

February 7, 2006 (Redacted)

FAA APPROVES 17 INSTRUMENT APPROACH PROCEDURES FOR GRAND PRAIRIE-BASED CAREFLITE

ORANGE BEACH, ALABAMA -- Low clouds and poor visibility will no longer impede CareFlite helicopters from responding to emergency medical flight requests.

“CareFlite joins a select few visionary programs within the United States, and is the first in Texas, to invest in a comprehensive network of IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) approach procedures at hospitals throughout the company’s service area,” said Steve Hickok, president of Hickok & Associates, Inc.

Hickok & Associates, Inc. developed CareFlite’s 17 IFR procedures.

“Our IFR network enables CareFlite crews to fly instrument approaches at referring hospitals, safely pick up patients in need of transport, and safely deliver patients to any one of four receiving hospitals in Dallas/Fort Worth.” Said Ray Dauphinais, Vice President of Operations for CareFlite. “Filing IFR directly to the hospitals allow CareFlite crews to accept missions they otherwise would have to refuse, increases the service we provide the public, and satisfies the same IFR safety recommendations FAA is now recommending to all air medical service (AMS) operators.” He added, “CareFlite, and ultimately our customers, also benefit from an enhanced level of safety in all flight conditions from the added proficiency our pilots realize from the additional training and IFR skill set that comes from a fully developed and supported IFR program.”

About CAREFLITE:

Serving more than 100 counties and communities within a 150-mile radius of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, CareFlite began operations in 1979 and is the only nonprofit, full service medical transportation provider in North Central Texas.

About the IFR PROJECT:

Hickok & Associates, Inc was contracted in June 2004 after responding to CareFlite’s request for proposal (RFP). Work began in late August 2004 with the first of two on-site trips. By late October the last hospital sites had been selected by CareFlite, the final on-site trip was completed, and the procedures were in the initial design phase of development. By early December 2004, the preliminary procedure designs were completed: Hickok returned to Dallas, performed verification flights, and conducted meetings with Air Traffic Control (ATC) Plans and Procedures at Dallas/Fort Worth Airport. In late February 2005, Hickok and CareFlite provided briefings to the FAA South West Regional Administrator, and the Regional Airspace and Procedures Team (RAPT) members, on the procedures and CareFlite Special IFR project.

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Hickok divided the CareFlite project into two groups: sites where heliport work was needed to comply with FAA AC 150/5390-2 heliport design recommendations, and sites where no heliport improvements were needed. Production of final procedure packages for submission to FAA began in March 2005 and the final procedure package was delivered to FAA by mid-August. The first group of nine procedures was flight inspected in early September and approved by FAA in mid-November 2005. The final group of eight procedures was flight inspected the first week of October and approved by FAA in late December 2005.

About HICKOK:

Stephen M. Hickok, president of Hickok & Associates, Inc, has a long history in the development of helicopter IFR procedures. In the early 1990's, while working at FAA Headquarters as an active duty Coast Guard officer/pilot, Hickok managed the helicopter GPS flight testing that resulted in FAA's helicopter GPS criteria, and FAA approval of the first GPS procedures. In 1995 he retired from the Coast Guard, left FAA, and founded the first company authorized by the FAA for the development of instrument approach procedures. He founded Hickok & Associates, Inc. in January 2004. During the past two years Hickok & Associates has completed 19 FAA approved procedures, developed 4 procedures to New York City's Manhattan heliports which are being completed under FAA sponsorship, 2 fixed-wing Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) procedures in support of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) flight trials, and is currently contracted by FAA to manage and conduct helicopter visual segment evaluation flight testing at FAA William J. Hughes Technical Center, Atlantic City, NJ.

Mr. Hickok became the first person to submit completed IFR approach procedures to FAA, and the first airman to become designated by FAA as a Procedure Evaluation Pilot (PEP). All of his efforts have resulted in over 90 percent of the nation's helicopter GPS procedures; which represents more than one-third of all the special instrument approach procedures approved by FAA and in use throughout the United States today.

Mr. Hickok served as an FAA Advisor to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Obstacle Clearance Panel (OCP) and participated in helicopter GPS criteria becoming published by ICAO for use worldwide, and has worked with helicopter operators in Asia, Europe, and Africa. He currently serves on the ICAO OCP representing the International Federation of Helicopter Associations (IFHA) and is a member of the OCP Helicopter Working Group. Mr. Hickok is the Chairman, Helicopter Association International (HAI) Flight Operations Committee, and also represents HAI on the FAA's Performance Base Aviation Rulemaking Committee (PARC) and is the Chairman of the PARC Vertical Flight Working Group.

In addition to his paid works and organizational services, Mr. Hickok has a strong commitment to *"give back to his industry"*, and has also provided pro-bono development of several IFR procedures to support his industry and operators where needed.

For more information, please contact:

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