



COMMUNICATING ACROSS GEORGIA

April 2008

Volume 4, Number 1

Key Dates to Remember

April 1, 2008

Phase III installation of 35 new PSAP sites initiated

April 29-May 2, 2008

Governor's annual Emergency Management Conference held in Savannah

April 4, 2008

Georgia Statewide Communication Interoperability (SCIP) plan approved by DHS

April 4, 2008

Georgia awarded \$24.5 million in federal funds for regional public safety radio system enhancements through Public Safety Interoperable Communications Program

For more information or if you'd like a presentation for your organization, contact program director Dan Brown at dbrown@gsp.net.

State starts rollout of Phase III of Georgia Interoperability Network

Georgia is entering the final stages of implementing its statewide Georgia Interoperability Network (GIN) infrastructure, having successfully installed a Motorola gateway system in 105 Phase I and II sites. On March 19, the State initiated Phase III, in which 36 more gateway system sites will be placed throughout Georgia. Georgia has also requested federal funds for Phase IV to complete the buildout of the system, with 40 installations in counties and state agencies, beginning in 2009.

Georgia's GIN allows participating local public safety agencies to communicate with other responders by radio, regardless of the kind of communication equipment each party uses. These installations consist of a public safety answering point (PSAP) system placed at a single 9-1-1 dispatch location in a county or at a state agency. The PSAPs allow dispatchers to see incoming calls represented as icons on their computer console screens. They are able to connect callers by dragging one of these icons on top of the other on their console screens. The GIN program has been supported by the federal Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP). See map on page 2 shows the GIN's current and planned installations.

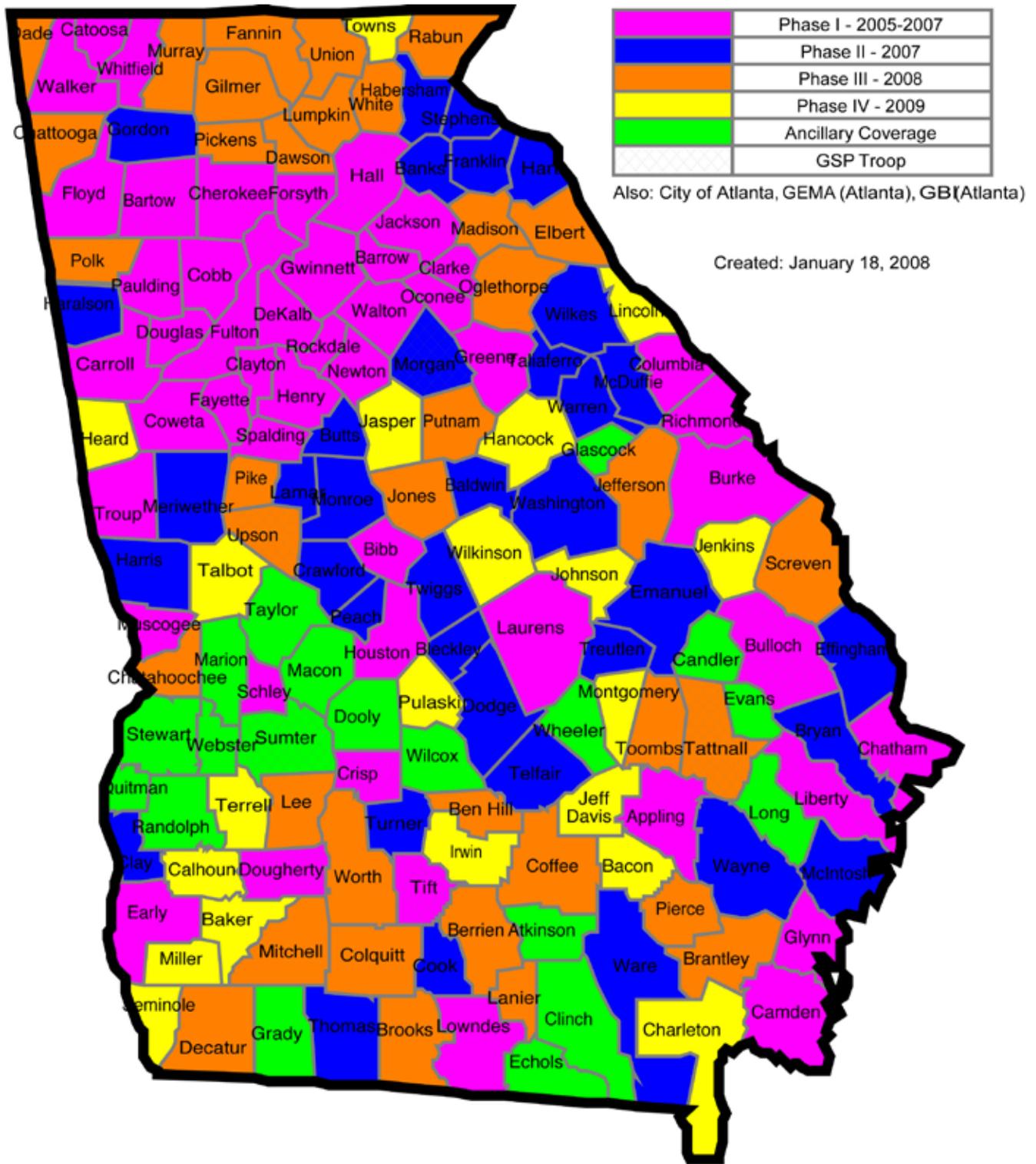
The Phase I, II and III implementations will provide coverage for approximately 95 percent of the state's population. Other, more isolated parts of Georgia will be served by mobile communications units (MCUs) that can



Georgia Tech engineers overview installation of nodes in the growing Georgia Interoperability network.

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Phase III Georgia Interoperable Communication System Rollout



Statewide interoperable communication plan approved

Georgia's first Statewide Interoperable Communication (SCIP) plan has won approval of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The award paves the way for the State to receive \$24.5 million in federal funds to implement the plan and carry out related enhancements through the Public Safety Interoperable Communication (PSIC) grant program.

Although DHS reviewers are requiring the State to make modifications, they granted full approval to the Georgia plan, making it one of the first 20 states or territories to receive this distinction.

The State developed the SCIP plan with technical assistance from the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) to provide coordination for future investments in interoperable communication. It is a "living document," which will be updated annually, according to project manager Dan Brown, who is the chief information officer of the Georgia State Patrol.

The PSIC \$24.5 million grant (plus a 20% state and local match) will allow Georgia to initiate the SCIP planning process, complete the buildout of the Georgia Interoperability Network infrastructure, fund four regional public safety network enhancements and related training and exercises, establishment of a State Technology Reserve.

SCIP planning process

The process for continuing the SCIP planning process beyond the initial document includes the following activities:

1. *Incorporate the changes required by the federal team of SCIP reviewers.* Though DHS has approved Georgia's plan, the review team requested a number of changes in the proposed plan

2. *Start taking an inventory of the State's communications capabilities through use of the Communication Asset Survey and Mapping (CASM) tool.* GTRI will collect an initial inventory of interoperable communications assets throughout the state and enter the data into the federally provided CASM system.

3. *Produce standard operation procedure (SOP) guidance.* This step will consist of producing initial interoperable communication SOPs to act as models for the PSIC Project Team and developing an SOP template that can be used by local and regional agencies and jurisdictions to develop their own customized SOPs. This step will allow regional and multi-regional groups to produce consistent SOPs across the state.

4. *Perform statewide workshops and meetings.* GTRI will facilitate six quarterly meetings (four in Atlanta and two as retreats) involving the Homeland Security Task

Force Public Safety Communications Committee and local/regional stakeholders. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that the PSIC planning process has local/regional buy-in and reflects local/regional priorities.

5. *Perform planning efforts to training and exercises.* GTRI will perform the planning needs to design and carry out interoperability exercises throughout the state. Working with a group of agencies from multiple jurisdictions, GTRI will develop a scenario to test the various aspects of interoperable communications in different regions.

6. *Update the SCIP document.* As changes are mandated by the activities described above, the SCIP master document will be updated quarterly.

Interoperability enhancements

Aside from supporting the SCIP planning process, the PSIC grant provides funding to complete the buildout of the Georgia Interoperability Network (*see page 1 story*) and to consolidate regional

Georgia is receiving \$24.5 million in federal funds to implement its SCIP planning process and make various enhancements in regional interoperability capabilities.

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Statewide communications interoperability plan . . .

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public safety radio systems throughout the state. The enhancement of these systems will allow radio operators to roam seamlessly across multi-county areas with enhanced spectrum efficiency and at a cost that localities can more easily afford. The projects will: 1) build out a 700/800 MHz system in hurricane-prone coastal counties and link up with an adjacent inland county that hosts many hurricane evacuees; 2) improve the infrastructure and coverage of a multi-county 800 MHz system along the I-20 evacuation route west of Atlanta and strengthen its links with metro Atlanta; d) broaden and enhance a multi-county 800 MHz system covering much of the state's third largest metropolitan area, Columbus; and d) build out a 700/800 MHz radio system in three northwest Georgia counties and enhance their interstate cooperation with public safety agencies in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Interoperability buildout approaching final stages . . .

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respond to any Georgia incident in several hours.

The State is providing the GIN network “backbone” and maintaining network costs of the interoperable communication infrastructure.

Since April 1, the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) team serving as the State's technical consultant on the GIN buildout has held nine project kickoff meetings and four workshops in counties that will get PSAPs in Phase III. Dr. Douglas Cobb, the GTRI team leader, said that each project requires approximately 16 weeks to complete.

Cobb added the GIN Operations Work Group will develop standard operating procedures to provide local and State agencies with guidelines to operate the PSAP systems.

When the buildout is complete, the Georgia State Patrol will operate the GIN as an enterprise, providing customer service to local and state agency users.

Another investment in Georgia's PSIC grant will provide local training and regional exercises for jurisdictions that receive radio system enhancement funds. The training and exercise program will improve the abilities of local agencies to use their consolidated radio systems and interoperate on a regional basis.

Finally, the PSIC grant is establishing a State Technology Reserve that will be used, on an as-needed basis, to acquire and stage mobile communication units, radio caches, portable towers, and radio communication sites in disaster-prone areas of the state.

This investment will allow public safety agencies across jurisdictions throughout Georgia to communicate during major disasters that damage or destroy existing communication equipment or overtax existing communication systems.

Kings Bay Exercise Shows Interoperability of Georgia Network & Military Systems

A recent exercise at Kings Bay Naval Base in St. Mary's, Georgia, successfully demonstrated that military, local and state public safety agencies can communicate through the Georgia Interoperability Network.

The exercise also showed that the Georgia State Patrol and Florida Highway Patrol are able to maintain connectivity through the GIN infrastructure.

Agencies participating in the exercise were the U.S. Department of Justice, the FBI, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Florida Highway Patrol, Georgia Emergency Management Agency–Office of Homeland Security, Georgia State Patrol, local law enforcement agencies in the St. Mary's area, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of the Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.