



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Vertical Aviation International Launches a New Era in Vertical Flight Helicopter Association International Rebrands**

*Anaheim, Calif. Feb. 26, 2024* – In response to the needs of the rapidly expanding vertical aviation industry, Vertical Aviation International (VAI) is the new identity and name for Helicopter Association International (HAI).

As the trade association representing the global vertical aviation industry, VAI is open to all manufacturers, operators, suppliers and vendors, pilots and maintenance technicians, and aviation professionals who serve or support aircraft capable of vertical or short takeoff and landing.

“VAI is the world’s preeminent membership association for the entire vertical aviation industry, dedicated to leading the evolution and expansion of vertical flight,” says Nicole Battjes, 2023–24 chair of the VAI Board of Directors. “By focusing on what unites us—the unique capabilities of all vertical flight aircraft—we will leverage our ability to protect access to airspace, elevate safety, and ensure communities around the world are strengthened by the power of vertical flight.”

By widening its focus to encompass all vertical aviation, the association will expand its advocacy with legislators and regulators and provide a forum where all sectors of vertical flight can collaborate on shared challenges, such as vertical aviation infrastructure, certification of new technology, and the safe integration of that technology into the airspace.

“Vertical aviation is an essential part of modern life, providing communities with security, connection, and prosperity. Our aircraft fly places others cannot go and accomplish missions that others cannot do,” says James Viola, VAI president and CEO. “VAI’s purpose is to fuel the growth of the vertical aviation industry by providing connection, advocacy, safety, education, and support for our members’ success.”

The decision to rebrand stems from the rapid expansion and technological evolution occurring in the vertical aviation industry. In addition to a new logo, VAI has renamed its annual conference and trade show: VERTICON. The first edition of that show will welcome thousands of vertical aviation professionals from 90-plus countries to Dallas in March 2025.

The association is in the process of building a new website, [verticalavi.org](http://verticalavi.org), which will be launched in late summer 2024. In the meantime, visitors can use either the new web address or the current one, [rotor.org](http://rotor.org), to access information about VAI.

#### **Vertical Aviation International**

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HAI began as the California-based Helicopter Council in 1948, supporting six companies operating in what was then a brand-new industry. The association has evolved several times throughout the past 75 years to support the global helicopter industry.

“We rebranded to grow our membership, so it represents the expanding vertical aviation fleet,” says Battjes. “The helicopters that provide so many essential services, including search and rescue, firefighting, and air ambulance, are not going away. No other aircraft can do what a helicopter does, and we are proud to represent them. Our goal is to enable new vertical flight aircraft to find their essential missions as well.”

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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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