



Oregon State Police Briefs

Command Centers



The Oregon State Police command centers provide dispatch support to all State Police activities across the state. During the Department's 16-year process of redefining the agency's dispatch business, the command centers have evolved from 26 dispatch points to four regional centers, and most recently to the present two command centers.

The Northern Command Center (NCC) is located at the State of Oregon Armed Forces Reserve Center/Emergency Coordination Facility in Salem. The NCC supports State Police activities across 21 counties and interfaces with the 30 primary Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP's) and nine secondary Public Safety Answering Points of this region.

The Southern Command Center (SCC) is co-located with the Southwest Region Headquarters/Central Point Area Command office in Central Point and interfaces with the 21 primary PSAP's and eight secondary PSAP's of the region. The NCC typically handles in excess of 500,000 thousand calls for services or trooper assistance with traffic stops. The SCC typically handles about 350,000 such calls.

Both centers are managed by Lieutenants and a complement of civilian shift supervisors. Technological, planning and logistical support is provided by the Command Center Support Unit located with NCC in Salem.

Lieutenant Molly Cotter – Northern
Command Center - Salem

Lieutenant Mark Walkup – Southern
Command Center - Central Point

The command centers have developed a large network of partnerships with federal, state, county, and city agencies. These partnerships vary in their scope from co-locating and sharing equipment with Oregon Department of Transportation to providing a higher level of officer safety for Oregon Department of Corrections Transport Units. Other partnerships include Bureau of

Land Management, Washington State Patrol, California Highway Patrol, CALTRANS, and others.

Staff in the command centers includes call takers, dispatchers and supervisors. Call takers are DPSST Certified Telecommunicators. They answer calls from the public, Primary and Secondary Public Safety Answering Points, courts, officers, tow companies, private businesses, others agencies, and many other sources. Typically, a call taker will answer telephone calls from all the geographical areas served by the command center plus several specialized toll free numbers, which cover broader geographical area. .

Dispatchers are DPSST Certified Telecommunicators. A prioritized call for service is electronically "shipped" to the dispatcher for communication to the appropriate State Police personnel in the field. The OSP dispatcher generally monitors and is responsible for up to three, or more, state police radio frequency groups. The specific number of "units" under the control of a given dispatcher varies by time of day and day of week, the presence of "non-patrol" resources on the air and scheduling of special patrols by their respective area command. It is not uncommon for a dispatcher to have 20-30 patrols "on the console" at some times of day in some regions.

Supervisors are DPSST Certified Telecommunicators and complete DPSST's Basic Supervisor Course as well as the State of Oregon CORE Program for Managers. They are civilian employees of the Department and are responsible for monitoring the flow of information through the centers, handling questions, problems, and unusual calls. Supervisors maintain the flow of information between the field and other functions such as City and County agencies, Oregon Emergency Management (OEM), the State Fire Marshal, the AMBER Alert program, Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS), Crime Labs, and the Medical Examiners Office.

The Command Center Support Unit is responsible for operational, administrative and logistical support to the command centers and provides operational communications support for special events.

The Command Center Support Unit interfaces with CJIS, Oregon Emergency Management, Oregon Department of Transportation and other appropriate organizations at the AFRC/ECF in Salem as well as other external customers of OSP dispatch services.