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**Andrew Edgerton Receives HAI's Salute to Excellence
Law Enforcement Award**

Alexandria, Virginia (Jan. 10, 2024) – Helicopter Association International (HAI) is pleased to announce that Fairfax County (Virginia) Police Helicopter Division Chief Pilot Andrew Edgerton is the recipient of the 2024 Salute to Excellence Law Enforcement Award. This award, sponsored by MD Helicopters, recognizes an individual or organization that has contributed to the promotion and advancement of rotorcraft in support of law enforcement activities. It will be presented Feb. 26, 2024 at HAI HELI-EXPO 2024 in Anaheim, California.

Edgerton fell in love with aviation at an early age, spending hours flying airplanes with his dad. Originally, he hoped to be a naval aviator, until he learned during his high school years that he had less than perfect eyesight. He continued to fly nonetheless, earning his single-engine land and sea airplane ratings in his early 20s before switching to helicopters.

Working at a desk job in the telecom industry, Edgerton built his helicopter ratings to include commercial, instrument, flight instructor, and instrument instructor ratings. He began teaching flight instruction in helicopters in 2006, teaching on weekends and evenings until he landed a full-time news helicopter job.

In 2010, Edgerton joined Virginia's Fairfax County Police Helicopter Division as a civilian line pilot flying the agency's Bell 407. He was a part of the unit in 2011 when it became the first law enforcement agency and air ambulance service in the United States to use Bell 429s. When the division's chief pilot position opened in 2021, he stepped up.

"I love the flying we do, as no two days are the same, especially because of the dual services we provide the community," Edgerton says. "When the chief pilot position opened, I saw an opportunity to put my old business career skills to work to help strengthen the division."

Edgerton had his work cut out for him. When he took the position, the helicopter division was temporarily based at Manassas Regional Airport (KHEF) in Manassas, Virginia, where it had been since July 2020 while its heliport in Fairfax was being rebuilt. He was responsible not only for running the helicopter division from a temporary facility, but also for overseeing the complex process of designing and constructing a new heliport—and then facilitating the unit's successful relocation to the structure in 2023.

"One of Andrew's most significant accomplishments was leading our team through a challenging transition period, which included the construction of a brand-new heliport, necessitating a three-year relocation to a temporary facility," explains Fairfax County Police Lt. Brian Bowman in his nomination of Edgerton for the award. "This achievement is particularly noteworthy, as his meticulous planning, leadership, and attention to detail ensured that our operations remained safe and uninterrupted throughout the transition. Andrew's resolute

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work ethic, dedication to our public safety missions, and significant contributions have not only elevated our aviation unit but have also had a profound impact on the safety and well-being of our community.”

Edgerton also served as the division’s safety officer for seven years before his promotion to chief pilot. In this role, he evaluated and mitigated risks associated with the unit’s missions and developed plans and risk assessments to maintain safe operations. He also ensured that the agency maintained strict compliance with all aviation regulations and guidelines.

He remains on the front line supporting his team by being the first to volunteer to cover shifts, including off hours and holidays.

“I really do believe in and enjoy serving the community,” Edgerton says. “I get up in the morning and I want to go to work. I enjoy the administrative work, but I also love to fly. If I can pick up shifts to catch a bad guy or get someone to the hospital on their worst day while ensuring the other five pilots can attend to their personal lives, all the better.”

The Law Enforcement Award will be presented during HAI HELI-EXPO 2024. HAI HELI-EXPO®, the world’s largest helicopter trade show and exhibition, will be held at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California, Feb. 26–29, with the exhibit hall open Feb. 27–29. For more information on HAI HELI-EXPO 2024, visit heliexpo.com.

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HAI is the professional trade association for the global helicopter industry and represents more than 1,100 companies and over 16,000 industry professionals in more than 65 countries. Each year, HAI members safely operate more than 3,700 helicopters and remotely piloted aircraft approximately 2.9 million hours. HAI is dedicated to the promotion of the helicopter as a safe, effective business tool that provides unique advantages to society and to the advancement of the international vertical aviation community.