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FAA Western-Pacific Region Hosts Annual Airports Conference

Summary of Facts

VAI and several other aviation industry groups will attend the [FAA Western-Pacific Region Airports Conference](#), Jun. 11–13, in Torrance, California. At the event, whose theme is “Celebrating Airports: America’s Gateway to the World,” VAI will make a

presentation on Jun. 11 in a session on industry stakeholder reports. Other participants will include general aviation associations such as the National Business Aviation Association, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the Association of California Airports, and more. FAA officials, state directors of aeronautics, and airport directors will also attend the conference.

The event will feature several technical workshops, including those offering updates on environmental law, Airport Improvement Program grants, airport safety and operations, vertiport design, community engagement for advanced air mobility (AAM), and electrical charging and hydrogen fueling at airports.

The FAA's Western-Pacific Regional Airports Division encompasses California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Marshall Islands, and the Mariana Islands.

VAI Position and Actions

VAI is excited to attend this event, where we will discuss with airport and transportation authorities the unique infrastructure challenges of the rotorcraft industry in the Western Pacific region. Our industry session will provide a high-level overview of challenges and advancements in workforce development, infrastructure, AAM, air tour management plans, sustainability, and other vertical aviation topics.

If you plan to attend the conference and would like to connect with VAI staff, please reach out to katiav@verticalavi.org.

News from the Northeastern United States

By Josh Rousseau, VAI Northeastern US Regional Representative

May was exceptionally busy for VAI's Government Affairs team. At the beginning of the month, I joined colleagues, government leaders, and elected officials at Albany International Airport (KALB) for Beta Technologies' fly-in with the company's all-electric ALIA aircraft.

Beta is expanding its presence in New York state, enhancing facilities in Plattsburgh and creating jobs through a certified technician training program at the local technical school. Beta has already installed three multimodal electric aircraft chargers across the state,

with four more planned by year's end. The company's electric aircraft has reached significant milestones, including flying through New York City's busy airspace and completing a record 386-mile flight across New York.

A week later, I addressed a meeting of the Eastern Region Helicopter Council in New Jersey, where I discussed the impact on New York City's West 30th Street Heliport of infrastructure projects under the region's Gateway Program. I highlighted concerns from legislators and advocates about the heliport's viability. Our ongoing efforts aim to mitigate the facility's operational impacts and preserve the heliport for future use.

Recently, legislation was introduced in the New York State Legislature to permanently close the West 30th Street Heliport. VAI believes this is one of the most serious threats to the facility in over 20 years. Closing the region's only 24/7 heliport with refueling capabilities would result in significant economic loss and increased local congestion, compromise health-care transportation, and jeopardize the introduction of new, greener vertical aircraft.

VAI's advocacy plan urged members to oppose this legislation, resulting in over 96,000 emails sent to legislators. Thanks to our collective efforts and collaboration with aviation organizations and others, before it passed both houses Jun. 7 [the bill was amended to preserve the West 30th Street Heliport](#) pending future processes. The facility has been saved and will remain operational for the foreseeable future.

As we await the certification of new advanced and greener vertical aviation aircraft, it is crucial to invest in our infrastructure rather than dismantle it. There is still much work to be done, but this example highlights VAI's ability to mobilize and protect our members and industry from harmful initiatives.

Thank you all for your engagement and support. I will provide more updates soon. In the meantime, keep powering up!

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