



GEORGIA TARGETING AGGRESSIVE CARS AND TRUCKS

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NEWS RELEASE

I-16 SAFETY CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY IN BULLOCH

(STATESBORO, GA) – The Georgia Department of Public Safety launched the latest enforcement and education wave of the Georgia TACT Program today along Interstate 16 in Bulloch County. The G-TACT program, or Georgia Targeting Aggressive Cars and Trucks, is a traffic safety campaign designed to increase driver awareness of the dangers they face with risky driving behaviors around commercial motor vehicles. The program combines educational outreach with traffic enforcement to reduce the number of crashes between commercial vehicles and much-smaller passenger vehicles.

The Statesboro campaign kicked off a three-month-long enforcement effort with concentrated patrols and public information outreach efforts being conducted periodically until the end of March in Bulloch and Chatham counties. During the G-TACT wave, officers with the Motor Carrier Compliance Division, the Georgia State Patrol, and local law enforcement agencies will be concentrating on traffic violations by drivers of both cars and trucks that can lead to a traffic crash.

Colonel Bill Hitchens, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety, said the stretch of I-16 in Bulloch County and the portion of I-95 in Chatham County were chosen for the G-TACT program based on the crash experience over the past three years. Since 2007, there have been 90 crashes involving commercial motor vehicles in Bulloch County that have injured 75 people and claimed the lives of 8 people. In Chatham County, the three-year experience shows 511 crashes involving commercial motor vehicles with 363 injuries and 12 deaths. Commercial motor vehicle crashes with passenger vehicles in Georgia account for an average of 15 percent of Georgia highway fatalities. In fatal crashes that involve at least one large truck and a passenger vehicle, almost 90 percent of the people killed are occupants of the smaller vehicle. “And the majority of the commercial vehicle crashes are caused by a driving mistake made by the passenger vehicle driver,” he noted.

In addition to cautioning drivers to “leave more space” around trucks, law enforcement officers will be watching for drivers of both cars and trucks that are tailgating, changing lanes too quickly, crossing the gore or median, driving recklessly, speeding, driving in the emergency lane, failing to signal when changing lanes, operating a vehicle without an appropriate valid license, and trucks over six wheels traveling in the left lane.

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“Keep a greater distance behind tractor trailers, not only so the driver can see you, but so you can stop in time should the truck driver ahead be forced to take emergency evasive action,” Colonel Hitchens said. “When you tailgate a tractor trailer, you can’t see what’s in front of the truck and you are not prepared for sudden stops.”

The Commissioner said billboards, public service announcements, commercial radio spots, specially-wrapped tractor trailers, and safety messages on the Department of Transportation’s Overhead Variable Message Signs will be part of the public outreach for the G-TACT campaign in the Bulloch/Chatham area. “For motorists who travel Georgia interstates each day, a crash involving a tractor trailer can cause extensive travel delays, especially when the crash is fatal for a driver or passengers. We want to reduce travel delays by reducing the number of crashes between passenger cars and commercial vehicles,” he noted. Additionally, Motor Carrier Compliance Officers will be conducting public information and education activities at the I-95 Welcome Center periodically providing “Leave More Space” safety brochures to motorists.

Georgia Targeting Aggressive Cars and Trucks is a program administered by the Georgia Department of Public Safety with funding provided by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

For more information on Georgia Targeting Aggressive Cars and Trucks, visit <http://dps.georgia.gov> or the G-TACT web at <http://georgiatact.net>