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As Manager of the FAA's Flight Standards General Aviation and Commercial Division, James Viola is responsible for general aviation operations regulation and policy. He is also the FAA co-chair for the U.S. Helicopter Safety Team; the working group chairman for General Aviation for the International Society of Air Safety Investigators and the Director of the Pilot Familiarization Program for the International Grumman American Pilots Association.

Jim holds Airline Transport and Flight Instructor Certificates for airplanes and helicopters. He is qualified in a variety of helicopters from the Robinson R-22 to the Boeing MH-47 Chinook and has also flown more than 30 single and multi-engine airplanes. He holds a Master of Science in International Relations from Auburn University, Montgomery, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the US Army War Collage.