

PRESS RELEASE

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HELICOPTER INDUSTRY CEO'S ENDORSE IHST SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS AT HELI-EXPO

Alexandria, VA. On Sunday, February 21, 2010, the Chief Executive Officers of AgustaWestland, Bell Helicopter Textron, Eurocopter and Sikorsky Aircraft signed a joint letter captioned "A Call for Action by Helicopter Owners" during Heli-Expo in Houston, Texas. Acknowledging that recent media campaigns have focused the public's attention on helicopter safety generating a negative perception of the helicopter industry, the CEOs urged helicopter owners and operators to embrace the safety enhancements recommended by the International Helicopter Safety Team. Signing the letter were Giuseppe Orsi (AgustaWestland), John Garrison (Bell Helicopter Textron), Dr. Lutz Bertling (Eurocopter) and Jeffrey Pino (Sikorsky Aircraft).

Specifically, the CEOs urged the helicopter community to focus on four areas of concentration identified by the IHST, including adoption of Safety Management Systems (SMS), improved training, use of advanced systems and equipment such as Flight Data Monitoring Systems, Health Monitoring Systems, and use of mission specific equipment such as night vision goggles for night flying and avionics to avoid controlled flight into terrain. In addition, the CEOs urged strict compliance with the manufacturer's respective maintenance programs.

To assist small, medium and large operators, the IHST has posted toolkits on SMS, Training, and Flight Data Monitoring at its website at www.ihst.org.

The IHST is an international effort created in 2006, modeled after the Civil Aviation Safety Team or CAST, to reduce helicopter accidents by 80 percent by 2016. Participating in the effort are major helicopter associations, such as AHS International, Helicopter Association International, the Canadian Helicopter Association, and the European Helicopter Association, government agencies such as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transport Canada, and the European Aviation Safety Association (EASA), and major airframe, engines and systems manufacturers who make up the worldwide helicopter industrial base. For further information on the IHST, see www.ihst.org or contact Mark Liptak, FAA, Program Director (email markliptak@faa.org), Sue Garner, FAA, Incoming Program Director (email Sue.Gardner@faa.gov) or M.E. Rhett Flater, IHST Secretariat (rflater@vtol.org).