

# 414

Issue no. 79, November 2012

Swiss Air-Rescue Patrons' Magazine



Question time  
**Rega is not something  
that can be taken for  
granted**

Story  
**Rega's emergency app  
saved me from freezing  
to death**

60 years  
**Rega says thank you**





**Cover:**

One of the three ambulance jets taxis into the hangar at the Rega Centre.

## 4 Question time

### **Rega is not something that can be taken for granted**

Sixty years after it was founded, Rega continues to uphold such values as solidarity, caringness and professionalism in its endeavours to cater for the welfare of its patients. CEO Ernst Kohler talks about Rega's well-established patronage system, the jubilee year and the challenges faced by modern-day air rescue.

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### **We say thank you**

In 2012, Rega organised a number of public events to say thank you to its patrons, whose financial support keeps the air rescue organisation in the air.

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**Service number for patrons**

How to contact Rega: see page 32



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# Dear patrons

*Swiss Air-Rescue has been steering its course for 60 years. During our jubilee year, 2012, I have often had the opportunity to look back over Rega's eventful past. It has developed splendidly – from daring parachuting pioneers with a one-way ticket in their pockets, to state-of-the-art helicopters that can fly in all weathers. From slate blackboards, chits of paper and radio transceivers as big as a refrigerator, to highly advanced dispatch systems and cutting-edge technology that enables the emergency caller's exact location to be relayed via iPhone. Over the years, the financial situation of the fledgling air rescue organisation has often been precarious, but now it stands on firm foundations and is well equipped to face the future. We can be proud of the progress we've made – progress that has been made possible by financial support from the Swiss population.*

*However, as is so often the case, there is also a "but". We must take care that the pioneering spirit of yesteryear does not become weighed down by cumbersome instruction manuals and complex regulations. We must defend air rescue. It is not intended as a short-term measure or for self-gain. But success attracts imitators, who repeatedly call into question our tried-and-tested system. We are now in danger of allowing ourselves to become distracted by seemingly important discussions and of losing sight of the essentials.*

*Fundamentally, our task is quite simple: to be and remain the best air rescue organisation in the world, operating in the best interests of each individual patient, as a public service for the Swiss population and for our patrons. As we have done for the last 60 years, and will continue to do for the 60 years to come, thanks to our highly committed employees, to our competent operational partners and to your support as patrons. Thank you to you all!*

*Yours sincerely*

*Ernst Kohler*

*CEO/Chairman of the Management Board*

# “Rega is not something that can be taken for granted”

Today, sixty years after it was founded, Swiss Air-Rescue Rega enjoys an excellent reputation both at home and abroad. Solidarity, caringness, professionalism: these are just some of the values Rega upholds in its endeavours to cater for the welfare of its patients. Rega CEO, Ernst Kohler, talks about the well-established patronage system, the jubilee year and the challenges faced by modern-day air rescue.

*Mr. Kohler, Rega’s jubilee year is drawing to an end. On balance, has it been a positive one?*

Absolutely. In our jubilee year, we want above all to say thank you. First and foremost, to the Swiss people, whose patronage contributions have kept us in the air for the last 60 years. Over 50,000 people attended our Open Days – simply amazing! Our sincere thanks also go to all those whose tremendous passion and dedication have made Rega what it is today. Our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary was also a journey back in time and has shown that an institution such as the present-day Rega is not something that can be taken for granted.

*Your words pay great tribute to the achievements in the pioneering days. Where do you see Rega’s greatest challenges lying in the future?*

Despite the fact that Rega is well-established and soundly anchored among the public, it must not stand still, but continue to develop. As soon as you stop getting better, you stop being good. We want to maintain our leading position in all areas and to carry on setting standards in the field of air rescue in the future. We owe it to the Swiss people and to all our patrons.

*Rega’s 2011 Annual Report reveals impressive figures: the annual contributions from 2.4 million patrons cover almost 60 percent of Rega’s costs. Is it a case of no patrons, no Rega?*

Rega in its current form would be inconceivable without our patrons. Air rescue services cannot even begin to be cost-effective or professionally run if the rescue helicopters are required to be on stand-by day and night. If you take a look beyond the Swiss borders, you quickly realise that Switzerland’s air rescue system is absolutely unique and serves as a model for similar organisations all over the world. In most countries, air rescue has been commercialised and receives sums running into millions in state subsidies.

*Is the commercialisation of air rescue a bad thing then?*

Air rescue is not a proper market, but rather a classic public service. It is a business that makes big losses; the revenues from flight operations, which derive from health, accident and travel insurance, cover less than 50 percent of the overall costs. This is because the high level of availability, the round-the-clock stand-by service and the dense network of helicopter bases lead to deficits that can only be covered by patrons’ contributions.



“It’s impossible to make a profit out of seriously and professionally run air rescue services.”



*But competition is good for business and results in optimisation of costs.*

Let me explain by using an example. If Rega had to calculate on a strictly economic basis, we would probably have to consider closing some of our helicopter bases, such as the one in Ticino or in the Engadin. Yet these bases are absolutely vital for providing the population with swift medical assistance from the air, because the weather and topography often make it impossible for other Rega bases to cover these regions. In this respect, competition achieves nothing but additional costs.

*Is it actually possible to operate air rescue services profitably?*

It's impossible to make a profit out of air rescue services if they are operated in a serious and professional manner. There are two ways of helping to balance out the deficit. Either the helicopter is

used for other tasks besides air rescue – for example, transporting materials or supplies, heli-skiing or VIP flights – or older, relatively cheap helicopters are deployed instead. This might optimise costs, but measures of this kind do not conform to our philosophy of a modern and professionally-run air rescue organisation. After all, you don't transport children to school in an ambulance, and a fire engine from the 1970s belongs in a museum, not at a fire station.

*In Valais, air rescue is performed by Air Zermatt and Air-Glaciers. And recently the Touring Club of Switzerland (TCS) has also taken to the air. How are these companies organised?*

Air rescue has a different historical background in the canton of Valais than in the rest of Switzerland. The two private companies, Air Zermatt and Air-Glaciers, indirectly receive financial support from the cantonal government, including using tax payers' money.

The territorial boundaries between them and Rega are clearly defined. Rega's operational collaboration with these two organisations functions perfectly, as was shown by the major joint operation after the tragic coach accident in Valais. We help each other in whatever way we can.

*And what about TCS?*

The services offered by TCS are limited to a very small operational spectrum. They concern missions that can be planned in advance and performed using a simple set-up. This doesn't require a large infrastructure. TCS doesn't own any helicopters itself, but contracts them when required from a private firm in Zurich. The medical staff that accompany the helicopter are called out on a case-to-case basis and are not on constant stand-by. A system of this kind can only be implemented in the knowledge that Rega is also there around the clock to deal with emergencies.

*Yet it seems to function well.*

It may possibly be a viable solution for individual firms or organisations. However, there's a hitch: Switzerland's air rescue model is based on solidarity and only functions in the mid- and long-term if it doesn't have to contend with "cherry picking" of this kind. Does a village need two fire brigades? I firmly believe that Switzerland only needs one Rega, and this must be as professional as possible. I therefore ask myself if it really makes sense to develop structures that already exist and have been shown to be unprofitable parallel to Rega's services, using TCS membership fees.

*In its advertising campaign, TCS uses the helicopter as a dominant marketing instrument. That causes confusion and raises various questions. Can travel insurance, such as the ETI-Schutzbrief, replace Rega patronage?*

No. There are numerous instances where insurance cover is insufficient and doesn't cover Rega's mission costs. The optimal



solution is good insurance cover, supplemented by Rega patronage, which comes into its own when everything else fails. Rega patronage is a voluntary contribution to a non-profit foundation. Its big advantage is that Rega is in a position to waive the costs of a Rega mission carried out on patrons' behalf if they are not covered by an insurance policy.

*So Rega patronage is a kind of insurance?*

No, patronage is not an insurance contract. An insurance policy reimburses costs incurred by third parties, such as a hospital for example. Rega can only waive costs for services that it has performed itself. Rega patronage is, if you like, more like a co-operative principle or a self-help group, with no goal of making a profit, with no financial support from the state, and with the welfare of patients as its primary concern. Self-help also in the sense that these patronage contributions finance the entire infrastructure, the round-the-clock stand-by service and the dense network of helicopter bases.

*Is there a mission in this jubilee year that has particularly remained in your memory?*

The tragic coach accident in Valais in the middle of March 2012. The work of the rescue teams on site and in the hospitals was exemplary and shows how well Switzerland can deal with major rescue operations. On the evening after the accident happened,



*"The optimal solution is good insurance cover, supplemented by Rega patronage, which comes into its own when everything else fails."*

Rega was on the spot with a helicopter, and in the following days, our ambulance jets flew a total of 18 seriously injured children back home to Belgium. Within the space of just one afternoon, we deployed our entire air ambulance fleet to repatriate 14 children on six separate flights. It was the first time in Rega's history that all of its ambulance jets were involved in the same mission. It gives me enormous satisfaction that we are capable of carrying out such complex missions so quickly and efficiently.

*Mr Kohler, what do you wish for Rega over the next 60 years?*

I wish Rega many loyal patrons, who enable it to go to the aid of people in distress 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. And many motivated employees, who continue to work towards improving Rega, day after day.

*Interview: Karin Hörhager*

## **Patronage is worthwhile – whether you end up needing it or not**

Anyone who thinks that all the costs of a rescue mission or repatriation from abroad are automatically covered by their accident, health or travel insurance may well be in for an unpleasant surprise.

Insurance policies do not always cover all the costs that arise: sometimes, the Federal Health Insurance Act does not provide for certain situations, or the insurance cover is insufficient, or the incident is not considered to be an accident. So what happens if your insurance company rejects your claim for reimbursement? Then you, as the patient, or your relatives have to foot the bill. That can mean having to dig deep into your pockets; depending on the mission, the total amount can run to several thousand or, in individual cases, even a hundred thousand Swiss francs or more. If, however, you are a Rega patron, you can avoid being presented with such an enormous bill. For if patrons ever need to call on Rega for assistance, the air rescue organisation shows its appreciation for their financial support by waiving the costs of any of its services that are not covered by their insurance policy. The cases described on the opposite page may be fictitious, but they are also realistic, for they portray situations that could happen to anyone.

These examples show that, quite apart from the physical and emotional damage they suffered, Lisa and her husband would have been faced with enormous costs. Yet as Rega patrons, they could have considerably reduced the risk of costs not included in their insurance cover. When everything else fails, Rega patronage acts as a safety net.

Even if you never have cause to request Rega's assistance yourself, your annual patronage contribution can be used to help others. That alone is a good reason why Rega patronage is worthwhile – whether you end up needing it or not.

*Karin Hörhager*





**Lisa, an 18-year-old student**, is on her way to join her parents at their holiday home on her Vespa. She takes a bend too fast, crashes, and sustains severe injuries. The Rega rescue helicopter flies Lisa to the nearest suitable hospital. As a student, Lisa has accident cover through her health insurance. This pays for 50 percent of the rescue costs; Lisa has to pay the rest herself.



**Lisa is now 42 years old**, married, and a housewife. Like many other people, she has taken out supplemental accident insurance cover, but no other additional insurance. During a hiking trip in the mountains, she suddenly feels faint and is unable to continue on her way. She has to be flown down into the valley by Rega helicopter. This does not constitute an accident as such. Once again, she puts in a claim to her health insurance company, but in this case, too, she is entitled to just 50 percent of the costs, and only then up to a maximum of CHF 500 per year.



**Lisa is retired** and travels to Cyprus on holiday with her husband, who is an avid cyclist. Unfortunately, he has an accident and fractures his pelvis. Rega flies him back to Switzerland. The pensioner is no longer insured through his employee health insurance plan, but instead through his own basic health insurance cover. But this basic insurance does not include repatriation costs – and so he is liable for the entire amount himself.





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Turkey: Rega repatriates Swiss nationals injured in a coach accident

# Antalya and back in 24 hours

**On the evening of 10 April 2012, the Rega Operations Centre at Zurich Airport receives an emergency call. On the way home from a day trip, a coach with 20 Swiss tourists on board has been involved in an accident just outside the Turkish city of Antalya.**



Quite by coincidence, at the time of the accident, a Rega doctor is on holiday at a resort just a few kilometres away. The Rega Operations Centre contacts him shortly after the alarm is raised, and he immediately sets off for Antalya. As soon as he arrives at the hospital, he gains a precise picture of the medical condition of all the Swiss casualties. Thanks to this prompt intervention, the initial clarifications prove to be relatively simple.

Less than 24 hours after the accident, the first Rega ambulance jet takes off for Turkey. On board are two medical teams, comprising two flight physicians and two flight nurses. Later the same day, one of the two teams accompanies the first six patients on their journey back to Switzerland, while the second team stays overnight to prepare for the other repatriations.

12 April 2012, shortly after 5.00 am. Briefing at the Rega Centre in Zurich-Kloten. The flight coordinator informs the crew – pilots Felix Degen and Roland Oberholzer, flight physician Anne Seidl





4 ambulances transport 4 patients to the Rega jet.

and flight nurse Edith Ehrenreich – about the forthcoming mission. The remaining eight patients who are still in Turkey are to be flown back home on two separate flights. The briefing is followed by various preparations. The pilots get the ambulance jet ready for take-off, while the two medical staff organise the stretchers, equipment and medical supplies. Shortly before 7.00 am, the Rega jet takes off from Zurich-Kloten and heads towards Antalya. Anne Seidl and Edith Ehrenreich take advantage of the just under three-hour flight to prepare for the long day ahead. At 9.30 am Swiss time, Flight SAZ 461 touches down on Turkish soil. The aircraft taxis to the apron, the engines are shut down, and the door is opened. It was 8 °C when the jet left Zurich, here in Antalya it is around 25 °C – all in a day's work for the Rega crew.

### Remain calm

Now the waiting begins. Waiting for the jet to be refuelled. Waiting for the ground ambulances that have been arranged to transport the first four patients, accompanied by the medical team who had arrived the previous day, to the airport. While the aircraft refuelling progresses quickly and smoothly, the patient transportation takes rather longer. Some exit papers and medical records are still missing. However, while the mills of bureaucracy may grind very slowly in many Mediterranean countries, the hospitality here is all the more wholehearted. Airport employees invite the Rega crew for a coffee. This offer is accepted gratefully, for it is still unclear how long it will be before the aircraft can take off, and the heat on the tarmac is slowly becoming unbearable. "At airports in other countries, you often need a lot of patience," explains the experienced flight captain, Felix Degen. "Rega pilots quickly learn that rushing will get you nowhere."

After a more than two-hour delay, the ambulances finally arrive at Antalya Airport. The jet is standing by, the ramp has been unfolded, and the patients are carefully transferred into the aircraft cabin. Rega physician Thomas-Thi Plüss and flight nurse Stephanie Seiler also board the aircraft. Before they say goodbye, they provide their colleagues, Anne Seidl and Edith Ehrenreich, with the latest information about the four patients who are still in hospital.

### Recuperating in readiness for the return flight

Whilst the ambulance jet slowly taxis towards the runway, Anne Seidl and Edith Ehrenreich make their way to the hospital by ambulance. They want to get an idea of the state of health of the four patients whom they will be accompanying back to Switzerland later that evening. The hospital where the four Swiss are being cared for is regarded as one of the best in Antalya. Its good reputation is underscored by the professional assistance that the Rega team receive during their time in the Turkish city. One of the female members of the hospital staff speaks fluent German, which makes it considerably easier to communicate with the Turkish physicians.

Anne Seidl and Edith Ehrenreich discuss the medical treatment that the patients have received and their current physical condition with the local doctors. Subsequently, they decide whether the patients are in a fit state to be transported. Naturally, they also take the opportunity to exchange a few words with the patients themselves. "For many patients, the Rega medical team are the first people they can speak to in their own language about what they have experienced.

Rega Centre:  
The patient is carefully loaded  
into the ambulance jet via the ramp,  
which weighs just 42 kg.





Often these are very emotional moments,” says Edith Ehrenreich, who has worked as a Rega flight nurse for many years.

Anne Seidl reports back to the Rega Operations Centre in Zurich for the first time. She provides the flight coordinator with the latest information and describes the current situation in Turkey. Now they need to plan the procedure for the rest of the day. When is the ambulance jet due to land again in Antalya? How long is the journey from the hospital to the airport? How long will it take to get the patients ready? It quickly becomes clear that it will be a few hours before the injured Swiss are finally ready to be transported. A few hours to spare in sunny Antalya? What better way to spend the time than by enjoying a very welcome lunch by the sea; after all, it is already after 2.00 pm and breakfast was a long time ago.

Once again, the friendly lady assigned to look after them proves to be a godsend. The party make their way through the busy city traffic to the beach, where a selection of local specialities await the hungry Swiss women. “Moments like this are invaluable,” says Anne Seidl. “On long missions, it’s important to be able to switch off and recharge your batteries.” The Turkish hospital employee also joins them for lunch.



Zurich Airport:  
The ambulance jet taxis  
towards the hangar.





### The luggage also needs to be transported home

But the short break is over all too quickly. At around 6.00 pm, the medical crew start preparing the four patients for transport. Two of them are accommodated in the hospital's intensive care unit. They are transferred to the portable medical apparatus and carefully lifted onto vacuum mattresses. The Rega flight nurses check the medication one last time and collect up the patients' personal belongings. The latter task is not of a medical nature, but it is also part of the Rega team's job; after all, the Swiss tourists came on holiday with luggage and want to take all their possessions home again – especially their valuables. The other two patients take less time; they are able to pack up their belongings and get ready by themselves. One final check: everything in order from a medical point of view? All the necessary papers to hand? Luggage on board? With the blue light flashing, the ambulance sets off for the airport.

This time, the customs formalities go off without a hitch. The Rega ambulance jet is waiting for the passengers. Pilots Hanspeter Leemann and Marc Bühlmann have unfolded the ramp and are standing ready to help load the patients into the aircraft. Shortly after 9.00 pm, the Rega jet taxis towards the runway and takes off for Zurich. As is so often the case, things on board are quiet. "The patients are just relieved to be on the way home. Usually they are so exhausted that they sleep throughout the flight," explains

Edith Ehrenreich. During the flight, there is plenty to keep the two flight nurses occupied. They check the patients' vital functions, administer drugs, and fill out medical reports for the Swiss hospitals. They are also responsible for preparing the food and refreshments for both the crew and the patients.

### The day is not yet over

It is long after midnight when the ambulance jet finally taxis into the hangar at the Rega Centre. The ground ambulances are waiting ready to transport the casualties to hospitals near to where they live. It is time for the Rega staff to say goodbye and wish their charges a speedy recovery. But their working day is not yet over. Anne Seidl and Edith Ehrenreich prepare the jet for the next mission. The waste needs to be disposed of and the medical supplies replenished. The pilots, too, have various tasks to complete, including all the paperwork. The repatriation mission finally comes to an end with a debriefing session with the flight coordinator. It is 3.00 am when the doors of the Rega Centre close behind the two flight nurses and they set off for home. A repatriation operation to Antalya and back: almost 24 hours in duration, two time zones, 20 degrees difference in temperature, two cultures, four fates and many experiences the richer.

*Karin Hörhager*

4 ambulances wait in the Rega hangar for the 4 patients from Turkey.





Ambulance dispatch centres can now pinpoint Rega helicopters' positions

# Faster response to accidents



**Where exactly is the nearest available rescue helicopter? Until now, only the Rega Operations Centre had access to this information. However, with the recently introduced software, Rescue Track, ambulance dispatch centres can now pinpoint the Rega helicopters' positions within their operational area and thus coordinate assistance more efficiently.**

A road accident in the Emmental valley: a motorcyclist is seriously injured. The ambulance control centre in Berne receives a call via the Swiss emergency number, 144. The dispatcher finds out where and how the accident happened and immediately arranges for professional medical assistance. On his monitor, however, he sees the position not only of the nearest available ground ambulance, but also of another highly efficient means of rescue – the red Rega helicopter, which provides swift assistance from the air.

Since spring 2012, Rega has equipped the various ambulance emergency control centres in Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein with the Rescue Track Internet application free of charge. This system has already been successfully used by the German air rescue organisation for a number of years. With Rescue Track, Rega aims to improve coordination between the rescue services on the ground and those in the air, enhancing patient care. In addition, it should reduce the number of empty flights, such as on the return journey from the hospital to the helicopter base.

On the monitor, Rescue Track displays the map position of the Rega rescue helicopters

within an 80-kilometre radius. The dispatcher thus has a constantly updated overview of all the available helicopters' exact locations. This makes it easier for him to choose the most suitable means of rescue and, depending on the situation, can also reduce the amount of time taken for an emergency physician to arrive at the accident scene. If the dispatcher decides to deploy a rescue helicopter, it is called out in the usual way via the Rega Operations Centre. In addition, he can track the helicopter's route to the scene of the accident in real time and estimate the approximate landing time. Once the helicopter has landed, its location is indicated on the map.

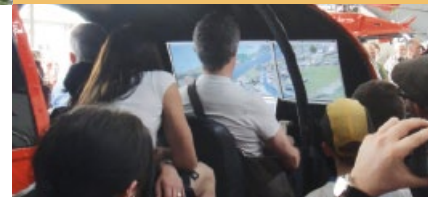
Around three-quarters of Switzerland's 19 ambulance emergency control centres are already using Rescue Track on a daily basis. According to Robert Frey, Head of Rega's Helicopter Operations Centre, this tool has more than proved its worth: "Already on a number of occasions, ambulance control centres equipped with Rescue Track have called out a Rega helicopter that happened to be in the vicinity of the accident site." As a result, casualties receive emergency medical assistance more swiftly than ever before.

*Wanda Pfeifer*



## Rega-ch: barrier-free online access

The world of Rega should be accessible to everyone. Rega has set itself the goal of designing its website in such a way that it is completely barrier-free. Users who have visual or motor impairments, for example, should be able to easily access our online information and services. Rega has been awarded the "Barrier-Free Website" certificate by the "Access for All" foundation in recognition of its endeavours. You can find out more about this foundation and its efforts to promote universal accessibility at: [www.access-for-all.ch](http://www.access-for-all.ch)



## Scaling virtual heights in the Alouette III

The Alouette III was deployed by Rega to perform rescue operations until the early 1990s. Now, on the occasion of Rega's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it has been instilled with new life. The instrument panel has been replaced by four large monitors, and in place of a turbine engine, what is arguably the best-known of all helicopters is powered by a high-performance computer – for the Alouette III has been transformed into a helicopter flight simulator. Besides the cabin, many other original features have been retained, including the joystick, pedals and pitch, which the simulator pilot now uses to steer the helicopter through virtual landscapes instead of real ones. The software that makes the dream of flying come true is called Microsoft Flight Simulator X and is equipped with various additional helicopter flight programmes.

You can have a go at "flying" the Alouette III yourself at the following trade fairs:

- Awa Amriswil, 28.11.–2.12.2012
- Ferienmesse Berne, 10–13.1.2013
- Ferienmesse Geneva, 18–20.1.2013
- Fespo Zurich, 31.1.–3.2.2013

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# SPHAIR



Rega in the public eye

# The trade fair organiser

**A core team of three people is responsible for Rega's guided tours and events. Pulling the strings in the background is Regina Wicht, who organises just under 100 Rega exhibitions every year. These events provide an ideal platform for patrons and non-patrons alike to find out more about the air rescue organisation direct from Rega itself.**

It is 7.00 am. All is quiet at the Rega Centre. After checking her e-mails, Regina Wicht goes through and updates her list of things to do. "I really appreciate the peace and quiet at this time of the morning," says the 61-year-old administrator, who has worked for Rega for 13 years.

It requires considerable concentration skills to supervise all the countless things that are necessary to organise a trade fair. Together with Head of Expo/Events, Raphael Schweizer, Regina is also responsible for the Open Days at the Rega helicopter bases, and ensures that Rega is regularly represented at events in all of Switzerland's language regions. In spring and autumn, this means participating in up to six trade fairs a month around the country. These events give the general public the opportunity to come into direct contact with Rega. Regina Wicht is rarely on site herself, but when she is, she makes good use of her knowledge of French, Italian and English in addition to her German mother tongue. Until 2012, she also worked part-time at Rega's Patronage Centre. Her profound knowledge of Rega's patronage system, coupled with her natural ability to deal with all kinds of people and to answer their questions competently, are of great advantage to both the team and the event visitors.

## Open Days to celebrate Rega's 60<sup>th</sup> jubilee

The Guided Tours and Events team were also responsible for organising the various festivities held to mark Rega's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012. With large events such as these, Regina Wicht is an invaluable help to her boss. The Open Days were particularly tiring, for the staff were busy from nine in the morning until ten at night.

In 2011, a serious incident turned Regina's life upside down. Nowadays, she takes care not to overexert herself. She recharges her batteries by spending time with her daughters or her grandchildren, or by relaxing in the sauna. She loves reading, and currently can often be found immersed in an 18th century historical novel. Her creative talent is demonstrated in various artistic works and handicraft items.

## Lost without a checklist

What preparations need to be carried out for Rega to take part in a national or regional trade fair?

Regina meticulously enters all the internal and external events into a large diary. "I keep a separate folder for each trade fair," she explains, "or to be more precise, there are actually three of them."

The "heart" of a trade fair is carefully stored in the thickest file: the checklist. Step by step, Regina checks and coordinates the various events. Has the organiser already sent the contract? Are the location and surface area of the booth what was actually requested? Is the entry in the trade fair catalogue correct? Has the necessary insurance cover been arranged? Is there a power connection? Are the carpets being laid?

## Whether big or small, the amount of work is the same

In the second file, she makes a note of all the shop articles and advertising material that are required, and then gets everything ready. It makes no difference whether Rega is represented at a small event or a major trade fair such as Olma or Muba – the amount of organisational work is just the same.

File number 3 contains instructions for the staff who are installing the exhibition booths. "I decide when the stand should be erected and dismantled, what materials need to be taken along, and where what should be positioned – from the counter to the booth walls, and from the plants to the information stands," Regina Wicht explains. She is very reliable and extremely precise in everything she does. It is only thanks to her meticulous lists that everything goes off without a hitch, whether before, during or after the event. As soon as the exhibition is over, the experienced organiser prepares the accounts, draws up statistics, and also makes a note of possible improvements. After all, it is important for there to be no repetition of things that did not turn out very well, while procedures that functioned smoothly need to be recorded and then regularly implemented.

For Regina Wicht and her team, the best reward is when visitors express their enthusiasm for Rega and its activities. "I'm delighted when I see that all the hard work has been worthwhile, and everything runs smoothly from beginning to end," she smiles.

*Maria Betschart*



Every year, Regina Wicht organises up to 100 trade fair appearances all over Switzerland on behalf of Rega.

## Visit us:

- Comptoir de Payerne  
5–14.11.2012
- Les Automnales, Geneva  
9–18.11.2012
- Winti Mäss, Winterthur  
28.11.–2.12.2012
- Awa Amriswil  
28.11.–2.12.2012
- Ferienmesse Berne  
10–13.1.2013
- Ferienmesse Geneva  
18–20.1.2013
- Fespo Zurich  
31.1.–3.2.2013
- Ferienmesse St. Gallen  
8–10.2.2012
- Swiss-Moto Zurich  
21–24.2.2013



[www.expo.rega.ch](http://www.expo.rega.ch)

# The times are changing

Air rescue was a pioneering achievement – and still is today. Throughout its 60-year history, Rega has equipped its rescue crews with state-of-the-art technical aids. Over the years, this bears witness to the inestimable value of the expertise accumulated.

## Night jumps wearing spotlights strapped around their ankles

In the founding years, when carrying out night missions, Rega parachutists wore special boots with motorbike headlights strapped around their ankles. An electric cable ran from each boot inside the trouser leg and up to a battery attached to the parachutist's waist belt. As a result, shortly before touching the ground, the rescuers could see the terrain in the cone of light and were able to land safely.

Battery weight: 4.7 kg  
Headlight power: 25 watts each



## Pulmotor

The pulmotor was invented by Johann Heinrich Dräger in 1907. This emergency ventilator was designed to resuscitate victims of drowning or avalanches. It functioned by automatically pumping air or oxygen into the airways by alternately creating positive and negative airway pressure, and was powered by oxygen under pressure. This apparatus was in use at Rega until the mid-1950s.

Weight: 22 kg



## Helicopter lift

Rega's first helicopters were not equipped with a rescue hoist. If the helicopter was not able to land at the accident site, the rescuers had to improvise. The picture, taken in Zurich-Kloten on 15 November 1952, shows an experiment using a hot-air balloon basket suspended underneath the helicopter.



## Loading a patient into the Cessna 421

Heavy work requiring strong backs: in those days, there were no technical aids to help load patients into the air ambulance. It took three people to lift the patient, lying on a stretcher, from the ground ambulance into the aircraft cabin. Rega did not have any ambulance jacks of its own until the early 1970s. Instead, generous business executives placed their private aircraft at its disposal when required.





# - and so is technology



Over the years, Rega has continually strived to combine the ever-growing experience and technology that has been developed over the years, technology has experienced a dynamic development. Over the years, technology has experienced a dynamic development. Over the years, technology has experienced a dynamic development. Over the years, technology has experienced a dynamic development.

## Night-vision goggles mounted on the pilot's helmet

Nowadays, Rega's helicopter pilots use night-vision goggles when flying at night. This device amplifies any residual light by a factor of up to 3,000. The NVGs produce a green image, on which transportation routes, clouds and topographical formations are clearly visible. They are mounted on the pilot's helmet and lifted up just before landing. The helicopter's searchlights provide sufficient light for the helicopter to land.

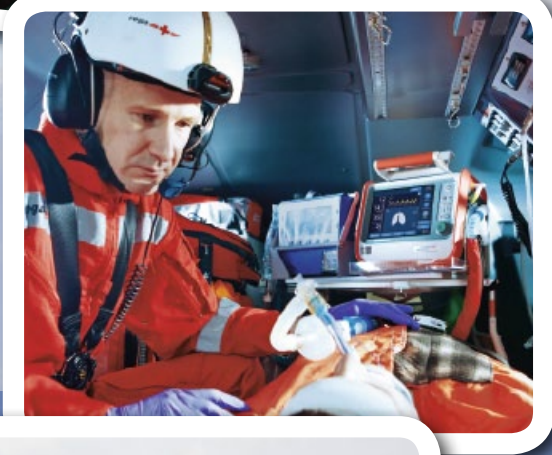
Weight: 800 g  
Power: the residual light at night is amplified 3,000 times over



## HAMILTON-T1

This cutting-edge device was specially developed in Switzerland for ventilating intensive care patients (adults and children) during transport. When used in helicopters, air ambulances or rescue vehicles, it functions just like an autopilot, controlling the patient's respiration in accordance with his specific needs. Rega has been using this apparatus since 2011.

Weight: 6.5 kg



## Rescue hoist

The rescue hoist comes into its own when the helicopter is not able to land next to the patient. It is used to lower the flight physician or rescue specialist out of the helicopter down to the patient.

Hoist cable length: 90 metres  
Payload capacity: 270 kg  
Power: electric  
Average no. of hoist operations per annum: 700



## Into the jet via the ramp

Rega's state-of-the-art air ambulances are each equipped with a three-section ramp, which is stored just inside the cabin door. When the ramp is unfolded, the stretcher trolley carrying the patient can be gently wheeled up the ramp and into the cabin.

Rega operates three Challenger CL-604 jets. They are fitted out as flying intensive care units and transport patients from all over the world.

Weight: 42 kg





Rescue of a snowshoe trekker near Rougemont (Canton Vaud)

# “Rega’s emergency app saved me from freezing to death”

During a snowshoe tour, Didier Schlegel fell and slid a long way down the mountainside into a steep-sided gorge cut out by a mountain stream. Injured and unable to move, he fortunately remembered Rega’s emergency app.



Didier Schlegel is a keen mountain hiker. The 53-year-old from Lausanne has been a member of the Swiss Alpine Club (SAC) for a number of years and spends most of his weekends in the mountains. On 5 February 2012, a sunny but freezing cold day – the thermometer showed minus 16 °C – he set off on a snowshoe trek. He left Rougemont at around 10 o’clock and slowly made his way up to the peak of the Rodomont on snowshoes. Here, at almost 1,900 metres above sea level, he stopped to take in the magnificent panoramic view. In the early afternoon, he commenced his descent – completely unaware of what was about to befall him.

## A never-ending slide down the mountain

The terrain around Montadzou was very steep. Didier tried to follow the contour line: “I wasn’t able to traverse the mountain in the direction I wanted. My snowshoes could barely grip on the frozen ground. But the forest there is quite dense, so I wasn’t afraid of slithering down

the mountain out of control.” At some point, Didier suddenly found himself between two streams. Here there were no more trees to stop his fall. And then it happened: “I slipped on the ice, but I couldn’t recover my balance and slithered faster and faster down the mountainside. It was like being on a toboggan.” Then his snowshoe caught on the rough ground. “I was flipped over onto my stomach and suddenly I felt a severe pain in my right leg,” he recalls. But Didier continued to slide down the slope, this time injuring his right foot.

## Swiftly located thanks to one click

“Finally, I found myself on my back in a steep, shady gorge. Fortunately, the stream running through it was frozen over,” he said. Even the slightest movement was agony. Didier was in shock: “Without thinking much, I took out my smartphone and summoned help via Rega’s emergency app.” As luck would have it, he had downloaded it just a few days earlier.

Didier Schlegel, a member of the Swiss Alpine Club (SAC), is an experienced mountain hiker.







You can find further information about the Rega app at: [www.app.rega.ch](http://www.app.rega.ch)

Breathtaking view high above Rougemont, halfway along Didier's tour route on 5 February 2012.

the helicopter flew back to where Didier was located. "As soon as I saw the rescuer slowly descending through the air towards me, I heaved a huge sigh of relief," he recalls. The RSH secured the accident site, so that the Rega flight physician could administer first aid to the patient. Then Didier was carefully laid into a rescue recovery bag and pulled up out of the gorge on the end of the rescue hoist.

"Just a few minutes later, I had arrived at Saanen Hospital, where a competent medical team was waiting for me. I was really impressed by the warm-hearted attention and professional medical care that I received." The diagnosis: acute hypothermia, a dislocated hip and a sprained ankle. Less than an hour later, Didier was lying with his leg in plaster in a hospital bed – where he had to stay put until he was discharged one week later.

**Unwavering love for the mountains**

This mishap has done nothing to diminish Didier's passion for hiking in the mountains. But now he is only too aware that an accident can occur at any time and he pays particular attention to signs of imminent danger. "I was lucky that things didn't turn out worse," he says. "What would have happened if I had not had my smartphone with me, or if there had been no reception in the place where I was?"

*Adrienne Prudente*

Being on your own in the mountains is dangerous: read our prevention tips on page 24.

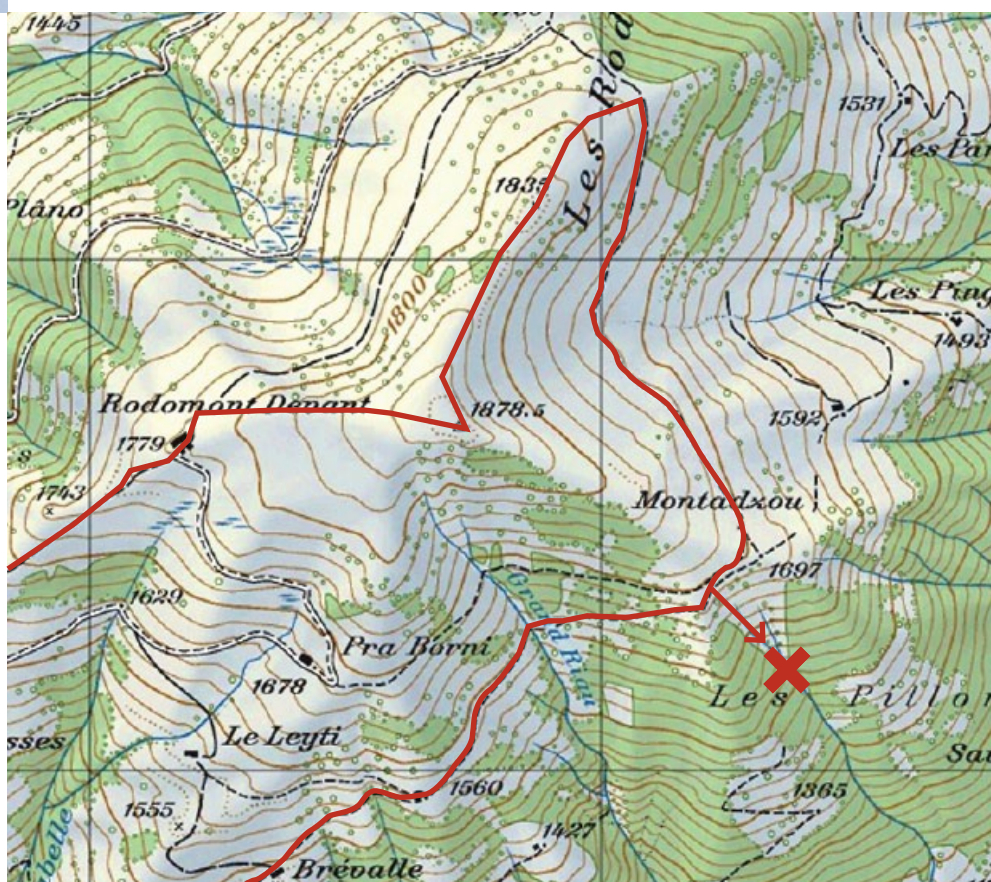
The snowshoe tour in the Pays d'Enhaut region that Didier Schlegel was planning to do is marked red. The fateful fall occurred in the vicinity of Montadzou.

This app is able to pinpoint the caller's position very accurately and automatically sets up a connection with the Rega Operations Centre. "I was so relieved when I realised that Rega knew exactly where I was."

Nevertheless, the long, lonely wait in the cold and quiet seemed endless. "Even if you know that help is on the way, you can easily start to panic," he says. "I was afraid that I was going to freeze to death." He called Rega again, and his spirits lifted when he heard the reassuring voice at the end of the line say, "The helicopter will be with you in three to four minutes."

**Rescue with the aid of the hoist**

For this mission in difficult terrain, the crew from the Rega helicopter base in Zweisimmen also took on board a helicopter rescue specialist (RSH) from the Swiss Alpine Club. The casualty needed to be lifted out of the steep gorge at the edge of the forest using a rescue hoist. After first flying over the area to check out the terrain,





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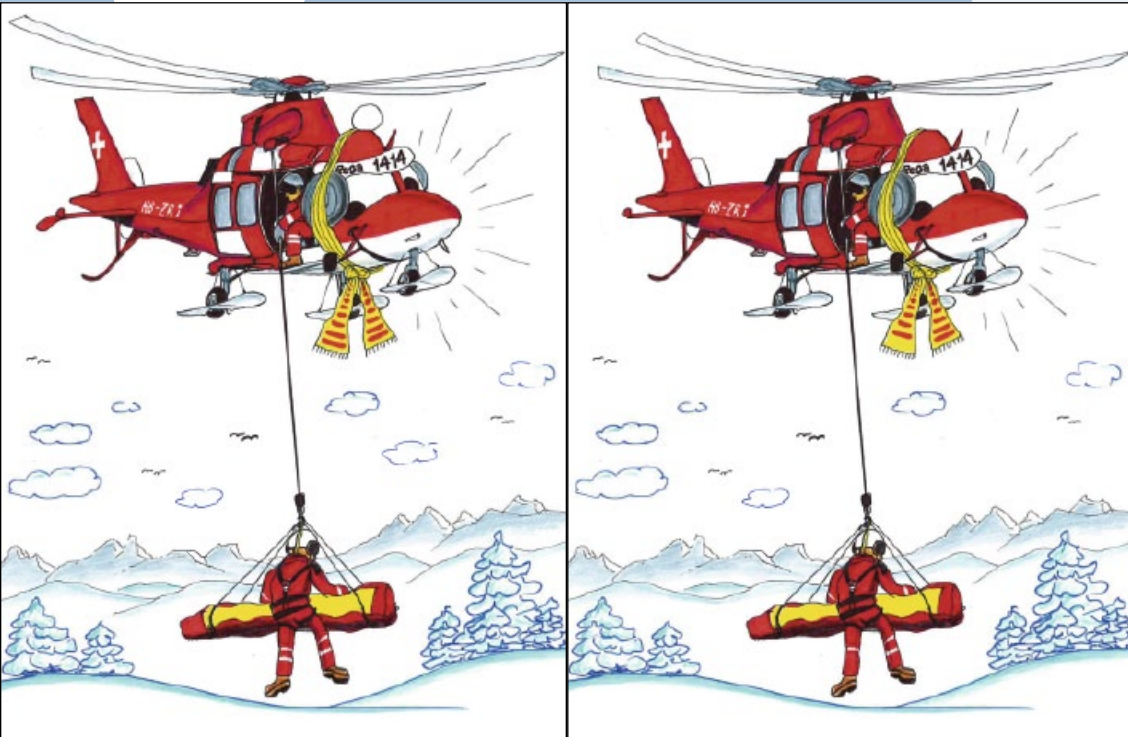
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# REGA FOR KIDS



## Spot the ten differences

If the Rega helicopter is not able to land near to the casualty, the paramedic lowers the doctor down to the ground using a rescue hoist. The doctor attends to the injured person and prepares him for transport. Then both are hooked onto the rescue cable and are winched up into the air.

When our illustrator copied this picture, he made ten mistakes. Can you find them?



**Solution from issue no. 78:**  
 You can find the ten mistakes on our website at:  
[www.1414.rega.ch](http://www.1414.rega.ch)

© Illustration: Joggi / Peter Jost

## Competition

Join the dots and answer the following two questions:

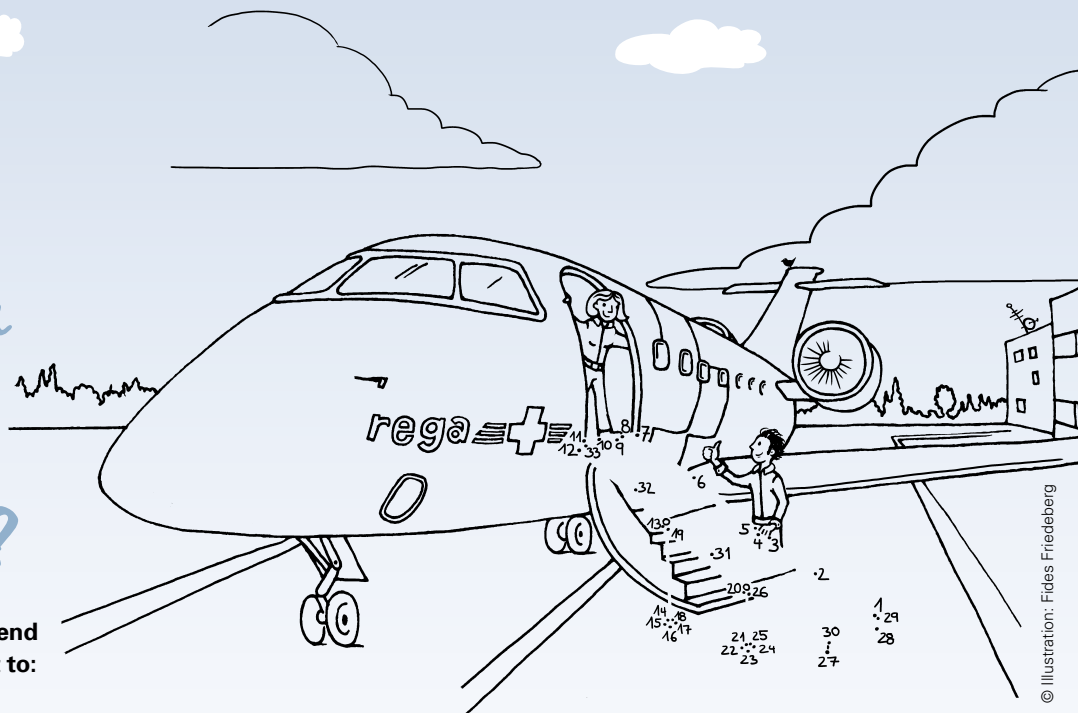
What can you see here and how much does it weigh?

Write the answers on a postcard and send by 20 December 2012 at the very latest to:

Swiss Air-Rescue Rega  
 "Quiz", Patrons' Magazine 1414  
 PO Box 1414  
 CH-8058 Zurich Airport

Ten winners drawn from the correct answers will each receive a remote-controlled model Da Vinci helicopter worth CHF 49.

Good luck!



© Illustration: Fides Friedeberg

**Solution from issue no. 78: Until he learns to fly, Rega will do the job.** We're talking, of course, about the slightly naive, yet highly lovable St. Bernard. You can see him in Rega's advertising spot and on our website, [www.rega.ch](http://www.rega.ch).

Each of the following have won a DVD of our latest film, "Rega close up", as well as a cuddly St. Bernard toy and a Rega jubilee carrier bag:  
 Ranjit Duggal, Zurich; Julian Freitag, Stein am Rhein; Fabio Gambonini, Gordola; Amy Lee and Lou Ann Golay, Le Brassus; Rina Marielli-Brighenti, Bignasco; Adriano and Diego Montavon, Courfaivre; Jonas Neeser, Reiden; Philipp Schuwey, Brünisried; Nora Tschuur, Bad Zurzach; Yuna Vifian, Lullier.

Congratulations!



A child sustains severe burns – but skin grafts are not possible in Senegal

# A young African girl receives life-saving treatment in Switzerland



Thiès hospital, Senegal.

**The Swiss relief organisation, Sentinelles, arranges for Rega to fly 10-year-old Coumba, who is suffering from severe burns, from Africa to Switzerland for medical treatment. In her home country of Senegal, she would have had little chance of survival, for her injuries are getting worse and skin grafts are not possible in this part of Africa. A moving story with a happy end.**

It is 3 January 2007. Ten-year-old Coumba is standing with her brothers and sisters around the open fire; dinner is almost ready. Her mother is paying a brief visit to a neighbour. Suddenly she hears her daughter screaming – Coumba's clothes have caught fire. The flames are licking away at the child's body. The villagers extinguish the fire with water – but the severe second-degree burns are deep and cover 36 percent of her body. At the nearby healthcare unit, the staff bandage Coumba's open burns, and then send her back home to Mbour. No fresh dressings, no hospital treatment. After eight days, the pain becomes unbearable. By 11 January,

the only solution is to make the long journey to the hospital in Thiès. Here she finally receives professional medical treatment. But those first days without the dressings being changed have taken their toll; the open wounds get increasingly worse and additional infections make the healing process slow, if not impossible. Coumba lies in her hospital bed for eight long months. She is in constant pain. She loses her appetite and from August is no longer able to stand up. A healthy, high-protein diet and regular physiotherapy are vital for the burns to heal – but this is not available here. The young girl's physical condition becomes steadily worse.





In the aircraft.



In the ambulance.



At the HUG University Hospital, Geneva.



On the road to recovery.

### Sentinelles in Senegal

Fortunately, the Swiss relief organisation, Sentinelles, is also active in Senegal, where it helps defenceless people and attempts to give them back their lives ([www.sentinelles.org](http://www.sentinelles.org)). Sentinelles hears of Coumba's tragic story and calls on Rega for assistance. For in Coumba's own country, she would not survive such serious injuries, and she is in desperate need of skin grafts. Rega flight nurse, Anne-Lise Stuby, flies alone to Senegal. She takes a taxi to the hospital, and subsequently accompanies Coumba by ambulance to Dakar Airport. There the young girl is made comfortable on a stretcher installed in an Air France aircraft. On 24 September 2007, the Rega flight nurse flies with the 10-year-old child to Geneva. Coumba stays in Switzerland for almost a year: hospital in Geneva, skin grafts, the gradual healing process, learning to walk again, rehabilitation – and visits from Anne-Lise Stuby. The two already became good friends in the hospital in Senegal – although they did not know then that their friendship would be a lasting one.



Mbour, Senegal: Coumba shows the Rega flight nurse how she can balance a 30-litre washing-up bowl on her head.



The young girl slowly learns to walk again.

### A new school and a new baby sister

This very special mission also gives rise to many positive experiences and sparks a long-lasting friendship spanning the two continents. Rega often fetches a white person from black Africa – but for once it is the other way round. Anne-Lise Stuby visits Coumba, first in the rehabilitation clinic in Switzerland, and later in Senegal during one of her trips to Africa. The young girl would love to return to Switzerland, so she could get a good education. The teachers at the state schools in Senegal do not receive a regular wage and so often fail to turn up for work. While private schools provide on-going, good-quality tuition, they are much too expensive for Coumba's family. Stuby helps by paying her fees. Now Coumba can attend private school every day and receive an education – in her own country. She is now well on the way to recovery and is thrilled at the birth of her baby sister on 18 August 2011. And – how could it be otherwise – the baby has been named Annelyse after the Rega flight nurse.

*Ariane Güngerich*



# Snowshoe trekking – safe and environmentally sound

**Snowshoe trekking is becoming increasingly popular, for it is healthy and offers adventure, relaxation and fitness all at the same time. However, the risk of avalanches and respect for wildlife must also be heeded.**

Snowshoe trekking is suitable for people of all ages, is inexpensive, and does not require much snow or previous experience. However, natural hazards and the impact on the local wildlife are aspects that are often forgotten.

## **Natural hazards and risk of avalanches**

Snowshoe treks often lead across terrain where there is a high risk of avalanches. On average, two trekkers a year suffer fatal accidents, and mountain rescue teams are increasingly called out to rescue injured or stranded snowshoe enthusiasts.

So join a group with a professional guide or attend an appropriate training course – for assessing the risk of avalanche requires in-depth knowledge and considerable experience. Moreover, it is more difficult to get your bearings in winter than in summer, and the situation can quickly become life-threatening in foggy conditions. Be sure to pack maps of the area, a compass and/or a GPS device in your rucksack.

## **Respect the wildlife**

Snowshoe trekkers also intrude into the natural habitat of wild animals, which in winter react very sensitively to being disturbed. Respect the specially designated wildlife quiet zones and reserves. Avoid forests and woods, including the areas around the edge, or stay on the marked tracks. Dogs should be kept on a lead.

**Ideally you should follow officially open, marked snowshoe trails, which are avalanche-free and comply with wildlife protection regulations.**

## **Good preparation and the correct equipment considerably increase safety**

Find out about the weather and the current conditions along your planned route. Adapt the length and difficulty of your tour to match your ability. Allow plenty of time – and do not hesitate to turn back if necessary! Sturdy hiking boots with a good tread profile, hiking gaiters, warm weatherproof clothing, sufficient provisions and hot drinks, sunscreen, a mobile phone and a first-aid kit are all vital pieces of equipment. Never go off trekking alone, and be sure to inform someone of your plans.

*Monique Walter*

*bfu – Swiss Council for Accident Prevention*

Marked snowshoe trails:  
[www.globaltrail.ch](http://www.globaltrail.ch)  
[www.schneeschuhpfade.ch](http://www.schneeschuhpfade.ch)  
 Information on accident prevention:  
[www.bfu.ch](http://www.bfu.ch)  
 "Avalanche danger" leaflet, ref. 3.028





Medical coordinator, Beat Schwander, discusses a medical case with Rega physician, Olivier Seiler.

Medical emergencies abroad:  
 Rega's medical coordinators provide a link with home

# There for our patients around the clock

**Switzerland is a nation of travellers. According to the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO), Swiss nationals undertook around 10 million trips abroad in 2010 – and that's not counting expats living and working in other countries. However, if they are injured or become seriously ill while they are abroad, they are very often confronted with a whole series of problems – such as the very limited treatment options available or language barriers that make communication difficult. In such cases, the best course of action is to ask Rega for help.**

The central pivot for emergency missions abroad is Rega's Jet Operations Centre in Zurich-Kloten. In addition to an experienced team of flight coordinators, who are responsible for managing the missions, medical coordinators are also available around the clock. When an emergency call is received, a flight coordinator makes a note of the key facts and passes on this information to the medical coordinator on duty.

Rega employs a total of 12 medical coordinators working in 24-hour shifts, who deal with matters relating to medical emergency management. Once the medical coordinator has received all the necessary information, he contacts the doctor at the local hospital who is treating the patient. Consequently, a sound knowledge of foreign languages is absolutely essential in this job. After discussing the case with the local doctor, the Rega physician speaks to the patient, the patient's next-of-kin and often also his GP. This is to obtain additional medical information – such as existing illnesses, potential

medical complications, or the patient's fitness to fly – and to determine the optimal time for repatriation. In addition to the patient's medical condition, the Rega physician is interested in other aspects, too, such as whether other family members will be accompanying the patient on the flight home. Only when the medical coordinator has gathered all the necessary information is he in a position to decide, in consultation with the Operations Centre, whether or not repatriation is necessary, and if so, the best time for and method of repatriation.

Day and night, Rega's medical coordinators provide a link between people in distress abroad and home – perhaps one day for you, too.

**In the event of a medical emergency abroad, you can contact the Rega Operations Centre by calling +41 333 333 333.**

*Karin Hörhager*

## Rega's Chief Pilot receives award for his outstanding work

On 27 September 2012, Rega's chief helicopter pilot, Heinz Leibundgut, was presented with the 2012 Aerosuisse0 Award. With this prize, the Swiss aviation and aerospace industry's umbrella organisation pays tribute to his outstanding achievements in the field of helicopter flight safety and reliability, particularly in the sphere of air rescue. Among other things, Leibundgut worked closely with other partners to launch the highly successful "Remove" project, a free service aimed at dismantling redundant wire ropes and cables that pose a hazard to helicopter pilots. He has also been responsible for developing the concept of all-weather GPS approach flights to hospital helipads, which is currently in its introduction phase.



Heinz Leibundgut has served as Chief Pilot of Rega's helicopter fleet since 2000, and has over 30 years' experience in the field of helicopter flying. The Aerosuisse Award is presented annually. Previous prize winners include astronaut Claude Nicollier and the crew of Switzerland's principal airline, Swiss. Rega congratulates its Chief Pilot on this honour in recognition of his achievements.

## Patrons' Magazine: over 100 million copies

With this issue, the total print run of our patrons' magazine has topped 100 million. Since 1977, this professionally produced magazine has been keeping the Swiss population regularly informed about Swiss Air-Rescue's day-to-day activities, both at home and abroad.





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# Whether in a helicopter or on skis – flying is a skill that needs to be learned

My parents and their bunch of little terrors – by that I mean me and my two elder brothers – have always been family patrons. My brothers were my first rivals on the ski slopes! It's good to know that Swiss Air-Rescue is ready to deal with serious incidents, around the clock. A patron's card makes you feel safe, because Rega has been carrying out rescue missions, reliably and professionally, for 60 years.

Back then, in March 1993 – I was 19 years old at the time – I took part in the European Cup downhill ski race in Meiringen, but never reached the finish line. A fractured femur, excruciating pain, an injection from the team doctor – and then the whirring sound of the red Rega helicopter's rotor blades. I can still clearly remember the Rega flight physician and the huge feeling of relief that swept over me when I saw him. "Now I'm in good hands," I thought to myself. Unfortunately, I don't recall anything else about the flight. Luckily, I've only ever needed Rega's help on that one occasion.

No doubt you're wondering what an Alpine ski racer does after he has retired from competitive sport. Well, I want to pass on my experience and to support both active skiers and up-and-coming champions – for example, at the regional performance centre, Alpine Mountains Jurassiennes. My involvement in projects such as "Porte-Bonheur" (Lucky Charms) for orphans ([www.porte-bonheur.ch](http://www.porte-bonheur.ch)) is also very important to me. In my role as ambassador and adviser, my daily work is particularly marked by my partnerships with Audi, Corum watches, Head, KJUS golf- and skiwear, and Ovaltine.

It's a great honour for me to hold the title of "Swiss of the Year" in this, Rega's jubilee year. I hope Rega gains a great many more patrons, so that this fantastic concept continues to exist and these "modest heroes" are able to rescue many more people in distress.



*Didier Cuche*



## **Didier Cuche**

Alpine ski racer

Swiss of the Year 2011

21 World Cup victories

Super-G World Champion 2009  
in Val d'Isère

Record holder for number of wins  
on the Streif section in Kitzbühel

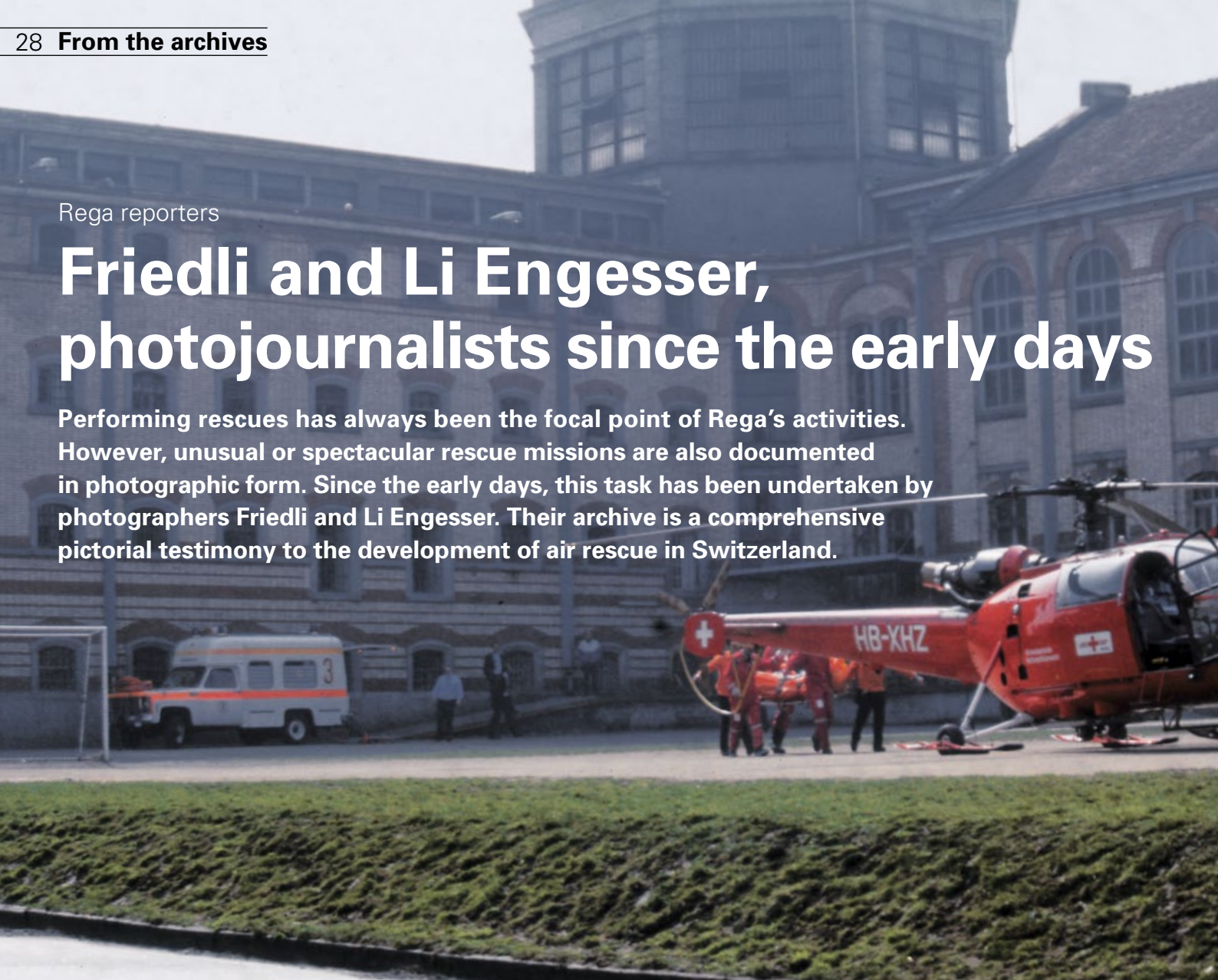
More at: [www.didiercuche.ch](http://www.didiercuche.ch)



Rega reporters

# Friedli and Li Engesser, photojournalists since the early days

Performing rescues has always been the focal point of Rega's activities. However, unusual or spectacular rescue missions are also documented in photographic form. Since the early days, this task has been undertaken by photographers Friedli and Li Engesser. Their archive is a comprehensive pictorial testimony to the development of air rescue in Switzerland.



Friedli and Li Engesser:  
Always where the action is.

The police officer recognised the red Ford from a distance and allowed Friedli Engesser to pass through the barriers as far as the accident site, so that he could photograph the scene on behalf of Rega. Every evening when he went to bed, Friedli never knew when or where he might be sent during the night. He always made sure that his petrol tank was full – so that he was prepared for all eventualities.

## Rescues: spectacular, unusual and moving

Once Friedli had arrived back at headquarters with his exposed films, it was his wife Li's turn to go into action: the films had to be sent off for development, copies needed to be made and then carefully filed away. After all, the best pictures in the world are useless if they cannot be found later on.

The Engessers' archive documents the whole spectrum of Rega missions spanning three decades. When asked about their favourites, they found it difficult to make their choice.

One particularly spectacular mission was, without doubt, the rescue of two workers from the top of a 90-metre high factory chimney in Basel. The rescue helicopter succeeded in lifting the



**Unusual:**

The Rega helicopter has landed in the prison courtyard in order to attend to an injured prisoner.

uninjured men to safety on the end of a rescue hoist.

Unusual certainly describes the time when a rescue helicopter landed in a prison courtyard to attend to an injured prisoner. Friedli managed to drive into the prison grounds, but discovered that leaving again was not quite so easy: "After all, anyone could say that they were from Rega!" he laughed.

An extremely moving occasion for everyone involved was when Rega flew a terminally ill child from hospital back home, where the whole school class were waiting to say their final goodbyes. Even today, the photographer is lost for words when he recalls the scene. His pictures say it all.

**A life spent in Rega's service**

Now in their mid-eighties, Friedli and Li Engesser are still out and about armed with their camera, and their photo archive remains an absolute treasure trove for Rega's Patrons' Magazine, 1414. Looking back, they say that the frequent alarm calls in the middle of the night never bothered them. Indeed, they both agree: "We would do it all over again".

*Walter Stünzi*

**Moving:**

Rega transports a terminally ill child home to die.

**Spectacular:**

The rescue of two workers stranded on top of a tall factory chimney.





# 60<sup>th</sup> jubilee: Rega

In 2012, Rega organised a number of public events to say thank you to its



**27 April 2012: Rega celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday at the Rega Centre, together with specially invited guests.**



Sylvia & Jürg Künzi:  
We wish Rega safe flights.



**28 & 29 April 2012: over 20,000 visitors flock to the Open Days at the Rega Centre at Zurich-Kloten Airport.**



Hannes Baumgartner:  
As many patrons as possible, who help Rega to optimise its rescue infrastructure with their contributions.



**23 June 2012: Open Day in Berne – more than 10,000 visitors make their way to Berne-Belp.**



**Long queues form in front of the ambulance jet – everyone wants to take a look inside.**



Sophie Blaser:  
That Rega stays just the way it is, and saves many more lives.



**7 July 2012: Open Day in Zurich – over 10,000 interested people visit Rega's Zurich helicopter base in Dübendorf.**



Paul Lehmann:  
All the very best! And many, many patrons, so that at some time in the future Rega is funded by the entire Swiss population.



# says thank you!

patrons, whose financial support keeps the air rescue organisation in the air.



Niels Frutig:  
I hope that Rega will be able to carry on flying for a long time.



**9 June 2012: Open Day in Lausanne – over 7,000 visitors showed a keen interest in Rega.**



Mireille Paellenbach:  
I hope that even more people become patrons, and that the Swiss people continue to show their solidarity – so that Rega can save a lot more lives.



Frédéric Morier:  
Even more patrons, so that Rega has the best possible infrastructure for operating missions.



**The 100-year-old Carnegie Rescuers' Foundation awarded 60-year-old Rega an honorary diploma and its Silver Medal. Rega is delighted to receive this award.**



Niklas Burri:  
Nice patients and no accidents!



**18 August 2012: special event on Barfüsserplatz in Basel – a unique opportunity for 3,000 people to inspect a Rega helicopter at close quarters right in the city centre.**



Vincent Tan:  
I hope that Rega will continue to develop and strive towards even higher goals.



20 & 21 April 2013  
**Open Day**  
at the Rega helicopter base in Ticino.  
We look forward to your visit!





**“We would like to join Rega in celebrating its anniversary by rounding up our annual patronage contribution.” “We’ve been married for 60 years, and so we feel a particularly close affinity to Rega. Congratulations!” “We read in the media that Rega is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Happy birthday! We would like to pass on our congratulations and very much hope that this important and vitally needed organisation will continue to exist for many, many years to come.”**

During our anniversary year, Rega staff have received countless birthday greetings, and Swiss Air-Rescue is delighted at the enthusiastic support from the Swiss population in response to our jubilee activities. The various events, such as the Open Days held at a number of Rega helicopter bases, prompted many people to apply for Rega patronage or to request a gift patronage.

**Dear patrons, we thank you most sincerely for your invaluable support and would like to symbolically present you with this rose!**

*Your Rega*

## How to contact Rega

**Emergency number in Switzerland**  
1414

**Emergency number abroad**  
+41 333 333 333

**Patronage Centre**  
Monday–Friday  
8.30–12.00 am  
1.00–4.30 pm  
+41 (0)844 834 844  
[www.rega.ch](http://www.rega.ch)

**Website address for all queries**  
[www.info.rega.ch](http://www.info.rega.ch)

**Switchboard**  
+41 (0) 44 654 33 11

**Rega Newsletter**  
[www.newsletter.rega.ch](http://www.newsletter.rega.ch)

**Rega Shop**  
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[www.shop.rega.ch](http://www.shop.rega.ch)