

PRESS RELEASE
July 1, 2005

Tift County Selected for Homeland Security Project

Tift County has been selected to participate as one of only 43 Counties in Georgia in building the first statewide interoperable communications system for public safety. Chief Mike Flippo Director of the Tifton/Tift County Emergency Management Agency explained that funding for the project has been provided by Federal Homeland Security Dollars and would provide an enhanced level of protection for all residents of Tift County including the incorporated Cities of Tifton, Ty Ty and Omega.

“Interoperable Communications is one of the most important goals identified in protecting Georgia’s homeland”, Director of Homeland Security Georgia Emergency Management Agency Mike Sherberger said. “Areas selected were evaluated by analysis examining population, critical infrastructure, and transportation corridors.”

This project will provide interoperable communications for the operators of radios using different technologies and frequency channels, and provide important advances in capability for law enforcement and state agencies in times of crises. The Office of Homeland Security - Georgia Emergency Management Agency (OHS-GEMA) has contracted with Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI), to provide technical oversight for the initiative. “The plan will not require public safety agencies to purchase new infrastructure or equipment in order to participate, rather will utilize existing radio frequency (RF) infrastructure” said Chief Mike Flippo.

While only forty-three counties were chosen, because of limited state-wide budget funds, the coverage accrued by this first phase will be over 75% of Georgia’s population.