USHST Schedules Two September Safety Events

Alexandria, Va. (08 August 2023) – The United States Helicopter Safety Team (USHST) is hosting two safety-focused events in September, and all interested members of the vertical lift industry are invited to attend.

The events include a nearly day-long “COPTER IFR/Weather Camera Summit” on Monday, September 11, followed by USHST’s quarterly “All Hands” meeting on September 12. Both events are available for in-person or online attendance. USHST is holding the events at the offices of Helicopter Association International Headquarters (HAI) in Alexandria, Virginia. Registration for both events, either in-person or online, is required at https://tinyurl.com/2wshuen4

Attendees with active FAASTeam accounts may be able to earn FAA WINGS and/or AMT credit for attendance at the USHST All Hands Meeting. Final credits are issued after FAA verification of webinar attendance.

“The purpose of the COPTER IFR & Weather Camera Summit is to provide a venue for operators and the FAA to discuss challenges and identify opportunities to collaborate for improvement,” according to Chris Baur, USHST Industry Co-Chair. “This COPTER IFR and weather camera summit to bring attention to the barriers involved in flight with COPTER IFR and to advocate for the much-needed improvements desired by operators.

“The USHST is asking for additional support for the FAA Weather Camera network, and necessary resources for its complete expansion throughout the entire United States. The FAA has indicated an 85% reduction in weather-related accidents and a 69% reduction in weather-related flight interruptions from 2007-2014. based on pilot decision making related to the cameras. The USHST and HAI are soliciting your support and advocacy to expand the program and increase funding. Additionally, efficient alternative weather sources that can be used in IFR operations to support safe decision making. This is a great opportunity for operators with IFR Programs to share their experiences, challenges and recommendations.”

The summit will provide an opportunity to capture challenges experienced by operators operating COPTER IFR:

- Use of COPTER Instrument Approaches as both Primary and Alternate locations.
- Repositioning helicopters between pads within the same aerodrome.
- Inaccessibility and underutilization of IFR clearances for procedures and routes.
- Exclusion of Special Instrument Departures and Airways from the NASR for flight plan filing.
- When combined with approved weather products, weather camera images become a powerful “go-or-no-go” aviation flight decision tool.

The IFR/Weather Camera Summit runs from 9 am to 4 pm (EDT), with a break for lunch, and will include seminars on weather cameras and pre-flight risk assessments. During the presentation, panelists will provide an update on the weather camera program and answer audience questions.

The quarterly All-Hands meeting will take place Tuesday, September 12, 2023, from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm (EDT). The USHST vision of zero fatal civil helicopter accidents is a lofty goal, but work on several key helicopter safety enhancements (H-SE) demonstrates the team’s optimism. The last round of H-SE projects are complete and five new ones have commenced with a focus on continued reduction in fatal accident rates. Here are a few of the agenda items that will be addressed during this event:
  - Monthly FAA Rotorcraft Accident Briefing
  - H-SE #125 Preflight/risk assessment
  - Weather camera usage for decision-making
  - FAA lessons learned library awareness

Those attending onsite are invited to join a networking reception from 4:00 – 5:00 pm.

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If helicopter community members have questions or want a webinar on a particular topic, please let the USHST know through its general email at safety@ushst.org or contact the organization’s communications specialists Dan Sweet from the Helicopter Association International at dan.sweet@rotor.org or Gene Trainor from the FAA at eugene.trainor@faa.gov.

About the US Helicopter Safety Team

The USHST is a volunteer team of US government and industry stakeholders formed to improve the safety of civil helicopter operations in the National Airspace System. The USHST is a partner of the Vertical Aviation Safety Team (VAST). The USHST vision is a civil US registered helicopter community with zero fatal accidents.