

## HAI US News

### HAI Testifies at NYC Heliport Oversight Hearing



Earlier this week, Katia Veraza, HAI manager of government affairs and regional relations, testified before the New York City Council's Committees on Economic Development and State & Federal Legislation. The hearing was focused on oversight of the two city-owned, public-use heliports—the Downtown Manhattan Heliport and the East 34th Street Heliport.

Veraza explained how Manhattan's heliports are a critical component of New York's transportation network and support the operation of the city's businesses and the growth of the economy. She explained the broad range of helicopter operations conducted in the city and how they play an essential role in saving lives and protecting the community.

Speaking about innovative technological advancements, Veraza informed the council members of opportunities that advanced air mobility (AAM) and electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft would bring to New York. On the issue of community compatibility, Veraza touted HAI's Fly Neighborly program and expressed HAI's continued commitment to forging positive relationships between operators and communities.

Council members present at the hearing were primarily focused on helicopter noise complaints. During the hearing, council members promoted various bills and resolutions that would ban all "nonessential" helicopter operations and effectively shut down the two heliports. Two witnesses representing the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) provided council members with an overview of the data collected from the city's noise complaint system.

NYCEDC argued that the data showed that most helicopter noise complaints could be attributed to air tour operations originating out of state. In response, council members explained they were working with officials in New Jersey to severely restrict those and other helicopter operations.

While the hearing was highly contentious, HAI was pleased to be the only representative of the vertical flight industry to participate. The HAI Government Affairs team will continue to engage legislators and policymakers in New York and New Jersey to defend the industry and improve relationships with communities.

## Congressional Update

As Congress approaches the government funding deadline, its members are trying to establish a bipartisan deal to fund the federal government for fiscal year 2023. While top negotiators have begun exchanging quotes for a potential omnibus funding deal, Congress remains uncertain whether it will be able to pass the bill by Dec. 16. Therefore, lawmakers have two weeks to pass legislation to keep the government running or risk a shutdown.

Negotiators have said Congress will most likely pass a continuing resolution that would push the deadline to Dec. 23. As these negotiations continue, the HAI Government Affairs team will continue to advocate for policies and funding priorities that advance the vertical flight industry while also working to prevent any potentially harmful policy riders that could be attached at the last minute to the massive spending measure.

## Voluntary Agreement Extension

The FAA and National Park Service (NPS) recently announced the reopening of the public comment period for an additional 30 days on the proposed voluntary agreement for Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument.

We need your help submitting public comments on NPS plans for the two national monuments. Public comments are once again being accepted during a 30-day period that started on Dec. 1 and will end on Jan. 1.

Since advocacy groups opposed to air tours requested the extension and are currently submitting further comments to stop this voluntary agreement, HAI strongly encourages tour operators to submit their own comments. To assist in this effort, HAI has created a template to help simplify the comment-submission process. You can submit an HAI-endorsed prewritten comment directly to NPS in three simple steps:

1. Submit your comments to NPS on the voluntary agreement [here](#).
2. Enter your contact information.
3. Submit the comments.

Thank you for assisting with this important advocacy effort, and please encourage others to submit comments too. Comments previously submitted need not be resubmitted.

## The FAA's eVTOL Plans

HAI's Government Affairs team attended the Nov. 17 Aero Club Luncheon, where Acting FAA Administrator Billy Nolen discussed the administration's plans to implement air taxis by May 2023. In his speech, Nolen stated that many advanced air mobility companies would be certified and in high demand by the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

"We know that when the Los Angeles Olympics get underway in 2028, air taxis will be in high demand," Nolen said. "We may see some of them in the years leading up [to the Olympics], but nowhere near the scale of 2028. All the advanced air mobility companies will expect to be there."

Acting Administrator Nolen's speech can be viewed [here](#).

## Sen. Risch Virtually Attends HAI Aerial Work Safety Conference



This past November, HAI hosted its annual Aerial Work Safety Conference in Boise, Idaho. There, safety presentations were featured by both industry and government professionals from the FAA, the US Army, the Department of the Interior, and other leading organizations and companies.

During the conference, HAI was thrilled to have Sen. James E. Risch (R-Idaho) virtually address the operators in attendance. As a member of the Senate's Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Sen. Risch appreciates the essential role of helicopters in aerial firefighting, power-line construction, pipeline construction, and material and equipment transport and placement. Since his election to the Senate in 2009, Sen. Risch has been an ardent supporter of the industry. He has increased federal resources and implemented policies that support our operations.

In his speech to conference attendees, Sen. Risch expressed his sincere appreciation to each operator and recognized the pilots and aircrews who willingly operate in dangerous environments for the welfare of others. We thank him for his kind words and look forward to continuing our work with him.

## HAI International News

### EASA Proposes New HEMS Regulatory Requirements

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has published a final proposal to renovate the European Union's aviation regulatory framework on helicopter emergency medical services (HEMS). This proposal will improve safety and further efficiency while keeping the economic impact on HEMS operators to a minimum. These regulations are mostly aimed at HEMS flights operating in challenging landscapes, sites with low visibility, or in hospitals with old infrastructure.

Pilots flying to and out of outdated hospitals will be required to fly with a night vision imaging system (NVIS). Pilots already flying with NVIS will get upgraded night-vision goggles. Further requirements include preflight risk assessments, pilot training for night operations, and moving maps for obstacle awareness. Single pilots will have to be equipped with an autopilot system for night flights.

Regarding high-altitude operations, this new proposal will make it easier for pilots to have oxygen on board. It will also allow single-engine helicopters to support twin-engine rotorcraft during the day. Lastly, the proposal will extend HEMS to nonmedical emergencies for mountain operations. This is because at the time of dispatch for mountain rescues, it can be unclear whether medical assistance will be needed.

As one of the leading global voices in helicopter safety, HAI supports and applauds EASA's new regulatory framework on HEMS.

## Large-Scale European Drone Strategy

This week, the European Commission (EC) adopted a drone strategy that will further the development of the European drone market. As of today, the European Union's drone safety framework is the most advanced in the world. According to the EC, drones currently survey infrastructure, monitor oil spills, and sample soil.

The new strategy will instruct Europe on how to conduct large-scale commercial drone operations. The new mobility solutions proposed by this strategy will help improve the usage of drones for medical deliveries as well as help implement the "U-space" to manage drone traffic safely.

To ensure community compatibility and acceptance, the strategy calls for national, regional, and local municipalities to ensure that drone services are aligned with citizens' needs, including those regarding noise, safety, and privacy.

The strategy also envisions innovative air mobility services, such as air taxis, to become part of European life by 2030. For this to occur, the European Union (EU) must properly identify critical technology building blocks, such as artificial intelligence, robotics, semi-conductors and EU space services, and mobile telecommunications. This will help the EU build an innovative and competitive drone sector.

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