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HAI, New Orleans, Industry Gearing Up for HAI HELI-EXPO 2021

Alexandria, Va. (August 20, 2020) – HAI HELI-EXPO 2021 in New Orleans is still about seven months away, but that doesn't mean that preparations for the world's largest civil helicopter show and exhibition are lagging.

The first stage of the show floor lottery closed in July, and over 300 companies — including most of the major OEMs — have already booked more than two-thirds of the available show floor. Housing for the show just opened this week, and over 10,000 room nights were secured the first day. Some hotels have already sold out.

"We fully expect to be able to hold HAI HELI-EXPO 2021 in New Orleans," says James Viola, HAI president and CEO. "Our early numbers tell me there is an entire industry that is eager to come out of quarantine and get together to do business.

"We know people are concerned," says Viola. "It's our job to manage the risk for attendees and exhibitors and ensure their safety during their visit with us, just as our members do for their customers."

New Orleans' Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, the site of HAI HELI-EXPO 2021, has already been preparing to host in-person meetings safely. It recently became one of the first event sites to be accredited under the Global BioRisk Advisory Council (GBAC) STAR Program as meeting the industry's highest standards for cleaning and disinfection of infectious agents. "This means that cleaning is an ongoing priority for the convention center management, and their staff has been trained and equipped to do the job properly," says Viola. "The HAI staff is also working with convention center staff to add additional cleaning time between sessions."

HAI staff and New Orleans and Company, the city's tourism bureau, recently led a site visit for exhibitors, touring both in person and virtually the convention center, hotels in the housing bloc, and potential event spaces. The HAI Operations Department surveyed the convention center landing zone and then flew the route from the staging area, New Orleans Lakefront Airport, to the landing zone.

Over 50 helicopters and more than 600 companies routinely fill the show floor at HAI HELI-EXPO®. Additionally, there are over 100 industry meetings of all kinds: technical briefings, professional education classes, safety education sessions, forums, and workshops. "From networking to training, from gumbo to beignets, there will be something at this show for everyone," says Viola.

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HAI HELI-EXPO

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"We're expecting great things from New Orleans," he says. "This is an area that knows and loves us: helicopters are important to their economy, and they haven't forgotten that helicopters saved hundreds of lives following Hurricane Katrina. They like hearing the rotors turn down there, and we'll bring one of the largest fleets into the city since then."

The dates for HAI HELI-EXPO 2021 are March 22–25, with the exhibit floor open to attendees March 23–25. The show kicks off at the welcome reception on the evening of March 22, which will be held aboard the *Riverboat Louis Armstrong*. Attendee registration for HAI HELI-EXPO 2021 opens on October 27, 2020 at <https://www.rotor.org/home/heli-expo>.

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HAI is the professional trade association for the international helicopter industry. HAI members represent more than 3,000 aviation businesses and individuals who safely operate more than 4,500 helicopters approximately 2.3 million hours each year in more than 73 nations. 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.

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