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*Coordinated Highway Assistance & Maintenance Program (CHAMP)...*  
**Freeway patrol service begins in east central Georgia**

TENNILLE— Motorists in east central Georgia today began experiencing the benefits of a new statewide Coordinated Highway Assistance & Maintenance Program (CHAMP). This operation is the nation’s first statewide freeway patrol service.

“Ensuring the safety of our roadways for motorists and first responders is our primary goal. With that in mind, we are excited to launch CHAMP in order to expand our patrol and assistance services across the state,” said Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell R. McMurry. “This is a complimentary public service made possible by Georgia’s Transportation Funding Act of 2015. CHAMP would not be feasible without those funds.”

East central region drivers will see the assigned operators cruising Interstate 20 from Newton County to the South Carolina line, I-520 and also I-16 from Bleckley County to Emanuel County.

While CHAMP is distinct and separate from the Department’s long-standing and highly successful Highway Emergency Response Operators (HERO) program in the Atlanta region, its addition to Georgia DOT’s safety program makes Georgia the first state to provide statewide interstate highway assistance.

“What makes CHAMP different from HERO and other similar patrols across the country is that it specifically addresses highway maintenance,” State Traffic Engineer Andrew Heath said. “CHAMP operators are Georgia DOT’s eyes on the road. By proactively responding to maintenance issues, as well as addressing incident clearance and motorist assistance, they will make Georgia highways safer.”

CHAMPs report or resolve roadway maintenance issues and assist law enforcement with traffic incidents to ensure safe, quick clearance and efficient traffic flow. They provide immediate

notification about bridge or roadway damage, downed signs, missing markings, signal malfunctions, and commercial vehicle crashes and spills.

They clear clogged drains, clean up minor non-hazardous spills, and remove debris, vegetative growth and abandoned vehicles. CHAMPs also aid motorists who need it.

“As Georgia continues to grow, the Georgia Department of Transportation stands ready to address increasing traffic and maintenance needs on our state’s highways,” District Engineer Jimmy Smith said. “Helping to safeguard roadways for the traveling public requires our commitment to maintaining high quality interstates, state routes and bridges. This is our obligation, and it is critically important to the quality of life Georgians expect and deserve.”

For motorist assistance or to report a crash, infrastructure damage or debris on a Georgia interstate or state route, motorists are directed to dial 511. Callers will be asked to provide operators with their location, milepost or nearest exit number to assist CHAMPs in locating the incident.

The Georgia Department of Transportation’s new service will continue a phased launch through the end of April. Northeast Georgia was the first district to see CHAMP operations earlier this month and west central Georgia is next up on March 7.

When fully operational, CHAMP will be staffed by 48 full-time operators and 18 full-time dispatchers. A total of 51 branded, custom-fitted CHAMP trucks will patrol 16 different routes on interstates (except short stretches of I-24 and I-59) seven days a week, 16 hours a day, and will be on call the other eight hours. Operators do not accept tips or payment from the public.

The CHAMP procurement process was completed through a competitive solicitation request for proposals. The contract was awarded to AECOM team; KCI and Kennedy Engineering (DBE) subcontractors, who provide management, dispatch, operator staff and the truck fleet to carry out all duties. The three-year contract includes an option to extend for an additional two years.

For information about CHAMP, including a route map and statewide implementation schedule, visit [www.dot.ga.gov/CHAMP](http://www.dot.ga.gov/CHAMP).

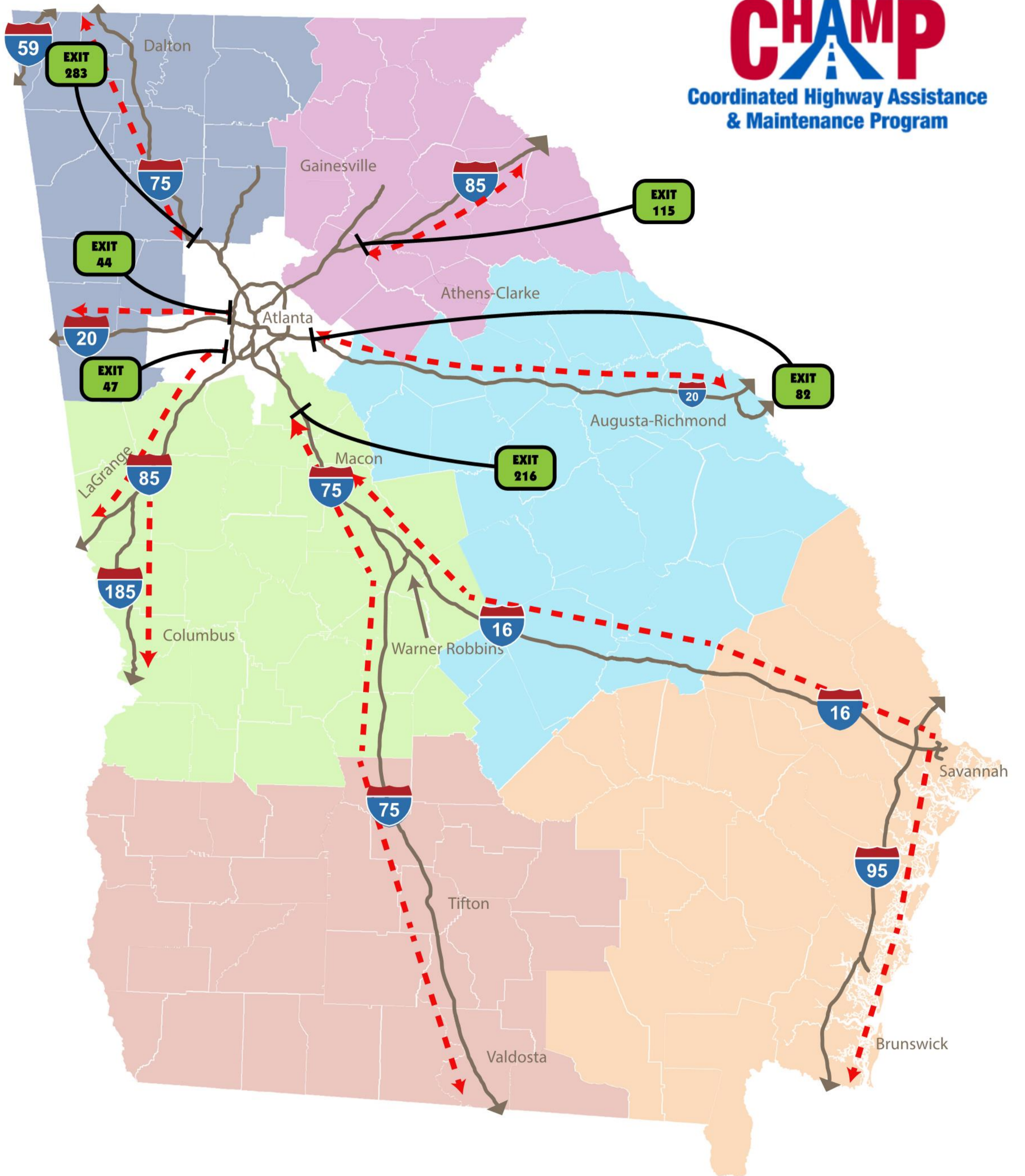
**CHAMP truck body: The CHAMP vehicles utilize push bumpers, message boards and other traffic control devices.**

**CHAMP supervisor: CHAMP region supervisor Ronnie McNornton works off Interstate 16 near Dublin Monday tagging an abandoned vehicle.**

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# CHAMP

Coordinated Highway Assistance  
& Maintenance Program





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