



NEWS RELEASE

# They've got your back: Meet American's system customer service managers

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Day and night, rain or shine, American's team of system customer service managers (SCSM) has a sharp focus on our customers, helping to ensure their journeys go smoothly. Though they're based at American's Integrated Operations Center (IOC) in Fort Worth, Texas, the SCSMs have their eye on every customer, looking for operational solutions to get customers on their way.

Daniel Schiff, the IOC's Senior Manager of Network Ops Strategy, recently sat down with System Customer Service Manager Kim Burrell for a discussion about their roles at the IOC.

Daniel: Let's start with the basics: what is American's Integrated Operations Center?

Kim: We call it the IOC, and it's the nerve center of our airline. In this large facility, more than 20 workgroups — and 1,700 team members — come together to help run our airline 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. We work collaboratively to solve challenges that come our way, from weather to anything else.

American's Integrated Operations Center.

Daniel: Our strategy is our customers, and the SCSMs ensure our customers get where they want to go smoothly. The team is always thinking ahead to minimize disruptions.

Kim: That's exactly right. A day in the life for me is busy and full of twists and turns. When I get in, I'm assigned to a unit, which is broken down by the types of aircraft we operate and hubs that we fly into. The unit is led by an



Operations Coordinator, who works in tandem with team members overseeing our fleet, our crew members and, in the case of SCSMs, our customers.

Daniel: SCSMs have a key role in caring for group travel. We have large groups —sometimes really large groups with hundreds of customers — who travel throughout our network. It's critically important they have a seamless journey when traveling with us. If one of these groups were to misconnect, it might be harder to reaccommodate them as there likely wouldn't be enough available seats on the next flight, unlike when we have individual travelers and smaller parties to reaccommodate. The first order of business is alerting our airport teams that these groups are coming through to make sure we have a plan for them. Sometimes we'll hold their connecting flight, and we've even found back-up aircraft for these groups because they're such a big part of our operation.

Kim: Military service members are also incredibly important to us. We work to ensure that our service members have as easy and smooth a journey as possible. We look at markets that have military bases or are close to them — we have many of them — and keep an especially close eye on those markets, going out of our way to ensure there are crew and aircraft to support the operation there. We develop a plan B as well. I'm glad the SCSM team gets to play a role with caring for our troops.

Daniel: SCSMs play a key role in the recovery of our network during what we call irregular operations — severe weather or any other type of event that disrupts the airline. We're responsible for running a tool that helps reaccommodate our customers on alternate flights when their travel plans are impacted. American has gotten much faster at recovering, and I'm proud to say that the SCSM team plays an important role as we care for customers who are impacted.

I'm sure you have some incredible stories to tell about other ways we've helped our customers in the 17 years you've worked here.

Kim Burrell working in the IOC's regional unit.

Kim: You bet! One time, we had a group of 40 customers who were originating in Knoxville, Tennessee, connecting through DFW on their way to Honduras, and I realized that they were going to misconnect. After I worked with the station and my colleagues in the IOC, we found a solution to use a larger aircraft for the next flight. The airport let me know that the customers were very excited that they were able to get to their destination within a reasonable amount of time. For me, it was a reminder of why I do this. I genuinely care about our customers and want to find solutions.

“It was a reminder of why I do this. I genuinely care about our customers and want to find solutions.” Kim Burrell

Daniel: One of my favorite stories is when we had a high-volume connection, which means we have a large number of customers traveling between cities. This one was between Oklahoma City and Hanoi, Vietnam, with a connection in Chicago. When their initial flight was delayed, we found another aircraft from one of our regional partners to get this group to Chicago, where they connected to one of our oneworld® partners. The SCSM team coordinates within and outside of the IOC to ensure our customers are looked after, no matter who operates the flight. It felt great to help these customers out.

Kim: It's really the best part of the job. And we do it every day because when you purchase a ticket on American, you place your trust in us to get you to your destination safely and as efficiently as possible.

**Learn more about the people who help keep American's operation on track.**

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