

WELCOME TO

NORTH OPS



Welcome to North Ops

Northern California Operations is the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) for the northern half of USFS Region 5 (California), and the Regional Emergency Command Center for the Northern California Region of the California Dept of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). It provides service for the Northern District of the Bureau of Land Management within California, six National Park Units of the Pacific West Region, and numerous wildlife refuges (FWS), and tribal holdings (BIA). North Ops provides support for 16 Northern California emergency command centers (ECC's) when additional assistance is requested (Attached Map).

The compound itself includes an Administrative building, the Northern California Training Center, an Operations building, and is home to the Redding IHC and the Redding Smokejumpers. Also located on the compound are facilities related to the Shasta Trinity NF and the Shasta Trinity Unit including maintenance facilities, machine shops, CAL FIRE Station 43 and an air tanker base with state and federal airtankers, air attack and lead planes.

The Operations Building provides office space for both USFS, USDOJ, as well as CAL FIRE personnel who support and manage the interagency mobilization of resources requested for major incident support in the geographic area. The Operations Building consists of a National Interagency Support Cache and the Jumper Loft on the ground floor, and the Operations Center on the second floor. The Operations Center has offices for the Interagency Coordinators, space for the Redding Fire Weather Center and Predictive Services Coordinator, a communications floor or dispatch center, and facilities for expanding the ordering unit when needed. The dispatch center is linked by intercom to all the local command centers in Northern California and also to Sacramento CAL FIRE and Southern California Operations. North Ops provides initial attack aircraft for northern California units from six fixed wing bases and 14 helibases. Additional resources can be requested through the mobilization process from other Geographic Area Coordination Centers as the needed.

Both geographic coordination centers in California are different from other national coordination centers because of the partnership with the state, which has the largest state firefighting organization in the country. They also are the only coordination centers that provide initial attack dispatching capabilities for their aircraft using tankers owned and operated by both federal and state organizations. Because of the multitude of resources available to these centers from the state and local governments, it is imperative that proper ordering channels are observed. For instance when resources are being requested for out-of-state assignments, only the CAL FIRE channels can be used to approve their personnel to respond. Normally the state will approve only so many orders to be filled for out-of-state requests due to their responsibilities within California. Ordering through ROSS (the nation resource ordering and statusing system) is common with all units at this time but **before an out-of-state request can be placed or filled with other than federal resources, it first must be approved by the CAL FIRE duty officer** who will clear each request. The same applies to local government personnel and that system changes periodically so following the most current direction is applicable. Federal coordinators or CAL FIRE Battalion Chiefs need to be advised when orders for local government resources are received to assure the most current ordering protocol is followed.

CURRENT STAFFING

The current staffing of the Operations Center at North Ops is listed below:

Name	Postion	Agency
Dept of Agriculture		
Joe Millar	Assistant Director/Coordinator	USFS
Susie Stingley-Russell	Center Manager	USFS
(vacant)	Emergency Operations Coordinator	USFS
Laurie Forni	Mobilization Coordinator	USFS
Sue Gethen	Aviation Coordinator	USFS
Tom Elliott	Logistics Coordinator	USFS
Mark Luker	Logistics Coordinator	USFS
Amy Baldauf	Logistics Coordinator	USFS
Deneen Cone	Logistics Coordinator	USFS
Lisa Smyth	Logistics Coordinator	USFS
Marva Willey	Intelligence Coordinator	USFS
Matt Cannon	Intelligence Officer	USFS
Rob Holt	Intelligence Officer	USFS
John Snook	Predictive Services Program Manager	USFS
Brenda Graham	Meteorologist	USFS
Basil Newmerzhycky	Meteorologist	USFS
Dept of Interior		
Ed Duncan	Dept of Interior Coordinator	BLM
Steve Leech	Meteorologist	BLM
California Dept of Forestry		
Ken McLean	Region Chief	CAL FIRE
Cesar Partida	Asst. Region Chief – Operations	CAL FIRE
Kelley Gouette	Staff Chief Operations	CAL FIRE
Jeff Schori	Deputy Chief VMP	CAL FIRE
(vacant)	Deputy Chief Operations	CAL FIRE
Steve McLean	Division Chief-OCC	CAL FIRE
Bryan Schieber	Battalion Chief	CAL FIRE
Dave Monro	Battalion Chief	CAL FIRE
Mike Rosales	Battalion Chief	CAL FIRE
Ken Lowe	Battalion Chief	CAL FIRE
Mike Crane	Communications Operator	CAL FIRE
(vacant)	Communications Operator	CAL FIRE
Leigh Ruff	Communications Operator	CAL FIRE
Marie Fields	Communications Operator	CAL FIRE

SUPERVISOR'S EXPECTATIONS

The North Ops Mobilization Coordinator has established their expectations of Federal employees who work here at North Ops. They are as follows;

Show up to work and on time for your planned shift. You must advise your assigned supervisor or their acting before leaving for your 30-minute lunch. Any lunches longer than 30-minutes must be approved by your assigned supervisor or their acting prior to your leaving. If neither is available, clear it with the current duty officer. In addition, before leaving your work area for any extended period, you must plan coverage of your current operational area prior to leaving.

We are entitled to two fifteen minute breaks during our shift. We are all encouraged to take those breaks. These breaks are for getting out of the office to get some air or conducting personal business if needed. Do not abuse government time for conducting personal business. Notify the duty officer prior to leaving on your break.

Cell Phones: All Federal Coordination personnel are to place ALL cell phones on vibrate while in the Coordination Center. Cell phone calls and personal calls will be kept at an absolute minimum and must not affect your ability to perform duties as assigned. Personal phone calls are to be taken out of the office (this includes the hallway) as to not disrupt others in the performance of their official duties. Texting while working is allowable as long as it does not infringe on your duties. Radio traffic will always take priority over phone especially personal phone calls. Any violations of this will result in no cell phones allowed on the floor.

Office Phones: While at your desk answer your phone in a timely manner rather than making the receptionist take messages for you. Also, if someone is on the phone and is receiving another call please help them by doing the group pickup and take a message for them. In addition, try to limit the number of calls you send to someone while they are on the phone. A little situational awareness of the room will tell you if you coworkers are on the phone alleviating someone else from picking up and taking a message. If the person asked for is on the phone take a message for them.

Your work area: Prior to going home at the end of your shift, clean the work area where you are working, making it as presentable as possible. Do not make others working in that space clean up your mess. Do not leave dirty dishes in a work area take them to the kitchen and do your dirty dishes, do not just leave them in the sink for someone else to clean up later.

TELEPHONES

The Receptionists

During the summer months we employ one or two receptionist to answer and disseminate phone calls. The Receptionist duties include answering incoming calls promptly and professionally, and transferring the call to a dispatcher who can help them. On occasion there may not be a receptionist staffing the receptionist desk. In this case everyone answers the phone, takes messages and/or forwards calls. Some phones do not have outside lines so calls must be forwarded frequently.

If someone asks for aircraft, you will need to determine if they want Initial Attack Aircraft which would be transferred to the #1 dispatcher or other aircraft which will be referred to Aircraft Desk (or designee).

A call placed in “orbit” is retained for 90 seconds. If not retrieved, the call returns to the phone of the receptionist.

Callers who are questioning policy or dispatch procedures should be immediately transferred to the floor supervisor.

Never give out home telephone numbers of employees even if they are published in books and/or lists. If a caller insists on reaching an employee at home, the receptionist can call the employee at home, give them a message, and let the employee decide whether or not to return the call.

Do not volunteer personal information about an employee. If an employee is off on sick leave, annual leave, or vacation simply say they are out of the office or not on duty today.

Messages should be placed in the message turnstile.

Always remember...we are here to serve the caller. Always remain courteous, polite, respectful, and professional regardless of the caller’s demeanor. You get to make the first impression for the office!

The phone system

Understanding the entire telephone system used by NOPS ECC is understandably complicated. However, the system is designed to allow the newest user the ability to function. There are two types of handsets in use in the building; a 20 key phone and a 28 key phone. There are complete instructions located in the Isotec Digital System User Guide at the receptionists’ desk but spending a little time with a experienced user will speed up your understanding greatly.

Specific to NOPS are a few lines for use:

- Green Lines = State Phone System
- ATSS Lines = State Regular Business Lines
- FTS Lines = Federal Regular Business Lines

To make a call

On all lines, with the exception of the FTS line, dial “9” to access a line followed by the number you wish to call.

*Remember the green lines are for calling the units and other statewide agencies within CALFIRE.

Receiving a call

This varies by the position you are located. You have several options. You may pick up your receiver, push the Answer button (blinking line).

If it is for you, talk to the person.....

If at the console, after talking, press the hang up button to disconnect phone.

If at another phone, hang up like a regular phone, on it’s cradle.

Answering the phone if it is for somebody else

Option #1

Place the call on hold by pushing the hold button and going to get the person the call is for. Remember which line you put them on hold on.

Option # 2

Place the call in orbit by pushing the Cnf/Trn button, then reading the number shown in the display. This will be a number from 50-59 (this puts the call in orbit or on hold, where a person can enter the same numbers and access the call)

Push the Page button, which activates a paging system. Announce there is a call for a certain person, on whichever number you parked it at (50-59) and hang up the phone in the cradle.

Option #3

If the call is for someone else and you know their extension.....

Push the Cnf/Trn button

Dial the extension of the person the call is for

Push the hang up button

Each work station should have an Operations Floor Phone Extension map to guide you in transferring calls.

Speed Dials

Many numbers are pre-programmed on the speed dials on each extension. Each work station should have a list of speed dial numbers that include commonly called numbers such as emergency dispatch centers and air tanker bases. Simply select a line such as ATSS or FTS, press the "Spdial" button and the corresponding number based on the list.

COMPUTER ACCESS

Due to security needs visitors will be assigned passwords from the expanded dispatch supervisor.

FIRE WEATHER FORECAST

North Ops has a staff of meteorologists that work on the Operations Center floor at the west end of the building. There are four fire weather meteorologists that provide incident support throughout the fire season and training and coordination support throughout the winter months. Normally there will be a morning weather briefing held throughout the season once fire season is declared. This will be at 1030 and held in the second floor briefing room. The briefing is open to everyone who would like to go. Predictions of upcoming weather events will often result in increased floor activity to preposition resources in areas where increased fire activity may result from lightning or wind.

OPERATIONS CENTER ACCESS

Only authorized personnel shall have access to the Operations Center. Those personnel authorized shall be agency personnel permanently assigned to the office or those that are on temporary assignment. Permanently assigned personnel shall be issued necessary codes to gain access to the building. All other temporarily assigned personnel shall make arrangements through the acting Duty Officers for access. Due to recent security concerns the doors to the Operations Center should remain locked which may change periodically according to the Site Security Plan.

OPERATIONS CENTER KITCHEN

For the convenience of the employees there is a full kitchen located in the Operations Center building. The kitchen is shared by the employees. There are two refrigerators, a stove, kitchen table, coffee machine, as well as various utensils. It is **each individuals responsibility** to clean after themselves. There is a coffee fund for those that wish to participate.

MEAL POLICY

Federal policy prohibits individuals from being provided meals when they are on per-diem as many of the visiting dispatchers are. It also prohibits meals being provided when an employee is working at their duty station regardless of whether there is an emergency or not. Food for lunch and dinner should be brought to the facility if long hours are expected.

CAL FIRE policy allows the agency to provide for food and essential services during emergency operations. In an Interagency operation this allows CAL FIRE to provide meals for federal employees when CAL FIRE operations are being supported. Federal employees may not request reimbursement for meals provided when submitting travel vouchers.

SUPPLIES

Each desk should have necessary office supplies at the desk. Basic supplies are located in the storage room between the Intelligence office and the main hall. It is located to the left of the fax and copy machines in the hall leading to the Predictive Services/Intelligence Office.

CACHE

The Northern California National Interagency Support Cache (NCK) is located below the Operations Floor on street level. Bulk and large fire supplies are located in this facility. The cache has a staff of one supervisor and eight permanent personnel, with additional personnel brought in when activity dictates. When an order is placed for resources from the cache, print a copy of the ROSS order form and highlight the required resources along with the date needed and take it down to the cache. Any additional information, such as how they are to be transported, should also be noted. The cache will fill the request and notify the ECC of fill information. It is also very important that when these items are returned that both the ECC and the Cache are notified. Cache hours are variable depending on activity.

COPIERS

The Operations Center has two copy machines.

Location – A black and white copy machine is located in the hall leading to the Predictive Services/Intelligence Office and in the supply cabinet. A color copy machine is located along the back wall of the expanded dispatch room.

Supplies - White paper is located in the upper left side of the cabinet above the copier or in the supply room. Colored paper and cardstock are located in the upper right side of the cabinet. Toner may be found in the cabinet to the left of the machine, above the fax machines. If you run low on supplies, the Expanded Dispatch supervisor. If they are unavailable contact the Duty Officer. Additional paper is stored downstairs in the Cache.

Maintenance – Report problems with the copy machine to the Federal Duty Officer.

FAX MACHINES

The Operations Center has one fax machine that is located by the copy machine in the hall leading to the Predictive Services/Intelligence Office. This is the primary FAX and the number is (530) 226-2742.

An additional fax machine is located on the Expanded Dispatch Floor in the NW corner and is used for incoming FAXes for expanded dispatchers. The number of this machine is (530) 223-4280.

Additional machines are located on the Dispatch Center floor but are not for general use and the numbers are not to be given out. Most FAX machines are set up with pre-programmed numbers for quick dial to the unit ECC's and other frequently used numbers.

Maintenance – Report problems with the copy machine to the CAL FIRE Duty Officer.

Northern California Geographic Area

Command Centers

