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El Aero Services Selects Baldwin Safety and Compliance as Inaugural Customer in HAI's SMS Program

Alexandria, Virginia (January 27, 2022) – Helicopter Association International (HAI) is pleased to announce that [El Aero Services](#), a northern Nevada–based helicopter operator, is the first member to join [HAI's SMS Program](#). Last fall, HAI introduced the safety management system (SMS) program as an affordable, scalable system for small rotorcraft businesses that desire assistance with incorporating SMS into their business.

“We were very interested when HAI announced they had sponsored the creation of these new SMS programs,” says Jairus Duncan, director of operations at El Aero Services. “We’d been looking at options for upgrading our dated SMS program to something that was based more in the digital world, with easy access to report generation of received data and simpler for pilots to utilize, with the bonus of being compliant with new government contracting requirements.”

Open solely to HAI operator members in good standing, the HAI SMS Program was the direct result of an HAI membership survey in which a significant number of respondents requested turnkey SMS support programs, including ways to make an SMS easier to implement and track. In response, HAI partnered with three industry-leading SMS software providers to offer a range of products to best meet the requirements of interested customers.

“While researching the various options, we were able to meet with a representative from Baldwin Safety & Compliance—Jordan Mallory—in person during the HAI [Aerial Firefighting Safety Conference] in Boise, Idaho, [in November 2021],” says Duncan. “Most of our management team attended that meeting, and we decided to select Baldwin as our new SMS partner. We fully implemented the system on Jan. 1, 2022, and are currently in the process of customizing the various elements of the program to match our operations and needs perfectly.”

“We’re delighted to have been selected by El Aero to support their safety management system,” says Jason Starke, director of safety for Baldwin. “We’re passionate about supporting organizations in the rotor-wing community and providing a fully scalable software tool to help these companies implement and maintain a robust SMS. We’re so proud to be partnered with HAI in helping establish safety management as a norm across this industry.”

El Aero Services has been in business in northern Nevada for over 50 years and currently operates two Bell 206L-4 aircraft, one Bell 206B-3, and three fixed-wing aircraft. With bases in Elko and Carson City, the

company regularly offers services to all of Nevada and five other Western states and occasionally into the Midwest.

“Our company is heavily involved in support of the [National] Wild Horse and Burro Program in Nevada, Arizona, Utah, and Oregon, performing bison gathers for state and national parks, and every facet of ACETA [Aerial Capture, Eradication, and Tagging of Animals] work,” adds Duncan. “We provide fire support to BLM, USFS, and Cal Fire in the summer and perform restorative burn seeding in the winter months. We also conduct search-and-rescue and tactical flight operations for the Elko County Sheriff’s Office and surrounding agencies.”

“One of the most exciting elements of the HAI SMS Program is how quickly and efficiently it helps improve safety across operations,” says James Viola, president and CEO of HAI. “We are truly grateful to our partner providers for enabling us to offer this tremendous program.

“Our members asked for assistance with SMS programs,” Viola continues. “We are pleased to offer this solution, which has the versatility to meet the needs of nearly every operator that currently does not have their own program. Our program also offers flexibility, allowing our members to consider each vendor and select the one that aligns best with their needs. This is affordable SMS for all of us!”

The three software providers HAI chose for the HAI SMS Program are:

- Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) of Washington, D.C. ACSF provides a full range of SMS software options.
- Baldwin Safety & Compliance of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Baldwin provides the Baldwin SMS Product Suite, which offers a menu of options available for small, medium-sized, and large businesses.
- WYVERN Ltd. of Nashua, New Hampshire. WYVERN offers its SMS Software and 24/7/365 Support Services package, with affordable options for small operators and other choices with premium SMS software capabilities.

Both Baldwin and WYVERN offer aviation safety action program (ASAP) reporting modules on their servers for companies participating in ACSF’s third-party-managed ASAP program. ACSF can then access the ASAP reports and conduct Event Review Committee (ERC) meetings with the participating company and the FAA. ASAP is a voluntary, self-reporting program that identifies and reduces possible flight safety concerns and mitigates risk.

The National Transportation Safety Board has long advocated for mandating SMS programs in all revenue passenger-carrying flight operations, including the recommendation in its annual NTSB Most Wanted List. The HAI SMS Program would meet the requirements outlined in the NTSB proposal and is equally available to member companies that do not carry passengers for hire.

“Finally, the other element our program offers is the amount of money our new software-provider partners will save our members,” adds Viola. “Signing up for the program through one of these providers should save most of our members more money than the cost of their HAI membership. I cannot imagine any HAI member not being interested in improving their safety program while saving money at the same time.”

Each package offered through the HAI SMS Program allows users to verify their compliance with current and future international and domestic regulations. While the FAA doesn’t currently require SMS programs for all operators, HAI and the NTSB have recommended that helicopter operators develop and adopt a safety reporting system that allows data collection, analysis, and corrective action where necessary. “Each of these programs provides that system for operators,” says Chris Hill, HAI’s director of safety. “They’re responsive and can be adapted as a company continues to grow.”

HAI SMS PROGRAM

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The HAI SMS Program packages also offer training, self-auditing capabilities, gap analysis, reporting capabilities, and user support services. “We could not be more pleased with the submissions we received and with those providers we chose to use,” notes Viola. “We believe our members will appreciate the versatility, and especially the value, these SMS programs offer. We believe our partners have made it so easy and affordable that it will be hard for an operator to justify not implementing an SMS program.”

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HAI is the professional trade association for the international helicopter industry and represents more than 1,100 companies and over 16,000 industry professionals in more than 65 countries. Each year, HAI members safely operate more than 3,700 helicopters and remotely piloted aircraft approximately 2.9 million hours. HAI is dedicated to the promotion of the helicopter as a safe, effective method of commerce and to the advancement of the international helicopter community.