wyl, Dr. med., Unterseen, since 2021

Petra Gössi, Küssnacht am Rigi, since 2023

Gabriele Casso, Prof. Dr. med., Sorengo, since 2023

Richard Brogle, Dr. sc. techn., Kilchberg, since 2023

## Resigned as of 31 December 2023

Thomas P. Emmerich, Riehen, 2011–2023

## Medical Commission

Christian Kern, Prof. Dr. med., Chairman

Gabriele Casso, Prof. Dr. med.

Markus Furrer, Prof. Dr. med.

Thomas von Wyl, Dr. med.

## Finance Commission

Josef Meier, Chairman

Michael Hobmeier

Paul Hälgi, Dr. sc. techn.

## Advisory Committee Partner Organisations

Franz Stämpfli, Member of the Rega Foundation Board, Chairman

Stefan Goerre, Dr. med., Swiss Alpine Rescue representative

Andy Scheurer, Spéléo-Secours representative

Markus Denzler, police commanders representative

Marc Ziegler, Swiss Cable Cars Association representative

Mariano Spada, Swiss Air Force representative

Roman Burkart, Medical Emergency Call Centres 144 representative

Renato Belloli, Swiss Helicopter Association (SHA) representative

Daniel Weisskopf, Swiss Fire Service Coordination (FKS) representative

## Auditors

KPMG AG, Zurich

as of 1 January 2024

# Management Board



From left: Heinz Leibundgut, Andreas Lüthi, Ernst Kohler, David Müller, Daniel Landert, Roland Albrecht, Philipp Simmen.

**Organigram** as of 1 January 2024

FOUNDATION BOARD		Foundation Board	
		Executive Committee of the Foundation Board	
		COMMISSIONS	Medical Commission Finance Commission
MANAGEMENT BOARD		CEO/Chairman of the Management Board Ernst Kohler	
Medicine Roland Albrecht		Communication and Patronage David Müller	
		DEPARTMENT	Safety and Quality Stefan Isler
Jet Operations Daniel Landert	Helicopter Operations Philipp Simmen	Helicopter Procedures and Training Heinz Leibundgut	Services Andreas Lüthi





# Mission Statement

## Our purpose

We provide an around-the-clock service offering swift, expert assistance by air. In particular, we transport medical care to the casualty and help in emergency situations.

This assistance also takes the form of medical advice and the use of our infrastructure.

Our operations are characterised by our highly qualified, professional members of staff and the very best equipment available in the fields of rescue, medical and flight technology.

## Our fundamental concept

We are a non-profit organisation that is funded by its patrons. Our services are primarily geared towards the needs of the Swiss population. We are financed by means of private funding. This enables us to operate independently in the service of our patients.

In the interest of the patient, we take an active stand against the commercialisation of air rescue.

Emergency missions and other operations carried out on behalf of the general public are not conditional upon whether or not the ensuing costs are covered.

Our rescue activities are based on the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross.

## Our patrons

Thanks to their annual contributions, our patrons enable us to build up and operate a suitable infrastructure to perform air rescue operations on behalf of the Swiss population.

The services rendered by Rega to its patrons are not of a contractual nature and are therefore not deemed to be insurance benefits.



## Our partners

We are fully aware of the importance of working in close collaboration with our partner organisations, and actively foster a successful working relationship with them.

We act as a fair and reliable partner.

We focus our activities on the fields of air rescue, air-ambulance repatriation services and medical advice.

In order to maintain and further improve the top level of expertise of our medical staff, we also perform medically indicated flights on behalf of international clients.

## Our staff

Our members of staff play a decisive role in fulfilling our purpose. The following factors are of particular importance in this respect:

- personal identification with the organisation and its purpose;
- independence and responsibility;
- willingness to perform, flexibility and motivation.

We aim to achieve this by means of:

- on-going training appropriate to the various hierarchical levels;
- progressive working conditions;
- appropriate salaries and attractive social benefits.

We foster a style of behaviour among our staff that is open, cooperative and characterised by mutual respect.

## Our values

We strive to provide around-the-clock services of first-class quality and safety, as well as to cultivate a conscious, structured manner of dealing with risks.

Our organisational structures are characterised by a clear-cut delineation of tasks, competences and responsibilities. These are implemented and respected at all hierarchical levels, from ordinary employees right up to the members of the Foundation Board.

We act and communicate in an open and transparent way, both within our organisation and towards the outside.

We are conscious of a potential conflict between performing our work and protecting the environment, and take this into account in everything we do.



# Governance & Compliance



The purpose of the Swiss Air-Rescue Rega Foundation is above all to help people in distress and in need of assistance, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross. It provides its services without discrimination as to person, financial circumstances, social status, nationality, race, religious beliefs or political opinions.

Rega is fully committed to conducting its business according to the principles of good corporate governance. It upholds the guiding principles of non-profit governance: checks and balances, responsibility and efficiency, transparency, and safeguarding the interests of patrons and donors. Rega's guiding principles relating to corporate governance are embedded in its Foundation Deed and Regulations, its organisation and management regulations, its Mission Statement and its Code of Conduct. The Foundation Board monitors these principles on a regular basis.

### **Foundation Board**

The Foundation Board is Rega's supreme body. It lays down the guiding principles of the organisation in accordance with the Foundation Deed. It draws up the Mission Statement and pertinent regulations, and adopts the strategy and the budget. It approves the Annual Report and the annual financial statements.

It defines the supervision and monitoring of the business activities. It also authorises the principles relating to the remuneration of the members of the Foundation Board and the Management Board.

The Foundation Board comprises a maximum of 15 members. The term of office is four years. Members are eligible for re-election up to their 70th birthday. There is no limitation on the length of service of the members of the Foundation Board. The Foundation Board elects from among its members a Chairman, as well as the five members of the Executive Committee, and also defines the Committee's tasks and competences.

### **Executive Committee of the Foundation Board**

The Executive Committee comprises five members of the Foundation Board: the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Chairman of the Medical Commission, the Chairman of the Finance Commission, and one other member of the Foundation Board.

The Executive Committee of the Foundation Board is responsible for carrying out the tasks delegated to it. It coordinates the permanent commissions of the Foundation Board. Furthermore, on behalf of the Foundation Board, it supervises

>



and monitors the Management Board and issues it with the necessary instructions.

The members of the Executive Committee also serve on the Board of Directors of the subsidiaries, Swiss Air Ambulance Ltd. and Airmed AG.

### **Management Board**

The Chairman of the Management Board is charged with managing the operative business, implementing the resolutions adopted by the Foundation Board and the Executive Committee, and delegating the various tasks and competences within the organisation.

### **Tasks and procedures of the permanent commissions and the Advisory Committee**

Each specialist body is governed by a set of regulations specifying its various tasks and competences, and is headed by a chairperson elected by the Foundation Board. The commissions meet on a regular basis to discuss specialist matters, which are specified by the relevant chairperson.

Prior to the meeting, the commission members receive the relevant documents so that they can prepare for the various items on the agenda.

### **Medical Commission**

The Medical Commission comprises the Chairman, Prof. Dr. med. Christian Kern, and three physicians, all of whom are members of the Foundation Board.

The meetings are also attended by the Chairman of the Management Board, the Medical Director and, where necessary, other specialists, who are present in an advisory capacity and have the right to propose motions.

The Medical Commission is an advisory body to the Foundation Board and the Medical Director. It deals with and considers specialist matters relating to emergency and rescue medicine that fall within the competence of the Foundation Board, prior to the latter taking any decisions. When drawing up medical guidelines and quality controls, the Commission is assisted by Rega's Medical Service.

### **Finance Commission**

The Finance Commission comprises its Chairman, Josef Meier, and other members of the Foundation Board. The meetings are also attended by the Chairman of the Management Board, the Chief Financial Officer and, where necessary, other specialists, who are present in an advisory capacity and have the right to propose motions.

The Finance Commission is an advisory body to the Foundation Board. It deals with matters relating to financial planning, budgeting, investment policy and the internal control system, and periodically examines the form and scope of financial reporting.

### **Advisory Committee Partner Organisations**

Under the chairmanship of Franz Stämpfli, the Advisory Committee comprises members of Rega's Foundation Board together with representatives from the following partner organisations: Swiss Alpine Rescue, commercial helicopter firms, the Canton of Valais Air-Rescue Service, the Swiss Air Force, the Swiss Cable Cars Association, police commanders, Spéléo-Secours Switzerland, Swiss Fire Service Coordination (FKS) and the Medical Emergency Call Centres 144.

The Advisory Committee is concerned with tasks relating to the collaboration between the partner organisations and promotes the exchange of information between the various network members.

### **Accounting and auditing**

The financial statements of the Swiss Air-Rescue Rega Foundation

and its subsidiaries are prepared in accordance with the principles of Swiss GAAP FER accounting and reporting recommendations (in particular, GAAP FER 21), and give a true and fair view of its net assets, financial position and earnings performance.

At Rega, the “four eyes” principle is applied. This means that fundamentally two joint signatures are required at all levels. The Foundation Board has drawn up a set of regulations governing competences and signatory rights. Both internal and external control bodies periodically check that these regulations are being complied with.

#### **Risk Management – Internal Control System**

The highly complex nature of emergency medical rescue, coupled with the strict requirements of aviation law and the demands of the Code of Obligations, make it necessary to take a structured approach to risks. Rega has combined demands from the Internal Control System and Safety and Quality Management to create integrated risk management in order to identify and view risks holistically and make use of available synergies.

As Rega’s supreme body, the Foundation Board is responsible for risk management at Rega and all its subsidiaries. The key risks are systematically identified and evaluated every year, and appropriate risk control measures are taken. The identified risks are additionally monitored on an ongoing basis.

#### **Rega’s interests**

Rega has interests in various companies domiciled in Switzerland. Strategic interests in companies and foundations in which Swiss Air-Rescue Rega directly or indirectly holds more than 50 percent of the voting rights or which are controlled by the Foundation Board are consolidated in the annual financial statements. An overview of these interests is provided in Rega’s consolidated annual financial statements.

Rega further holds operative and functional minority interests in helicopter companies, airfield companies and cooperatives, and partner companies. This portfolio is maintained in order to fulfil the purpose of the Foundation.

Rega also has interests/investments which are managed by external asset managers according to a portfolio management agreement.

#### **Foundation Board compensation**

Compensation of the Foundation Board is based on the set of regulations approved by the Swiss Federal Supervisory Board for Foundations. Compensation (fixed sums, attendance fees and expenses) covers part of the expenses of Foundation Board members for preparing meetings, reviewing documents and attending meetings of the Foundation Board, Foundation Board Committee, specialist and ad hoc committees, Advisory Committee, partner organisations, pension foundations and other companies in which Rega has an interest. All compensation made to the Foundation Board and its Chairman is reported in detail in Rega’s consolidated annual financial statements.

#### **Foundation supervisory authority**

As a non-profit foundation, Rega is subject to the supervision of the Swiss Federal Supervisory Board for Foundations in Berne, to which it is required to submit a management report each year. The last assessment and review by the Federal Supervisory Board was conducted on 23 August 2023; no objections of any kind were raised.



# Milestones in Rega's history



27.4.1952

**The organisation is founded**  
Swiss Air-Rescue is founded as a sub-section of the Swiss rescue association, Schweizerische Lebensrettungsgesellschaft (SLRG), in the Hotel Bären in Twann.



1952

**Swiss Air-Rescue is ready to start operations**  
On 25 December, Dr Rudolf Bucher, the head of Swiss Air-Rescue, announces over Radio Beromünster that the parachutists and helicopters are ready for action.



1957

**The first helicopter of its own**  
A countrywide collection by the Association of Swiss Consumers' Cooperative Societies (now Coop) produces sufficient funds to purchase a Bell 47J helicopter for mountain rescues performed by Hermann Geiger.



1960

**An autonomous organisation under Fritz Bühler**  
Swiss Air-Rescue breaks away from its parent organisation, the SLRG. Fritz Bühler is appointed Technical Director.



**First repatriation**  
For its first repatriation mission, the private Piaggio 166 aircraft owned by Dr Armin Meyer flies a patient from France back home to Switzerland.



1971

**First Alouette III**  
The Alouette III SE 316 HB-XDF is Rega's first helicopter to be financed by patrons' contributions. The picture shows it in operation at the Engadin Ski Marathon in 1972.



1956

**Emergency assistance in the USA**  
After a plane accident, Swiss Air-Rescue pioneers recover the bodies of 128 persons from an inaccessible area in the Grand Canyon region.



1953

**The first rescue parachutists**  
In winter 1953, Swiss Air-Rescue parachutists are used on a rescue mission for the first time.



1968

**Bell 206A, the first turbine-powered helicopter**  
The Jet Ranger HB-XCU has a turbine, but no rescue hoist. In mountainous areas where the helicopter is unable to land, rescue is only possible using the fixed rope.



1973

**Twin-engine helicopter**  
The introduction of the Bölkow BO-105C – depicted here on the roof of the University Children's Hospital in Zurich – marks the beginning of the era of twin-engine helicopters at Rega.



1966

**Self-help by means of patronage**  
No funds from the Swiss government. However, a nationwide appeal for help proves successful. 25,000 patrons save Swiss Air-Rescue from financial ruin.



**Operations abroad with its own aircraft**  
Rega's Learjet 24D HB-VCY is the first civilian ambulance jet in the world. It is fully equipped with medical apparatus and is on stand-by around the clock.



## 1979

### **Rega becomes a non-profit foundation**

The Association sets up a Foundation. Fritz Bühler is appointed the first Chairman of the Foundation Board. In 1981, Rega also becomes a Corporate member of the Swiss Red Cross.



## 1987

### **Helicopters with night vision goggles**

Rega is the first non-military organisation in the world to equip all of its helicopters with night vision goggles, thus increasing the safety of night missions.



## 1996

### **The first round the world flight**

In a mission lasting 43 hours, the Challenger CL-600 transports three patients in consecutive legs, a journey that takes it all the way round the world for the first time.



## 2002

### **Three new Challenger CL-604 jets**

Three identical aircraft from the Canadian manufacturer, Bombardier, replace the 15-year-old air ambulance fleet.



### **Five Eurocopter EC 145 helicopters**

Rega purchases five spacious rescue helicopters from helicopter manufacturer Eurocopter for use at its lowland bases. This is followed by a sixth.



## 2009

### **The AgustaWestland Da Vinci is Rega's new mountain helicopter**

Rega purchases from helicopter manufacturer AgustaWestland 11 rescue helicopters for use at its mountain bases.



### **Mobile heart-lung machine on board**

For the first time, critically-ill patients can be hooked up to a heart-lung machine in the Rega helicopters and jets.



## 1992

### **The new fleet is made up of Agustas**

On 14 August, the Untervaz base in Canton Graubünden puts the first of the 15 new twin-engine Agusta A 109 K2 helicopters into operation.



## 1984

### **Long-haul ambulance jet**

The Challenger CL-600 HB-VFW is equipped to perform long-haul operations with several patients on board. In Geneva, it is christened "Fritz Bühler".



## 1997

### **New Rega Center at Zurich-Kloten**

For the first time, Rega's hangar, Operations Center, maintenance works, logistics operations, Patronage Center and Administration Department are all united under one roof.



## 2011

### **Flying "blind" to the Inselspital**

27 July: thanks to satellite-based navigation, Rega flies to the Inselspital University Hospital in Berne despite poor visibility, using the GPS-assisted approach procedure.



## 2004

### **Tsunami in Southeast Asia**

Rega is pushed to the limit. Over a period of ten days, 16 medical teams are in operation. Within the space of a week, more than 60 casualties are repatriated to Switzerland.



You can find a comprehensive history of Rega at [rega.ch/history](http://rega.ch/history)



## 2013

**The flight simulator for the AgustaWestland Da Vinci sets new standards** in pilot training. Instrument flight and emergency scenarios can now be practised realistically and efficiently – in safety and without harming the environment.



## 2014

**Premiere for Rega's new transport incubator**, which can be used in both the jets and the helicopters and provides premature or newborn babies with the best possible medical care.



## 2017

**Precise flight weather data**  
60 new or enhanced measuring stations and weather cameras now continually supply Rega's helicopter pilots with up-to-date meteorological information – a key prerequisite for IFR flights.



**Authorisation for Low Flight Network**  
Rega receives special authorisation to use key intersections of the nationwide network of IFR flight routes on missions virtually around the clock.



## 2019

**The Rega drone**, which is to be used to search for missing or injured persons, is presented for the first time. The newly developed drone system aims to supplement Rega's scope of operations.



## 2021

**Support for Switzerland**  
Rega supports the Confederation, the cantons and the Swiss population in their efforts to deal with the coronavirus pandemic with its expertise and infrastructure.



**New night vision goggles**  
Rega also brings medical assistance by air in the dark. To do this, it uses night vision goggles that have been specially developed for Rega.



## 2016

**Rescue despite poor visibility thanks to IFR flight route network**  
In December, two routes of the Low Flight Network for helicopters, which is based on satellite navigation, are certified for daytime use.



## 2018

**Three new ambulance jets**  
The new Challenger 650 jets from Bombardier fly patients from all over the world back to Switzerland. The Rega jets replace the three CL-604s that have been in operation since 2002.



**New generation Rega helicopters**  
The first two H145 helicopters from Airbus Helicopters are stationed at the Berne and Basel bases as high-performance successors of the EC 145 fleet, which repatriated over 60,000 patients.



## 2020

**456 Covid-19 patients** are transported on board Rega's aircraft during the coronavirus pandemic, 316 of them by rescue helicopter and 140 in an ambulance jet.



**First emergency doctor vehicles**  
At the Mollis and Erstfeld bases, these vehicles allow the emergency physician and paramedic to be called out even if the rescue helicopter cannot fly – for example, due to bad weather.



## 2023

**New flight simulators**  
The two newly developed simulators for the helicopters and jets enable the cockpit crews to do their training in Switzerland.



## 2022

**Decision in favour of a single-type fleet**  
In March, Rega purchases nine H145 helicopters with an innovative five-bladed rotor and in December, an agreement is signed to procure a further 12 helicopters of this type. They are to replace the tried-and-tested Da Vinci fleet and will commence operations in 2024.



# Rega in numbers



**472**

Rega employees devote themselves to serving our patients, our patrons and our organisation with passion, commitment and expertise.



**1372**

missions were organised by the Rega Operations Center in 2023 to help patients abroad.



**3,620,000**

patrons keep Rega in the air with their financial contributions.



# 14

Rega helicopter bases are distributed throughout the country in such a way that the crews can reach any location in Switzerland within 15 minutes' flying time.



# 13,674

patients were transported by Rega on board its ambulance jets and rescue helicopters in 2023.



# 20,647

missions were coordinated by the Rega Operations Center last year.



# 400

different airports and airfields all over the world are flown to by Rega's ambulance jets every year.



# 15,695

helicopter missions were organised by Rega's Operations Center in Switzerland in 2023.



# 3161

missions were performed by the helicopter crews after darkness had fallen.



# You can also find our Annual Report online at [report.rega.ch/2023](https://report.rega.ch/2023)

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