



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2024

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## Last HAI HELI-EXPO Breaks Attendance Record

*Vertical aviation trade show will rebrand as VERTICON for 2025.*

Anaheim, Calif. (Mar. 01, 2024) – The world’s largest vertical aviation trade show and conference concluded with great news for the industry. Record attendance, business deals, and a new brand for the show’s producer marked this year’s HAI HELI-EXPO®, the 35th year the show has been held under that name.

HAI HELI-EXPO 2024 brought 15,000 professionals from 87 countries to the four-day show. They visited 625 exhibitors and got up close with 63 aircraft and the latest technology, products, and services for vertical aviation businesses. The event also saw the announcement that the show’s producer, Helicopter Association International (HAI), was rebranding as Vertical Aviation International (VAI).

“Both our attendees and exhibitors reported experiencing an outstanding show in Anaheim. Every exhibiting company I spoke with reported high-quality traffic, and our attendees took advantage of the hundred-plus networking and education opportunities,” says James Viola, VAI president and CEO. “It seems that our industry is expanding in every way—you could feel the excitement and optimism on the show floor.”

### The Expanded Vertical Aviation Industry

On Feb. 26, the show’s opening night, the new identity of VAI took the spotlight.

“We chose to announce our rebranding at the show because, each year, it becomes the center of the vertical aviation universe,” says Nicole Battjes, chair of the VAI Board of Directors. “Our theme for the 2024 show, Building Tomorrow, perfectly aligned with our reasons for rebranding.”

As part of the rebrand, the association’s annual conference and trade show has been renamed VERTICON, marking this year’s show as the last HAI HELI-EXPO. VAI leadership assured attendees that VERTICON 2025, to be held in Dallas, Texas, will offer vertical aviation professionals the highest quality opportunities to learn, grow their career or business, network with thousands of colleagues from all over the world, address industry issues, and see the latest technology, products, and aircraft on the show floor.

### Vertical Aviation International

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### **Leading the Industry's Environmental Stewardship Efforts**

VAI took the opportunity to promote greater use of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) by providing it to all aircraft flying into this year's show.

"Vertical aviation must do our part to reduce our carbon footprint by incorporating SAF. We want to thank Hangar 21, HeliStream Inc., Fullerton Municipal Airport, World Energy, and Titan Aviation Fuels who were instrumental in bringing SAF to HAI HELI-EXPO," Viola says.

### **Addressing Industry Challenges**

The show included 125 educational and training courses ranging from automation to aerial firefighting that attracted participation of more than 4,180 attendees. VAI's annual Rotor Safety Zone featured presentations, demonstrations, and access to the regulators overseeing aviation safety.

Recognizing vertical aviation's workforce shortage, VAI offered numerous opportunities for pilots, aviation mechanics and engineers, and other industry professionals to connect with employers through its Industry Career Fair and Mil2Civ Workshop, a program to assist military members transitioning into the civil aviation sector.

### **A Great Success**

"Overall, the last HAI HELI-EXPO was a resounding success! Our attendees were able to see the latest and greatest equipment and connect with one another to grow their businesses and their careers," Viola says.

Next year's show, VERTICON 2025, will take place in Dallas from Mar. 10 through Mar. 13, with exhibits open Mar. 11 through Mar. 13.

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### **About Vertical Aviation International (VAI):**

Vertical Aviation International (VAI) is the world's leading membership association dedicated to the vertical aviation industry, which encompasses all aircraft capable of vertical or short takeoff and landing. By fueling industry growth through connection, advocacy, safety, education, and support for its members' success, VAI strives to leverage the power of vertical flight to strengthen communities worldwide. The association welcomes all facets of the vertical aviation industry, including manufacturers, operators, suppliers and vendors, pilots and maintenance technicians, and other aviation professionals. For more information about VAI, please visit [rotor.org/newbrand](http://rotor.org/newbrand).

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