

City of
FRESNO
POLICE DEPARTMENT

March 17, 2026

TO: GEORGEANNE WHITE, City Manager
Office of the City Manager

THROUGH: MELISSA PERALES, Purchasing Manager
General Services Department, Purchasing Division

FROM: MINDY CASTO, Chief of Police 
Office of the Chief

SUBJECT: FIND SAFRAN HELICOPTER ENGINES UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO
PROVIDE SUPPORT BY THE HOUR SERVICES TO THE FRESNO
POLICE DEPARTMENT AIR SUPPORT UNIT IN AN AMOUNT NOT
TO EXCEED \$550,000 ANNUALLY (OR \$2,200,000 OVER FOUR
YEARS

Safran Helicopter Engines USA, Inc is a subsidiary of the Safran Group that specializes in the design, production, sale, and support of gas-powered turbine engines for helicopters. Specifically, Safran Helicopter Engines manufactures and provides service support for the Arrius 2F engine that powers the Airbus EC120 helicopter and the Arriel 2D engine that powers the Airbus H125 helicopter. The Fresno Police Department's Air Support Unit currently utilizes two Airbus EC120 helicopters and an Airbus H125 helicopter to conduct airborne law enforcement operations.

Engine service, repair, and overhaul account for a substantial portion of our helicopter maintenance budget. Time life components and engine inspection requirements are based on hours flown on the engine and can generally be forecasted to determine a timeline for repair, which is commonly referred to as scheduled maintenance.

Unscheduled maintenance of the engine occurs when an unexpected problem with the helicopter requires an inspection, repair, or service of the engine. Unscheduled maintenance of an engine may also occur if an Airworthy Directive (AD) related to the engine is disseminated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Whether maintenance of the engine is scheduled or unscheduled, the helicopter is grounded until the inspection, repair, or service is complete and the helicopter is deemed airworthy. This frequently requires the engine to be removed from the helicopter and shipped to Safran for repair. Safran will complete the necessary repair,

Uniquely Qualified – Safran Helicopter Engines

March 17, 2026

Page 2

inspection or overhaul and ship the engine back to be re-installed in the helicopter. Absent another available engine, the helicopter will remain grounded until the repaired engine is re-installed back into the aircraft.

In 2004, shortly after the acquisition of the EC120 helicopters, the Fresno Police Department entered into an engine maintenance and support agreement with Safran, commonly referred to as “Support By the Hour” (SBH). The SBH program enables the Fresno Police Department to pay an hourly rate for each hour flown on the engine. The cost of engine overhauls and other valuable services are factored into the hourly rate. The number of hours flown on each engine is reported at the end of each month and we receive a monthly invoice for the service. Safran’s Support By the Hour (SBH) program allows the cost of an engine overhaul to be distributed in advance through monthly payments based on the reported hours flown, so there is no additional charge when an engine overhaul is due.

Safran’s SBH program includes a loaner engine during the engine overhaul, allowing the aircraft to be flown when it would otherwise be grounded. Additionally, Safran provides specialized tools and lubricants needed for an engine exchange at no cost. Safran’s SBH covers the cost of shipping and testing of all engine oil samples between engine overhauls. Service support from Safran’s production and maintenance experts is available when needed.

Safran Helicopter Engines USA Inc. manufactures, services, repairs, and overhauls the Arrius 2F engine that powers our Airbus EC120 helicopters and the Arriel 2D engine that powers our Airbus H125 helicopter. Safran Helicopter Engines is the only authorized company in the United States that is certified as a repair center for warranty requirements for the Arrius 2F engine, the Arriel 2D engine, and the Hydro-Mechanical Unit or the Fuel Control Unit. As the manufacturer of our engines, Safran maintains proprietary rights over parts and some tools required during maintenance. Having engineered and developed each of the engines, Safran Helicopter Engines serve as the leading expert for their engine’s maintenance, performance, and any established industry trends. Safran serves as the sole source provider of this Support By the Hour (SBH) service.

Safran Helicopter Engines and the City of Fresno have maintained a continuous and positive partnership since entering the SBH agreement in 2004. The initial agreement provided coverage for the Arrius 2F engines of our EC120 helicopters. The initial agreement has been extended through the issuance of amendments over the years.

Uniquely Qualified – Safran Helicopter Engines

March 17, 2026

Page 3

The most recent agreement amendment took effect on January 1, 2023, and expired on December 31, 2025. As allowed in the initial agreement, our current coverage has been extended beyond the expiration date with concurring agreement between both parties. The extension of coverage will continue until it is superseded by a newly signed agreement. A new agreement is required to include the new Airbus H125 helicopter and continue the ongoing coverage of the two EC120 helicopters in the SBH program.

Safran's Support By the Hour maintenance and support agreement enhances the efficiency of the Air Support Unit's operation and provides consistency to the fiscal management of the unit. The Support By the Hour (SBH) agreement is a trademarked document and Safran is the sole source provider of this service. For these reasons, I am requesting Safran be deemed a uniquely qualified service support provider in an amount not to exceed \$550,000 annually (or \$2,200,000 over four years).

Approved

Not Approved



Melissa Perales, Purchasing Manager

03/23/2026

Date

Approved

Not Approved



Georgeanne White, City Manager

3/23/26

Date