



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 4, 2025

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PRESS RELEASE

VAI Announces 2025–26 Board Leadership

Board chair, officers bring decades of industry experience.

Alexandria, VA, USA (Apr 4, 2025) – The Board of Directors for Vertical Aviation International (VAI) proudly announces their newly elected leadership team, who will assume their roles Jul. 1, 2025.

The officers were elected by their peers on the VAI Board of Directors and will serve one-year terms as the association's Executive Committee.

2025–26 Executive Committee

- **Rick Kenin – Chairman.** Rick Kenin currently serves as COO of Boston MedFlight, a nonprofit emergency and critical-care medical transport organization. With over 20 years of aviation experience in both the US Coast Guard and civilian sectors, Kenin has built a career focused on safety, operational excellence, and public service.
- **Brian Jorgenson – Vice Chairman.** Brian Jorgenson is the director of operations and co-owner of Timberline Helicopters. Since founding the company in 2004 with a single Kaman K-Max, he and wife Ammy have grown Timberline into a prominent utility operator with a diverse fleet that includes MD 500s and Sikorsky UH-60 Black Hawks. With more than 19,000 flight hours, Jorgenson brings deep operational and business expertise to the board.
- **Paul Gottwig – Treasurer.** Paul Gottwig was the senior pilot – fire services with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, where he oversaw pilot training and emergency operations for firefighting, search and rescue, and air ambulance missions. A retired US Army aviator and former corporate helicopter captain, Gottwig has decades of experience in both military and civilian aviation operations.
- **David McColl – Vice Treasurer.** David McColl is with LiveWire Aviation, Homosassa, Florida, USA, specializing in aerial powerline construction, maintenance, and emergency response. His aviation journey began at Bristow Academy in Florida. McColl brings a safety-first perspective shaped by years of real-world utility aviation operations.

“These board officers represent the best of vertical aviation—leadership, vision, and a deep commitment to safety and innovation,” says Mark Schlaefli, outgoing board chair and owner of Dakota Rotors. “Just as important, they are dedicated to advancing VAI’s strategic vision. The board plays a critical role in guiding the long-term direction of the association, and under this new leadership, I am confident we’ll continue to make

Vertical Aviation International

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meaningful progress toward our strategic goals and the continued strength of vertical aviation.”

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Vertical Aviation International (VAI), formerly Helicopter Association International (HAI), 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. Throughout its 76 years of fueling industry growth through connection, advocacy, safety, education, and support for its members’ success, VAI has leveraged 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: <https://verticalavi.org/>

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