

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**David Fox Named Recipient of HAI's Salute to Excellence Award for
Maintenance Excellence**

Alexandria, Virginia (March 8, 2021) – Helicopter Association International (HAI) is pleased to announce life-long maintenance professional David Fox is the 2021 recipient of the association's Maintenance Excellence Award. The award, sponsored by Rolls-Royce, recognizes an individual for long-standing excellence in rotorcraft maintenance, maintenance instruction or supervision, or a single significant contribution to rotorcraft maintenance.

David has been around aircraft since he was old enough to toddle. Some of his most cherished memories are accompanying his mechanic father to the airport. His father was his inspiration as they built kit airplanes together and performed maintenance work on Bell 47s.

As a teen in 1970, David landed his first paying aviation job as a mechanic's helper working on Bell 47 helicopters. Three years later, he joined the US Army and worked as a crew chief, maintaining OH-58, UH-1, and AH-1G helicopters while serving a tour in Korea.

When he returned from Korea, David relied on his on-the-job training and self-study to achieve his airframe and power plant certificates. Not long after, he earned his private and commercial helicopter certificates.

In 1980, he and a friend founded Helitrans Co. Inc., a Part 135 operator and Part 145 repair station supporting the oil and gas industry off the Gulf Coast of Texas. He served as both the director of maintenance and chief inspector, having received his inspection authorization from the FAA.

For 20 years, Helitrans operated with a perfect safety record. The company did not have any accidents, incidents, violations, or forced landings.

“My proudest accomplishment is Helitrans's record,” David says. “Having good people working for you and maintaining and operating the aircraft properly to manufacturer recommendations are to credit for that. I was very serious about following the rules and not cutting corners. Money is not everything. Sometimes people lose sight of that.”

David sold Helitrans in 2000. He enjoyed semiretirement, doing a little maintenance and consulting work, before Bell invited him to be a ground school and simulator instructor at the Customer Training Academy for its light helicopters in 2001. For that position, he earned his certified flight instructor rating.

MAINTENANCE EXCELLENCE AWARD

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David became a fixture at Bell, not just at the training center, but also within the accident investigation and legal departments. He was also the go-to expert for Bell owners and operators around the world on all things related to their aircraft's operation, performance, and maintenance. He taught every system on the aircraft, sharing his stories and anecdotes to help solidify student knowledge while engaging them to learn. He also taught the simulator portion of students' aircraft transition training. He developed an astronomical list of connections and still gets calls from people around the world when they're stuck on a maintenance challenge.

While at Bell, David was instrumental in developing the Bell 407GX and GXi initial pilot transition courses as well as leading and standardizing pilot instruction for light helicopters.

David retired from Bell in 2020 and now works part time for the Helicopter Institute in Ft. Worth, Texas, providing pilot training. He also still moonlights as a mechanic, providing maintenance services for select clients.

HAI recognized previous recipients of the Salute to Excellence Awards through events at HAI HELI-EXPO[®], the association's annual trade show. Because of the pandemic, HAI is acknowledging the achievements of this year's recipients through a variety of virtual events, including a series of webinars relevant to the subject of each award. Each individual recipient or team will also receive a trophy and publicity surrounding their work.

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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.