

“Legal Lift”

Who Ya Gonna Call?

By Sarah MacLeod, Managing Member, Obadal, Filler, MacLeod & Klein, P.L.C.

Smart operators seek advice before it is needed. When it comes to seeking professional advice, particularly from those in the legal profession, it behooves one to gather the facts and use them to research individuals and their law practices for the expertise needed.

Getting the right help from others means bolstering your own knowledge first.

To aid in that search, your trade association has developed a Legal Resource page for members to educate themselves, and to research potential legal advisors. The site contains:

- ✓ The public laws that drive regulatory changes—to keep up on what federal lawmakers are doing, follow HAI’s legislative activities. When your interest is peaked, or the law has passed, and you want to read its language, the Legal Resource page points you to legislation, past, pending, and passed. (PROVIDE LINK TO CONGRESS.GOV and <https://uscode.house.gov/>)
- ✓ Code of Federal Regulation references—while anyone in aviation should have [14 CFR](#) bookmarked, there are other titles that impact aviation. It is easy enough to find the rules, it is harder to disseminate them. (PROVIDE LINK TO ECFRs)
- ✓ Downloadable research guide for everyday use in aviation.
- ✓ A Legal Directory—after conducting a bit of research on your own, this resource allows you to search for a legal advisor based upon the types of issues or laws involved. The individuals and firms are members of the association, have certified that the information provided is true, and like all members, have agreed to follow the code of conduct. That should not, however, be the end of your query.

The Legal Directory enables you to search by types of issues, name, state, and other useful parameters. It also encourages references to other legal advisors or professionals that should be known to association members. As the directory grows, so will the association’s ability to provide members more legal and professional resources.

When hiring a legal advisor, take the time to interview more than one person or firm to ensure the individual is familiar with and able to provide the attention needed to resolve an issue or to give *legal* advice on how to proceed (or not). Be prepared to prove *the facts* or to answer a lot of questions. In fact, the legal advisor should be asking probing questions to ensure the “story” is factually discernible so the proper information can be given. A legal advisor needs to be trusted and should not hesitate to point to another person or profession more able to assist after an initial conversation.

Finally, remember that you are seeking advice. A legal professional cannot dictate, and should not even judge, your eventual choices. The actions taken, or that need to be taken, are up to you. Legal advisors should be providing sound *counsel* based upon provable facts and your situation and circumstances.

While most people place the legal profession low in priority, it is best to seek advice before taking action than after...but in either event, HAI is providing you someone to call.

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