

JAMES A. VIOLA

Biography

James A. Viola joined Helicopter Association International (HAI) as President and CEO in January 2020. Prior to joining HAI, he served as a Senior Executive for the Federal Aviation Administration, in the positions of acting Deputy Associate Administrator, Aviation Safety and Director of General Aviation Safety Assurance. As Director, he was responsible for maintaining consistency and standardization in the application of safety oversight activities for the GA community. He was a government representative on both the International Helicopter Safety Team and the United States Helicopter Safety Team. He is now the Industry Co-Advisor (with ICAO as the co-authority) on the Vertical Aviation Safety Team, VAST.

Viola's aviation career began with the US Army, with the majority of his military flying done in the 82nd Airborne Division and in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. His final military assignment was as Division Chief for Army Aviation, Current Operations in the Pentagon.

A strong advocate for GA, Viola flies as often as he can. He splits his time flying between a Robinson Helicopter and an AG-5B Tiger airplane, depending on whether or not a runway is involved. He holds airline transport pilot ratings for helicopters and airplanes and is a dual-rated certificated flight instructor, having flown more than 70 make and models of aircraft. His accumulated flight hours are 6,500 plus, which includes 1,100 hours with night-vision goggles.

Viola holds a Master's degree in Strategic Studies from the United States (U.S.) Army War College in Carlisle, PA; a Master's degree in International Relations from Auburn University in Montgomery, AL; a Master's degree in Military Operational Art and Science from Air University in Maxwell AFB, AL; and a Bachelor of Science from East Stroudsburg University in East Stroudsburg, PA.

Viola holds professional membership of the Pi Sigma Alpha, National Political Science Honor Society; Lifetime member of the Army Aviation Association of America; the Airplane Owners and Pilots Association, the Veterans of Foreign Wars; Military Officer Association of America; Society of Aviation and Flight Educators; National Association of Flight Instructors; and the Theta Chi Fraternity.