



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Voluntary Rotorcraft Safety Initiative Launched by a Widespread Coalition of Operators, Manufacturers, Regulatory Agencies and Industry Associations

The Helicopter Association International (HAI) and the American Helicopter Society (AHS) announce the formation of the International Helicopter Safety Team (IHST). This organization is an outgrowth of the highly successful AHS International Helicopter Safety Symposium which was held in late September 2005. Close to 260 attendees at the symposium agreed that now was the time to do something about the unacceptable civil and military worldwide helicopter accident rate.

Together operators (both civil and military), manufacturers, and government regulatory agencies have agreed to launch a cooperative voluntary effort to reduce the accident rate by 80 percent within the next decade. This initiative is modeled after the highly-successful Civil Aviation Safety Team (CAST) which has produced startling results in reducing the accident rate for scheduled air carriers. The IHST challenge will be based on a careful analysis of the leading causes of accidents and an assessment of appropriate, cost-effective "interventions" to mitigate the accident rate.

The IHST Executive Committee, who will lead this effort include: Matthew S. Zuccaro, President, HAI as Co-Chair; Dave Downey, Manager, FAA Rotorcraft Directorate as Co-Chair; and members Somen Chowdhury, Manager, International Research, Bell Helicopter Textron Canada; Bob Sheffield, Managing Director, Shell Aircraft Ltd.; and Bill Taylor, Engineer, Transport Canada. M. E. Rhett Flater from AHS is the Secretariat for the newly-formed group.

HAI's upcoming Heli-Expo will feature several IHST meetings and the press are invited and encouraged to attend all of these events. The IHST process is meant to be all-inclusive and open to all participants.

- Friday, February 24th, 1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Hilton Anatole (formerly the Wyndham Anatole), Ming Room, IHST Executive meeting
- Sunday, February 26th, 10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., Dallas Convention Center, D164, IHST press conference following HAI scheduled press conference
- Tuesday, February 28th, 9:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m., Dallas Convention Center, Room C4, IHST Public Forum

These meetings will help further define those individuals and organizations that will participate in the IHST initiative, as well as clarify the process to be used to reach its goal. A preliminary membership roster includes: AgustaWestland; Bell Helicopter Textron; The Boeing Co.; Eurocopter; GE Aircraft Engines; Honeywell; Rolls Royce; Sikorsky Aircraft Corp.; Turbomeca; Association of Air Medical Services; European Helicopter Association; Professional Helicopter Pilots Association of California; Tour Operators Program of Safety; Helicopter Safety Advisory Council; EASA; FAA; NASA; Transport Canada; the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Command; the U.S. Naval Safety Center as well as the U.S. Dept. of Transportation.

For more information visit the IHST web site at ihst.org.