



MISSION

To protect Georgians by operating secure facilities and providing opportunities for offender rehabilitation.

Timothy C. Ward, Commissioner
Alan Watson, Chief of Staff
Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner Facilities Division

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

The Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) Special Operations oversees internal processes that support the Facilities Division’s primary task of supervising offenders. Special Operations is comprised of the following specialized units: 25 Tactical Squads (TAC) to include three Regional Interdiction Response Teams (IRT), and 28 Correctional Emergency Response Teams (CERT). In addition, GDC is part of the state’s overall law enforcement and criminal justice system.

CORRECTIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

MISSION

To maintain well-trained and highly motivated units, ready to mobilize upon command and move quickly to restore law and order within facilities and assist all departmental staff with daily organization and operations of facilities.

OVERVIEW

- 28 CERT teams across the state
- Traditional team has five members (team leader or sergeant and four correctional officers)
- Team size may be increased at Level V (close) facilities
- Gray battle dress uniforms with untraditional patches
- Receives advanced training in cell extractions, chemical munitions, less lethal escorts and transports, offender searches, interview and interrogation techniques, intelligence gathering, and security threat groups (STG)
- Conducts shakedowns- An unannounced procedure conducted to detect and prevent the introduction of contraband, prevent escapes and other disturbances and discover hazards to health or safety that may go unnoticed during a routine inspection
- On-call 24/7

LOCATIONS OF TEAMS

- Augusta State Medical Prison
- Autry State Prison
- Baldwin State Prison
- Burruss Correctional Training Center
- Calhoun State Prison
- Central State Prison
- Coastal State Prison
- Dodge State Prison
- Dooly State Prison
- Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison (2 Teams)
- Georgia State Prison
- Hancock State Prison
- Hays State Prison
- Johnson State Prison
- Lee State Prison
- Lee Arrendale State Prison
- Macon State Prison
- Phillips State Prison
- Pulaski State Prison
- Rogers State Prison
- Rutledge State Prison
- Smith State Prison
- Telfair State Prison
- Valdosta State Prison
- Ware State Prison
- Washington State Prison
- Wilcox State Prison

TRAINING

Special Operations Basic Course

- 40-hour training course
- Classes administered:
 - Defensive Tactics
 - Chemical Agents and Less Lethal Munitions
 - Drill and Ceremony
 - Squad Formations
 - Mobile Field Force
 - Cell Extractions
 - Intelligence Gathering
- Successfully qualifies yearly with the agencies preferred duty weapon (Glock 19)

Advanced Firearms Training Course

- Successfully complete advanced firearms tactics and safely maneuver through advanced firearm drills with weapon (Glock 19)

REQUIREMENTS

- POST certified employee (security) with the rank of correctional officer (CO)
- Must successfully complete the Special Operations Physical Fitness Test (push-ups and sit-ups for a duration of two minutes and a 1.5 mile run) with a minimum score of 60 percent according to the Army Physical Fitness Testing standards
- Successfully qualify with their duty weapon with a minimum score of 80 percent on the Georgia Double Action Course
- Endure a formal review board
- Members must maintain physical fitness and firearms standards
- Attend certificate training sessions

INFORMATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

TACTICAL SQUADS

MISSION

To maintain well trained and highly motivated units, ready to mobilize upon command and move quickly to restore law and order to disturbed facilities and assist outside law enforcement.

OVERVIEW

- 25 squads
- 22 based at facilities
- Three regional (southeast, southwest and north) tactical squads (interdiction response teams-IRT)
- 11 members (IRT and Hays State Prison (SP) has 18 members; Georgia SP has 17 members)
- Black battle dress uniform with untraditional patches
- Receives extensive training on riot and crowd control, firearms, chemical munitions and other less than lethal munitions
- Highly scrutinized to guarantee they have the proper personnel in place to carry out the highly difficult tasks
- Conducts shakedowns
- Assists in local community during disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes and floods
- On-call 24/7

LOCATIONS OF TEAMS

- Augusta State Medical Prison
- Austry State Prison
- Baldwin State Prison
- Coastal State Prison
- Dodge State Prison
- Dooly State Prison
- Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison (houses two tactical squads combined with Metro, Central and Burruss CTC)
- Hancock State Prison
- Hays State Prison (houses one tactical squad of 18 combined with Walker SP)
- Johnson State Prison
- Lee/Calhoun State Prison (combined/housed at Lee SP)
- Macon State Prison
- North Interdiction Response Team (Regional)
- Phillips State Prison
- Rutledge State Prison
- SE Interdiction Response Team (Regional)
- SW Interdiction Response Team (Regional)
- Smith State Prison
- Telfair State Prison
- Valdosta State Prison
- Ware State Prison
- Washington State Prison
- Wilcox State Prison

REQUIREMENTS

- POST certified employee (security) who ranks from CO I to lieutenant
- Must successfully complete the Special Operations Physical Fitness Test (push-ups and sit-ups for a duration of two minutes and a 1.5 mile run) with a minimum score of 60 percent according to the Army Physical Fitness Testing standards
- Successfully qualify with their duty weapon with a minimum score of 80 percent on the Georgia Double Action Course
- Endure a formal review board
- Members must maintain physical fitness and firearms standards
- Attend certificate training sessions
- Interdiction response Teams are CO II only

TRAINING

Special Operations Basic Course

- 40-hour basic course
- Physical and demanding training
- Classes administered:
 - Defensive Tactics
 - Chemical Agents and Less Lethal Munitions
 - Drill and Ceremony
 - Squad Formations
 - Mobile Field Force
 - Cell Extractions
 - Intelligence Gathering

Advanced Firearms Training

- Advanced firearms course
- Successfully completes advanced firearms tactics and safely maneuver through advanced firearm drills weapon (Glock 19)

Judgmental Use of Deadly Force

- Advanced firearms course
- Teaches judgment in shoot/don't shoot situations

Statewide Shakedown Initiative

Determined to eradicate the state's prison system of contraband, the Georgia Department of Corrections implemented and bolstered interdiction methods within its facilities across the state of Georgia.