



For Immediate Release:

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Newer and Safer...

Georgia DOT's HEROs Debut Larger, Safer Trucks

ATLANTA – The big yellow trucks of the Georgia Department of Transportation's hugely popular Highway Emergency Response Operator (HERO) program, sponsored by State Farm®, will soon be bigger and safer, the Department announced today.

The new, larger vehicles will enhance the safety of HERO patrol operators who are credited with assisting stranded motorists and helping keep the highways in Metropolitan Atlanta safe and clear. Measuring 13' long x 8' wide x 8' tall, the new vehicles are even more visible when stopped on the side of the roadway.

“Georgia DOT HERO prides itself as being a leader for safety within the Safety Service Patrol industry,” said Andrew Heath, Georgia DOT State Traffic Engineer. “These new vehicles are one way that we continue to challenge ourselves to provide a safer environment for our employees and for motorists.”

The new trucks, which are expected to hit the road on **Tuesday, December 8, 2015** and will replace 10% of the existing HERO fleet, will feature roll-up doors and compartments, which take less time to open and are more easily maneuvered than traditional swing doors. The roll-up doors compartments are well-lit and easy to navigate, so HERO patrol operators can quickly access the necessary tools to respond to an incident.

“When HERO patrol operators are responding to a call, every second counts,” said Jason Josey, Georgia DOT HERO Manager. “Our goal with these new vehicles is to improve response time, while also improving the safety of the HERO patrol operators and the traveling public.”

The vehicles will be co-branded to include DOT markings as well as recognition of State Farm who has been the program sponsor since 2009. State Farm renewed its support in 2014 and extended its funding to include 511, the contact number for the HERO program. 511 will also be prominently displayed on the new vehicle.

“The HERO program underscores our commitment to auto safety and embodies our ‘good neighbor’ philosophy,” said Ed Gold, State Farm Marketing Director. “We are proud to join the Georgia DOT in

improving the safety of HERO patrol operators, and to sponsor this important program that helps motorists recover from the unexpected, which is the heart of the State Farm mission.”

As part of the sponsorship, State Farm will add the HERO program to the website it maintains at www.assistpatrol.com where motorists who receive assistance from patrol operators are invited to take a survey about their experience. Assisted motorists are also invited to share their experience on social networks using #AssistPatrol.

*Motorists can access real-time, statewide, route-specific information on accidents, road work, traffic and weather conditions through **Georgia 511** - a free phone service. By dialing 511, callers also can transfer to operators 24 hours a day to report incidents or request assistance. The system can be used to access transit providers, major airports, rideshare organizations, tourism information and 511 systems in surrounding states. Additionally, 511 is available online. Georgia DOT partners with sponsors for assistance in funding 511, thereby preserving tax dollars and helping sustain critical services. For more information about 511, visit 511ga.org. For more information on Georgia DOT, please visit www.dot.ga.gov or subscribe to our Press Release [RSS feed](#). You also may follow us on [Facebook](#) (www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT) and [Twitter](http://twitter.com/gadepstoftrans) (<http://twitter.com/gadepstoftrans>).*

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