

Missions at night

Nowadays, one in four missions performed by a rescue helicopter take place after darkness has fallen. Our crews are optimally prepared for these demanding missions and are supported by state-of-the-art technical aids.

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Night vision goggles

Night vision goggles are always carried on board the rescue helicopters. These devices amplify the residual light and comprise a pair of binoculars attached to the front of the pilot's helmet, which can be flipped up or down, and a battery pack that sits on the back of the helmet.



Spotlights

The landing, rescue hoist or search lights can be used, for example, to illuminate a temporary landing site or an accident site. The two large landing lights on the fuselage of the helicopter can be swivelled and controlled individually.

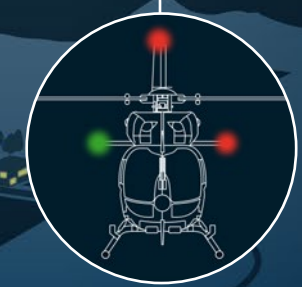


Night missions in 2020

Night missions illustrate Rega's broad range of missions: in terms of the 1,399 primary missions (emergency missions direct to the scene of the incident), the most frequent reasons for raising the alarm were acute illnesses followed by occupational and road accidents. Rega was also called out a total of 1,119 times during the night to carry out secondary missions, whereby the crews transfer patients from a peripheral hospital to a central one.



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Position and warning lights

In accordance with aviation regulations, these lights indicate the relative position and direction of flight of the helicopter, so that in the dark it can be recognised by other airspace users. In the flight direction, there is a green position light on the right side of the horizontal stabiliser and a red one on the left. On top of the vertical fin is a red flashing anti-collision light, while white lights shine out towards the rear.



Training to increase safety

Sound basic and on-going training helps to ensure the safety of crews and patients at all times, including at night. All Rega crews practise using the rescue hoist at night at least once every three months.



Digital maps

Digital maps and satellite-based images on the cockpit screens make it easier to navigate in the dark. They also show the location of low-lying ropes, cables and power lines, which are fed into the navigation system from Rega's own obstacle database.