

A GUIDE TO BASE CAMP

Here's a brief listing of places engine strike team personnel might want to be aware of when assigned to a large wildland incident outside L. A. City. Most of these places are designed to provide logistical support to you and make your life easier while assigned to the fire.

You can expect these units to be up and running by early in the second day of a major wildland that has an established base camp.

REMEMBER, the Incident Action Plan will normally have a map of the base camp that will show you where these various places are located so you don't wander around wasting time and effort.

Check-in

This is probably the first place you will go. You can check in at a number of locations. Normally you check-in on arrival. If you were initial attack and never "checked-in", do it when you get the opportunity.

Communications Unit

This is where you can check out loaner handi-talkies and get them programmed or "cloned". They also have lots of those neat AA batteries. Check with them to make sure you have a current communications plan.

Food Unit

You can get sack lunches from here. If you think you will be out on the line during dinner, get two sack lunches per member before your strike team moves out in the morning (your strike team leader can normally do this). Don't forget to get extra bottled WATER if you need it, again, before you go out on the line.

Ground Support

You will normally only relate to this unit when you demobilize. Mechanics in this unit will check the mechanical condition of your apparatus. If anything on your apparatus is damaged, tell the mechanics when they are inspecting your vehicle. If properly documented, the fire will pay for the damage.

Also, if you break something on your apparatus, like a window, get to Ground Support and they will make the repair or pay for it.

Medical Unit

This is where you can get lots of minor first aid supplies and sometimes "goodie bags" of toiletry items. Common items – eye wash, poison oak meds, band aids, aspirin, vitamins, etc.

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Supply Unit

You can check out items from here, but normally your strike team leader must do it. Such items might be sleeping bags, tents, light-weight 1 ½" and 1" hose and fittings, etc. Some items you get from here are "expendable" and don't need to be returned, make sure you know. You WILL have to return the "non-expendable" stuff as you demobilize from the incident.

If you damage or destroy equipment at the fire get credit for it when you demobilize from the incident. The fire will then replace it or compensate the LAFD for the loss.

Demobilization Unit

You will have to go through this unit when you demobilize from the incident. They will send you to most of the above mentioned units to verify you have returned anything you checked out.

Some additional places of interest:

Copy trailer – Normally a significant base camp will have a duplicating service at the incident. If you need copies of Incident action Plans, your ICS-214's, OES F-42's, etc. you can normally get them duplicated there.

OES Trailer – At larger incidents the State Office of Emergency Services (OES) will normally respond with a trailer. As part of the demobilization process your strike team leader will need to submit the OES F-42's to the OES representative.

Briefing Area – This will normally be an area that will accommodate a couple hundred people for a formal briefing held twice a day at the beginning of each shift. BY THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND DAY.

Operational Briefings will normally be held at 0600 hrs for the DAY shift (before they go out to the field), and 1800 hrs for the night shift (before they go out to the field). This assumes a 12 hour working shift.

If the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) is running the fire, they will probably run a 24 hour operational period so there will be only one briefing a day.

STRIKE TEAM LEADERS AND ABOVE SHOULD ATTEND THE OPERATIONAL BRIEFINGS. DON'T BE LATE!