

## Metal Innovations completes STC for Skycrane tail blades



### Metal Innovations

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*After three years of development Metal Innovations Inc. a small woman-owned business, has successfully completed a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) and is in full production under their PMA for a replacement tail rotor blade for all civilian operated Sikorsky and Erickson Air-Crane S-64E/F and CH-54A/B heavy lift helicopters. In addition, they are in the final stages of attaining approvals for a direct replacement tail rotor blade for military operated CH-53D helicopters.*

Metal Innovations Inc., an FAA Certified Repair Station and PMA holder, was started 14 years ago in a garage and has grown to over 30 employees in 26000 square feet of manufacturing and aircraft hanger facilities. Located at the Aurora State Airport in Oregon, Metal Innovations Inc. is known for providing Corporate, Air carrier, Air Cargo, and Helicopter operators with composite and sheet metal structural repair and parts manufacturing solutions for their most challenging issues.

The completion of the three year long tail rotor blade development and certification process is just the beginning of their move into becoming a internationally recognized blade manufacturing and repair facility. The new metal tail rotor blade is a direct replacement for blades flown on Sikorsky and Erickson Air-Crane

S-64E/F and CH-53/54 model helicopters whose operators include Erickson Air-Crane, Helicopter Transport Services, Evergreen, Heavy Lift Helicopters, and Siller Brothers. "We have incorporated new design and manufacturing techniques that have resulted in creating a perfectly balanced and incredibly efficient performing blade," said Craig Wilmes, Co-Owner and Director of Maintenance. Metal Innovations Inc. is also in the process of evaluating the development of a new composite tail rotor blade.

Metal Innovations Inc. also gained FAA approval for the repair of existing S-64E/F and CH-53/54 series heavy lift helicopters tail rotor blades. Their expertise in blade development has given them an edge for repairs, including state of the art balancing and metal bonding procedures. "We are currently building and assembling all parts associated with the new tail rotor blade. Providing quality repair services for our customers' blades was a logical step," said CEO Kim Wilmes.

Metal Innovations narrowly missed a bidding opportunity two years ago for a twenty-one blade contract with the Department of Defense. Solicitation number N0038306QF238 was awarded to Sikorsky to the tune of \$29 Million Dollars. "Our blades were in development during the last bidding opportunity. Being a small business we were discounted by several of the large players as being unable to complete such a difficult assembly. Well we did it and our blades are flying. We are poised and ready for the next bidding opportunity," said Craig Wilmes.

Metal Innovations Inc. was recently awarded a new contract for the development and manufacturing of a state of the art composite main rotor blade for the same aircraft. "We are currently working on a cutting edge composite main rotor blade design that will be available in 2013 and will revolutionize the viability of the S-64E/F and CH-54A/B heavy lift helicopters. The new blade will provide operators substantial performance improvement over other available options. It is all about domestic development and manufacturing and keeping U.S. operators competitive by providing superior lower cost options," said Metal Innovations Inc. CEO, Kim Wilmes.

Metal Innovations Inc. has always prided itself in taking on projects that provide opportunity for both themselves and the over 80 local suppliers that make up their supply chain. As a premier blade manufacturing and repair facility, Wilmes looks forward to the opportunities that this new market will bring to both themselves and their supply chain.

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