



# **Bell 407 GXi IFR Testimonial HALO-Flight**





## Bell 407 GXi

**Interview with Tom Klassen**  
Executive Director at HALO-Flight

### **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND HOW YOU BECAME THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT HALO-FLIGHT?**

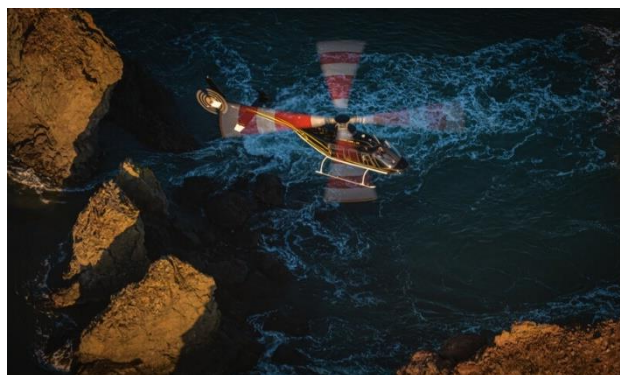
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**“I HAVE OVER 11,000 FLIGHT HOURS  
IN BOTH FIXED WING AIRCRAFT AND  
HELICOPTERS”**

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I started flying at the age of 19 and have flown in Alaska, Hawaii, Papua New Guinea and Russia - basically all over. I was an airshow pilot for about seven years. I have over 11,000 hours of flight time in both fixed wing aircraft and helicopters.

In 2010, I became the Director of Operations at HALO-Flight and was promoted to Executive Director a year later. I am currently the National Chairman of the Director of Operations section for the Air Medical Association and serve on the AMOA (Air Medical Operators Association) board.



### **WHAT TYPES OF AIRCRAFT HAVE YOU FLOWN?**

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**“I HAVE BEEN FLYING A WHOLE GAMUT OF BELL PRODUCTS FOR YEARS”**

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I've flown many Bell aircraft including the Bell 206, 206L, L3, L4, 205, 212, and 412. I have also flown a Sikorsky 51, a Skycrane and a LAMA in utility roles on the helicopter side. I also have experience flying a Hughes 500, A-star, BK117 and EC135.

I have a very diverse background with different types of aircraft, including flying cargo for an airline and fixed wing aircraft in airshows. I flew a Sukhoi (SU-26), a Russian aerobatic airplane, then switched over to a mic seventeen (Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-17), a supersonic jet fighter.



## Bell 407 GXi

### HOW DOES THE BELL 407 GXi COMPARE TO OTHER SINGLE ENGINE AIRCRAFT YOU HAVE FLOWN?

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**“THE BELL 407 IS SIMPLY THE MOST EFFICIENT AIR MEDICAL HELICOPTER OUT THERE. WE HAVE LOW MAINTENANCE COST, LOW OPERATING COSTS, GREAT RELIABILITY AND A G1000 AVIONICS PACKAGE THAT JUST BRINGS THE AIRCRAFT TO THE NEXT LEVEL”**

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The Bell 407 is simply the most efficient air medical helicopter out there. We have low maintenance costs, low operating costs, great reliability and a G1000 avionics package that just brings the aircraft to the next level. With the GXi engine upgrades and the dual FADECs, FADEC issues are not even a concern anymore. With the single pilot IFR and a single engine, I don't think you could find a more reliable airframe to fly in.

I used to fly night freight in Caravans and worked biweekly shifts at the hospital. On my week off, I flew night freight to build up my flight hours on the fixed wing side. I had no problem at all flying a single engine turbine airplane at night in all sorts of weather, so it's great to have similar capabilities with a helicopter.



### WHAT FEATURES OF THE BELL 407 GXi MAKES YOUR DAILY MISSION OF SAVING LIVES EASIER?

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**“IT GIVES US FLEXIBILITY WITH THE WEATHER; SAFETY IS OUR TOP PRIORITY IN OUR LINE OF WORK”**

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It gives us flexibility with the weather; safety is our top priority. In our analog Bell 407s, we evaluate the weather and may have to turn down flights depending on conditions. Changing weather conditions could affect the outcome of flying if we're relying on Visual Flight Rules (VFR). With the Bell 407GXi, many of our flights over a VFR airframe are not limited to IFR flying, they are limited to the decision making of whether to fly IFR or VFR. Now, we can take those flights knowing that we can just contact center, file and proceed IFR if the weather gets bad.

Often, we get a lot of fog or low visibility in our area. We have to evaluate flights based upon how the weather could change, so we might miss out on flights in our VFR analog Bell 407. We have that comfort with the Bell 407 GXi IFR package because we can accept those flights and know that we can complete them safely.



## WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THE HEMS COMMUNITY ABOUT THE IFR FEATURE?

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**“IT IS NEXT GENERATION SAFETY. ANY BELL 407 OPERATOR OUT THERE REEVALUATING THEIR FLEET NEEDS TO CONSIDER PURCHASING A BELL 407 GXI WITH AN IFR KIT”**

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It is next generation safety. Any Bell 407 operators out there reevaluating their fleet need to consider purchasing a Bell 407 GXi with an IFR kit.

The IFR kit is great because even if you stay VFR, you have the ability to handle an inadvertent IMC condition much better than you can without it.

We have in our analog Bell 407s a two-axis autopilot. We were the first company to fully integrate to two axis-autopilots as recommended by the NTSB back in 2008. While that is a great feature, it just stabilizes the aircraft until you get some situational awareness. With the fully integrated autopilot in the G1000 cockpit, flying is a more seamless activity. Everyone trains to a certain proficiency level and can easily handle this platform.

