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News Release

GECA aids Jeff Davis County after devastating fire at County 911 Center

(ATLANTA) – The Georgia Emergency Communications Authority (GECA) worked with local 911 officials to restore critical 911 services using mobile technology following a devastating fire at the Jeff Davis County 911 center January 30.

As the 911 center was evacuated for the fire, calls had to be routed to surrounding county 911 centers, creating the potential for delays. Within two hours of learning of the fire, GECA personnel were on the ground in Jeff Davis County, providing equipment and technical expertise that allowed 911 calls originating in Jeff Davis County to be returned to that county's 911 personnel's control.

"We utilized Southern Linc LTE devices which allowed us to restore local control of 911 service to the county within hours." Said Michael Nix, Executive Director of GECA. "We're happy to be able to assist our local partners during this crisis and continue to provide resources as needed."

Using the LTE devices, personnel handled 911 traffic for two days until wireless connectivity could be established using GECA's Mobile Command Center cases. This equipment enables sophisticated communications management in the event of an emergency, and was exactly what the county needed to manage their emergency communications.

The fire destroyed the 911 center, county emergency operations center and a number of county emergency vehicles.

"The fire was absolutely devastating from a communications standpoint," said Nix. "Thankfully, we were able to bridge that gap in capability quickly for the county."

GECA, working with Jeff Davis County, has since established a temporary 911 center at another location in the county.

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As part of the Office of the Governor, GEMA/HS works with local, state and federal governments, in partnership with the private sector and faith-based community, to protect life and property against man-made and natural emergencies. In addition, GEMA/HS employees are on 24-hour call statewide to assist local authorities when disaster strikes. GEMA/HS's "Ready Georgia" campaign helps Georgians prepare for disasters. Visit www.gema.ga.gov for more information.