

## Occupational Biography of Rolf P. Steinegger

During 1970/71, as a young lawyer, Rolf P. Steinegger provided legal counsel to an American company which intended to supply the attack aircraft, the Corsair A7-G, to Switzerland. His engagement ended in summer 1971 due to the negative decision of the Swiss Federal Council.

Rolf P. Steinegger achieved one of his first bigger successes in 1973 against the Grand Council of the Canton of Fribourg: its attempt to charge non-local boat owners double boat tax was declared unconstitutional by the Swiss Federal Supreme Court. The year 1974 noted a second positive result within the sphere of sports boating: the Swiss Federal Supreme Court overruled a resolve by the Council of the Canton of Bern to significantly restrict surfing on Bernese lakes.

In 1979, during direct negotiation in the USA, Steinegger obtained a significant settlement sum for a Swiss injured party. Due to a burst tyre, her vehicle overturned on an Italian motorway, whereby the driver sustained serious injuries. A world-leading tyre laboratory in Vienna could establish a product defect in the tyres. The negotiations with the American tyre manufacturer were supported by Assista, the legal protection insurer of the TCS (Swiss Touring Club).

In 1986, following vehement conflict between the parties, Steinegger was able to dissolve the contract which a professional boxer concluded with his trainer.

In 1987 Rolf P. Steinegger appeared as defence lawyer in a complicated economic criminal case, which attracted wide media coverage.

In 1988, the Swiss Federal Supreme Court rejected as unconstitutional a family law summary decree issued by the High Court of the Canton of Bern and contested by Rolf P. Steinegger – an extremely rare occurrence.

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In 1989 Steinegger had the front page of the Berner Zeitung (the Bernese cantonal newspaper) blacked-out on behalf of a journalistically active politician by means of an interim injunction (violation of personal rights). He achieved similar success in 1997 against the tabloid newspaper, the Blick, which violated the personal rights of the Chief of General Staff of the Swiss Army.

Steinegger has been representing various insurance companies, which were sued by "whiplash" victims since 1990. He became increasingly successful at securing the rejection of unfounded claims. A ruling of the Swiss Federal Supreme Court in 2010 caused the collapse of the "whiplash market". Steinegger published various articles about this realm and has thus acted frequently as a public speaker.

Steinegger likewise represented various injured persons and their relatives in court regarding sports accidents, e.g. swimming pool accidents, a collision between a snow groomer and a skier, a skier colliding with an unpadded iron rod and a fatal fall by a cyclist in Alpine terrain. Steinegger furthermore assisted injured persons or their relatives involved in various airplane accidents.

A newspaper publisher organised a hot-air balloon festival in Bern in October 1990. The temperature sensor of a balloon touched a power line during the landing process. The current caused a gas bottle in the basket to explode and a passenger was killed. On behalf of the relatives and two insurance companies, Steinegger sued the publisher in 1996 and claimed survivor's benefits and compensation.

Rolf P. Steinegger has been representing numerous victims of child abduction since the 1990s. In 1995 he secured the return to the USA of his three children for an American father. They were abducted to Switzerland by their mother. This case caused a furore in both the USA and Switzerland. The American senator, Jesse Helms, counted amongst those who intervened.

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In 1992 Steinegger achieved the acquittal of two geologists who assessed the risks regarding the construction of a flood drainage tunnel. The emission of methane during construction of the tunnel caused an explosion and killed a worker. The geologists did not breach any obligation to exercise due care.

By means of an interim decree, Steinegger achieved re-admittance for a well-known European football club in 1993 to the Champions League.

In 1994, Rolf P. Steinegger once again managed to obtain an injunction from the same court, by means of which the UEFA's marketing monopoly on radio, television and banner advertising was destroyed. The UEFA unsuccessfully contested the jurisdiction of the Bernese court hearing the case, similarly to the Bosman case which was decided by the European Court of Justice on 15.12.1995 (EuGH RS C-415/93, Sig. 1995 I-4921).

Steinegger, President of the Association of Swiss Police Officers, Bern City Section since 1994, represented numerous accused police officers – mostly regarding counter complaints – in criminal courts. He obtained acquittals almost without exception, inter alia, in a case concerning positional suffocation of a perpetrator.

In 1997 Rolf P. Steinegger successfully sued the Swiss Confederation before the Federal Court (government liability). He acted successfully for the same party in arbitration proceedings.

Steinegger represented various victims of the Luxor terrorist attack as from end-1997. By order of the Confederation, he drafted a pooling agreement, on the basis of which the claims of the Swiss injured persons were settled.

As from 1998, Rolf P. Steinegger represented one of the accused in the so-called Nyffenegger affair in the military courts; he obtained the acquittal of his client in the first and second instance courts.

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Since 2000 Steinegger was ever-increasingly engaged to file civil claims for traumatic brain injuries incurred in road traffic accidents involving children.

Furthermore, also in 2000, Rolf P. Steinegger represented the relatives of a murder victim. The perpetrator was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment.

From 2001 Steinegger proceeded to win four hospital liability claims in a row against cantonal hospitals. One of these victories caused the President of the FMH (Swiss Medical Association) to accuse Steinegger in the media of attempting, as a victims' lawyer, to establish American proportions in Switzerland. Steinegger rejected this unfounded criticism in, inter alia, the Schweizerischen Ärztezeitung (Swiss medical journal). In another case he had to file two appeals at the Swiss Federal Supreme Court against arbitrary decisions made by the Administrative Court of the Canton of Bern, before reaching his goal.

The first ever wrongful life claim in Switzerland (a legal action on behalf of a child born severely disabled), filed by Rolf P. Steinegger at the High Court of the Canton of Bern in 2008, caused sensation.

In 2009 a police organisation charged two of its staff members with criminal proceedings. Steinegger managed to have prosecution withdrawn in both cases with an agreement to cover costs.

In 2010, in a foreign divorce action, Steinegger succeeded in obtaining a freezing order in respect of the husband's Swiss assets, amounting to millions.

In 2011 the result of a comparison of law in a foreign case revealed that also in Switzerland the child maintenance contributions of fathers with extremely high incomes and assets stay relatively modest. Steinegger Rechtsanwälte requested a leading Professor of Law to prepare a legal opinion.

## Military Biography

1969 – 1974	Adjutant HOW Sec 7 / F Div 3
1975 – 1982	Adjutant Art Rgt 3 / F Div 3
1982 – 1989	Adjutant F Div 3, from 1985 1st Adjutant
1990 – 2003	Adjutant to the Chief of General Staff of the Swiss Army Colonel of the Artillery
2006 – 2011	Personal Adjutant Div Jean-François Corminboeuf, CC Ter Reg 1