



January 16, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Gene Hall
(707) 365-4310
<http://www.calstar.org/>

CALSTAR SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES ROLLS ROYCE ENGINE UPGRADES; TAKES NOTE OF MAJOR CONTRIBUTION BY FAMED BUSINESSMAN-ADVENTURER STEVE FOSSETT

California Shock Trauma Air Rescue ([CALSTAR](http://www.calstar.org/)), a non-profit air ambulance service that covers an area from Central California to parts of Nevada, has just completed a comprehensive program to dramatically upgrade engines on its fleet of Eurocopter Model BO-105LS helicopters, CALSTAR President and CEO Joseph Cook announced today.

The upgrade, five-to-six years in the making, involved changing Rolls Royce engines to provide for greater safety, a reduction in emissions and a savings in overall operating costs of about 40 percent. The upgrade, according to David Dyer, CALSTAR Director of Maintenance, was a joint effort between CALSTAR and Rolls Royce. After extensive engineering and testing, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) granted CALSTAR a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC), approving this engine retrofit for the entire BO-105 LS fleet nationwide.

According to Cook, the late Steve Fossett, famed businessman, aviator, sailor and adventurer also played a key role in the upgrade of the new engines. Cook said that Fossett had selected the BO-105LS for an endurance record he was hoping to set. “When he heard that we had more of these aircraft than anyone and that we had been talking to Rolls Royce about an engine upgrade, he met with us and we recommended that he also contact Eurocopter regarding its “Superlifter” rotor blades,” Cook said.

Cook said that Fossett was so interested in the project that he agreed to partner with CALSTAR and committed his own aircraft to the Supplemental Type Certificate process. “This allowed CALSTAR to use his aircraft to ensure proper fit and installation of the engines and all component hardware and for all of the FAA required flight testing,”

Cook said. “This was a significant help to CALSTAR as it allowed us to keep all of our aircraft committed to our daily mission. Steve also used his aircraft for his own training and all this flight time was used to demonstrate the reliability and dependability of the new engine configuration.”

Cook said that “without Steve’s support and partnership, this significant improvement to the aircraft and our crews’ safety would not yet be completed.” He added that Fossett’s contribution to the project was “yet one more of countless numbers of accomplishments that will be a part of his legacy forever.”

Fossett disappeared after taking off on a solo flight in Nevada in September of 2007. The wreckage of the aircraft was found in October of 2008 and DNA testing a month later confirmed that Fossett had perished in the crash.

Technically, according to Dyer, CALSTAR’S fleet was upgraded from the 250-C28 engines to 250-C30P models. The extra power delivered by the C30P engine enables the pilot to operate the aircraft to the certificated horsepower ratings of the airframe at higher altitudes and outside air temperatures, avoiding power losses due to reduced air density. The extra horsepower delivered by the C30P engine is critical in high altitudes and will provide an increased safety margin for CALSTAR operating in the Sierras and other mountainous regions. In all, CALSTAR operates 17 helicopters and several fixed-wing aircraft.

Cook said the retrofit of the helicopters was done primarily to enhance safety as well as to improve efficiency. “We are constantly taking measures to maximize the safety of our flight crews, EMS partners and of course patients,” he said. “Additionally, we are pleased to be operating cleaner burning, more eco-friendly engines. The C30 leaves no visible exhaust trail. We are very pleased with this effort.”

CALSTAR operates from 10 bases in Mendocino, Contra Costa, Placer, Amador, El Dorado, Solano, Santa Clara, San Benito, Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties. Headquarters are in McClellan.

In September of 2009 the organization will note its 25th anniversary. Since its inception CALSTAR has successfully transported more than 36,000 patients. It has an excellent safety record, with no accidents involving injuries to either passengers or crew members.

#####