

AIRCRAFT RESOURCES

8141

(No.45 October 2004)

CDF's goal is to contain 95% of all unwanted fires at 10 acres or less through aggressive initial response of aircraft, fire crews, equipment, and personnel. The CDF emergency response air program is designed to reduce the number of large fires through aggressive initial attack utilizing aircraft to place retardants and personnel at the emergency incident before ground forces arrive. All CDF aircraft are strategically located at air tactical and helicopter bases throughout the state of California.

The Aircraft response plan to an emergency incident within California, have been established to deliver retardants to the fire scene (on state responsibility lands) within 20 minutes of dispatch and to provide additional aircraft as needed. This response plan was developed to include the use of Federal aircraft.

CDF aircraft operations on an incident are often conducted under extremely adverse flight conditions. Congested airspace, reduced visibility, adverse weather conditions and mountainous terrain all add to the complexity of aircraft operations over an incident.

AIRCRAFT START-UP TIMES

8141.1

(No.45 October 2004)

[\(See Policy 8362.7.2 – Aircraft Startup and Shutdown Times\)](#)

[\(See HB 8300 Exhibit - Startup and Cutoff Information\)](#)

All CDF aircraft (fixed and rotary wing) are dispatched to arrive at an incident no earlier than:

- 30 minutes prior to sunrise - when an Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) or air tanker or helicopter coordinator is at the incident.
- 30 minutes after sunrise - when not working with an ATGS or air tanker or helicopter coordinator.

EARLY START UP TIMES FOR AIRCRAFT

8141.1.1

(No.45 October 2004)

Air tactical and helicopter supervisors are responsible for enforcing pilot duty and flight time limits.

Normal operational periods may be temporarily extended with the approval of the Region Chief to meet demands based on unusual fire danger or activity situations.

- Early start-up times may be required during extended fire operations.
- Base operating times will be extended to correspond with extended aircraft operating periods.

- At bases with more than one aircraft assigned, the Airbase Manager with Region Chief approval may elect to stagger the start up times of aircraft to improve coverage on days with long daylight periods.
- Duty schedules should be applied equitably among flight crews.

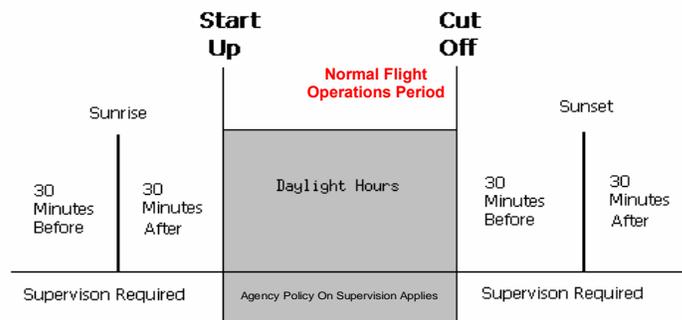
AIRCRAFT CUT OFF TIMES

8141.2

(No.45 October 2004)

All CDF aircraft are to be dispatched* to arrive at an incident no later than:

- 30 minutes before sunset when operating without an ATGS or air tanker or helicopter coordinator.
- Sunset - with an ATGS or air tanker or helicopter coordinator at the scene.



Poor flight visibility, mountainous terrain, shadows, sun and other hazards may require a later startup or earlier cutoff time.

RESPONSE GUIDELINES AFTER CUTOFF

8141.2.1

(No.45 October 2004)

All CDF aircraft may be dispatched to an Initial Attack response after official cut off time within the base Zone of Influence response area. This will be agreed upon by the ATGS, helicopter CDF captain and the pilots involved. They will take into consideration flight safety of the pilot and public, distance to incident, weather, ambient light conditions, familiarity with hazards and overall safety conditions of response.

All assigned aircraft shall cease incident operations and return to base no later than 30 minutes after sunset.

The normal daily start-up time for aircraft is set for each base according to zone-of-influence and approved by the Region Chief. This is the time specified for all personnel and aircraft assigned to the base to be ready for immediate incident response.

The normal cut-off time for all bases shall be thirty minutes before sunset.
The aircraft cut-off time applies only when aircraft are not engaged in air operations at an incident.

An extension of normal operational periods may be allowed under the following conditions:

- Ongoing incident air operations may be extended beyond normal base start-up and cut-off time when the air attack supervisor, helicopter CDF captain, and pilots involved concur that good visibility exists for low level operations in specific areas.
- All CDF aircraft may be dispatched to an Initial Attack response after official cut off time within the base Zone of Influence response area. This will be agreed upon by the ATGS, helicopter CDF captain and the pilots involved. They will take into consideration flight safety of the pilot and public, distance to incident, weather, ambient light conditions, familiarity with hazards and overall safety conditions of response.
- The 14-hour duty day limitation will not be violated.
- No low level flights will be made by any aircraft later than 30 minutes after sunset or until 30 minutes before sunrise regardless of need.

PILOT CALLBACK STATUS CHANGE

8141.3

(No.45 October 2004)

[\(See Policy 8332.2 – Daily Operational Requirements\)](#)

Operational periods may be shortened and pilots placed on callback status during periods of low fire danger when the using units and Region Chief approve the status change.

Callback status will include the aircraft affected and a specified time period for activating aircraft, if needed, usually within the range of thirty minutes to two hours.

Personnel on callback status must remain in contact with ECC operators or the base to meet callback requirements.

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