CHATHAM COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

> ESF-01 ANNEX APPENDIX 1-4

POST EVENT RETURN OF THE GENERAL POPULATION

AUGUST 2014









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ACRONYMS

- ASOC Air Support Operations Center
- CEMA Chatham Emergency Management Agency
- CPG Command Policy Group
- EAA Evacuation Assembly Area
- EOC Emergency Operations Center
- EOP Emergency Operations Plan
- ERB Evacuation/Reentry Branch
- ERBD Evacuation/Reentry Branch Director
- ESF Emergency Support Function
- GEMA Georgia Emergency Management Agency
- IC Incident Command(er)
- ID Identification
- OSC Operations Section Chief
- PSC Planning Section Chief
- RRC Returnee Reception Center



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I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The protection of Chatham County residents threatened by an Incident of Critical Significance is a primary objective of the County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). As a part of this Appendix, returning County Residents to their properties, homes, and businesses, following an evacuation requires an organized structure to ensure the protection of the general population and the emergency response community.
- B. Post event/disaster conditions in the affected area(s) may result in a variety of hazards not normally experienced. Enforcing access restrictions to specific hazardous areas within, and/or to Chatham County as a whole, may be required to ensure the initial response and prolonged recovery efforts are managed in the most efficient manner prudent.

II. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this Appendix is to outline procedures to facilitate the safe and timely return of Chatham County's general population into the affected area(s) following an evacuation caused by a local and/or large-scale emergency event and/or disaster.
- B. This Appendix also provides the various County Jurisdictions and their supporting agencies with basic coordination requirements to support their returning populations.

III. SCOPE

- A. Both natural and/or man made disasters may call for either a partial (specific locations, areas, and/or portions of the County), or total evacuation of the County's population. This Appendix is intended for County-wide application for return procedures taking place into and within Chatham County. This Appendix is an Appendix to Emergency Support Function (ESF) 01 Annex (Transportation), of the EOP; and is to be used in conjunction with the EOP under the direction of the Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), with the approval of the Command Policy Group (CPG).
- B. When established, emergency management partners coordinate efforts to ensure citizens are provided timely and accurate information and support regarding post event return procedures. These provisions apply to hazards or emergencies, and may be initiated and utilized at any level of organizational management and/or government within Chatham County.



IV. AUTHORITIES

- A. This Appendix is developed in accordance with the legal references listed below, and under the authority of the Chairman of the Board of the County Commission, Chatham County, Georgia; and the Director of the Chatham Emergency Management Agency, Chatham County, Georgia. This Appendix supersedes similar and previous versions to date.
- B. FEDERAL:
 - 1. National Response Framework, October 2007
 - 2. Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5 Management of Domestic Incidents
 - 3. Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.
- C. STATE:
 - 1. Georgia Emergency Management Act of 1981, as amended
 - 2. Georgia EOP
- D. COUNTY:
 - 1. Chatham County EOP, March 29, 2012
 - 2. Chapter 4, Article III, of the Chatham County Code, Emergency Management, December 21, 2012.

V. ASSUMPTIONS

- A. Following any evacuation, the Incident Commander (IC) and/or the CPG will determine when conditions in the area allow citizens to return to their homes, properties, and businesses.
- B. An IC is in command of a single significant event, and the CPG is responsible for policy decisions following a large-scale disaster. Both IC and CPG apply the same decision making process regarding access back into the affected area(s) following an event. This Appendix may use the term CPG and/or IC interchangeably.
- C. Guidance provided in this Appendix may also be used to protect lives and property in the event of an ordered partial evacuation.



- D. Reentry Operations refers to initial post-event efforts by First Responders and other designated emergency workers to enter affected area(s) of the County to mitigate life-safety issues prior to the return of the general population.
- E. Return Operations refers to the procedures providing for the County's general population to their homes, properties, and businesses following an evacuation.
- F. Returning the County's population to their homes, properties, and businesses after an event is a priority and begins as soon as practical.
- G. Phase I (Restricted Access) of the Reentry/Return Process has been completed.
- H. Decisions allowing access back into the affected area(s) following an evacuation are initiated by the appropriate command authority using available resources to assure an effective response.
- I. State assistance is supplementary to local activation of resources and will be made available in response to local requests for assistance.
- J. This Appendix is designed to provide the guidelines and procedures allowing access (the return) into either a portion or the whole of Chatham County. Operational actions and decisions made prior to allowing access back into County will be based to a large degree on the specific situation at hand and not on any one factor to be outlined in this Appendix.
- K. This Appendix applies to the entire population evacuated from the affected area, including those individuals evacuated utilizing public transportation. A successful return of the population will require additional planning and resources.
- L. Utilization of available resources and requests for mutual aid are coordinated through the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) utilizing established ESFs.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

A. This Appendix is implemented upon the recommendation of the Director of CEMA with the approval of the Chairman, Chatham County Board of Commissioners and concurrence of the Mayors of the Municipalities as appropriate (referred within this document as the CPG). Prior to the start of any Return Operations, CEMA will advise the State Operations Center of the anticipated schedule of events.



- B. Management of this Appendix will be coordinated through the primary coordinators of established County ESF Groups. These primary coordinators jointly make determinations necessary for the required response level to implement the plan. The Emergency Coordinators include:
 - 1. CEMA
 - 2. ESF-01 (Transportation)
 - 3. ESF-02 (Communications)
 - 4. ESF-06 (Mass Care & Sheltering)
 - 5. ESF-13 (Public Safety & Security)
 - 6. ESF-15 (External Affairs)

VII. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A. The Decision to Return
 - 1. The CPG is responsible for making the decision to allow access back into Chatham County following an evacuation. In order to make the determination as to when conditions allow for citizens to return/reenter, the CPG gathers information and evaluates the actual impact and potential affects an incident had on the County.
 - 2. The decision made by the CPG to allow the general population to return to the affected area(s) may have conditions granting access to some areas of the County while simultaneously limiting access to other designated areas until such time actions can be taken to mitigate and/or minimize conditions posing threats to life and/or safety.
- B. Coordination.
 - 1. Allowing access to the affected area(s) following an event will require a coordinated effort on the part of the County's emergency responders. In order to ensure the return is orchestrated in a timely, efficient, and safe manner, required coordination is accomplished through the Evacuation/Reentry Branch (ERB) which is part of the Operations Section in the EOC.



- 2. When practical, the County may be divided into designated areas and/or defined by municipality(s), geographical area(s), postal zip code(s), or other identifiable and enforceable limitations/boundaries to assist with reentry operations.
- C. Communications.
 - 1. General. Communications following an event will be a challenge. Mass communications networks, along with radio and landline communications methods routinely used by both government and private agencies may or may not be operational or available. Because of this possibility, both government and private agencies must plan to maintain redundant communications capabilities with the County EOC.
 - 2. Communications Methods. Regardless of the location of the County EOC, available communications resources will be coordinated through ESF-02 (Communications) and may include:
 - a. Commercial Land Line Telephone
 - b. Commercial Satellite Telephone
 - c. 800 MHz Radio
 - d. UHF Radio
 - e. VHF Radio (ARES and Public Safety Nets)
 - f. Internet Connectivity
 - g. Message Courier
 - h. Commercial Radio and Television Stations
- D. Public Information. Information, news releases, and return instructions will be provided to the public in accordance with established agreements with both public and private communications and media sources. Media sources include but may not be limited to:
 - 1. CEMA Hotline (Telephone)
 - 2. CEMA/Chatham County Websites (Internet)
 - 3. Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and Georgia Peach State Public Radio



- 4. Commercial Radio and Television Stations
- E. Progressive Reentry/Return.
 - During the period immediately following an event affecting areas of, 1. or Chatham County as a whole, living conditions will be austere at best. There are likely to be shortages of food, water, fuel; and services such as basic utilities and medical care may be unavailable. Numerous conditions can be expected in the affected area(s) posing major life-safety issues and challenges. Life-safety issues are conditions which if not addressed by properly trained and equipped personnel pose a continuing or additional risk to the public's health and welfare. Life-safety issues may include but are not limited to: downed energized power lines; blocked roadways, damaged bridges; structural damage to buildings; extensive debris; displaced domestic and wild animals including alligators and poisonous snakes; rotting garbage; large areas of standing contaminated water; possible gas leaks, chemical spills. uncontrolled fires, large scale flooding, and human remains.
 - 2. GEMA Officials and Coastal County Emergency Management Agency Directors have defined and developed four phases of reentry following a hurricane landfall in Georgia. It is further recognized these phases may be sub-divided or have additional restrictions based on current conditions.
 - 3. The Chatham County CPG will make the determination following an evacuation of the County as to when conditions in the affected area(s) allow for citizens to return (reenter). The affected area(s) may be limited in size; could include of Chatham County; or possibly extend into several counties in the region. When announced, a progressive, four-phase reentry plan will be initiated to ensure orderly access to the affected area(s) of Chatham County.
 - 4. PHASE I
 - a. Phase I Defined: Restricted Access. Render Safe Task Force Team Entry. This phase is the initial phase of reentry in which teams from state and local response agencies as well as private sector utility providers will gain access to impacted areas. The primary objective of personnel operating in this condition is to render the area safe for follow on first responders conducting life safety operations.



- b. Phase I Planning Assumptions: In most situations members of the Render Safe Task Forces will be co-located immediately before reentry operations begin in defined staging areas inland. These teams will be the first officials to enter restricted areas, therefore reentry passes are not required as law enforcement officials restricting access will be imbedded in this response element or will not be posted to restrict access due to operating conditions. The majority of supporting agencies and partners of this group will likely be operating emergency response type vehicles with obvious agency or company markings. Reentry into Chatham County during Phases I and IIA will be restricted to First Responders and other designated Emergency Response Personnel to include but not limited to:
 - 1) Law Enforcement
 - 2) Fire Services
 - 3) Search and Rescue Resources
 - 4) Emergency Medical Services
 - 5) Government Officials
- c. Phase I Identification (ID) Requirements: First Responders and other designated Emergency Response Personnel reentering during Phase I must be in possession of an official Local, State, or Federal Government/Department Photo ID Card.
- d. Determining Access. Law Enforcement and other designated security personnel will exercise discretion at County Reentry Control Points. If personnel at the control point are not able to make an appropriate determination regarding access, the EOC will be contacted for resolution. Please Note: Being in possession of a Reentry Permit WILL NOT allow access into Chatham County prior to Reentry Phase IIB.
- 5. PHASE II-Emergency Response and Life Safety Critical Workforce. Phase II is further defined as IIA and IIB.



- a. PHASE IIA.
 - 1) Phase IIA Defined: Designated for Critical Workforce Conducting Life Safety Operations. This phase will likely consist of personnel conducting life safety operations such as search and rescue, emergency suppression; hazardous medical services. fire materials control and containment. preliminary damage assessment, essential relief staff to critical medical facilities and immediate utility restoration to critical incident facilities.
 - 2) Phase IIA Planning Assumptions: Personnel entering during this phase responding in non-marked public safety or local utility vehicles should be expected to present employment credentials as well as a valid state issued identification card to public safety personnel controlling access. In limited situations, private sector personnel may be required to have State of Georgia Critical Workforce Reentry passes. These passes are issued to local private sector personnel through the Local Emergency Management Agency Director.
 - 3) Phase IIA ID Requirements: First Responders and other designated Emergency Response Personnel reentering during Phase IIA must be in possession of an official Local, State, or Federal Government/Department Photo ID Card.
- b. PHASE IIB.
 - 1) Phase II B Defined: Essential infrastructure emergency support personnel this phase should consist primarily of those individuals from the public and private sector supporting the re-establishment of critical infrastructure to support the Reentry of the general public. These critical infrastructure systems include but are not limited to petroleum and food distributors, non-emergency medical facilities such as dialysis centers, pharmaceutical providers, members of the media, medical facility support staff and local government essential workers.



- 2) Phase IIB Planning Assumptions: This phase will require close coordination between county emergency operations centers, as well as local public safety officials controlling access to ensure the appropriate individuals are allowed into damaged areas.
- 3) Phase IIB ID Requirements: First Responders and other designated Emergency Response and Support Personnel re-entering during Phase IIB must be in possession of an official Local, State, or Federal Government/Department Photo ID Card; OR Disaster Critical Workforce Permit.
- 6. PHASE III.
 - a. Phase III Defined: This phase provides for residents, property owners and business owners access to the affected area(s).
 - b. Phase III Planning Assumptions: This phase may come one week or more after phase I and may be the hardest to control for various reasons. Residents and individuals entering during this phase should expect to have their residency or affiliation with a local business challenged.
 - c. ID Requirements: Local public safety officials will likely ask those attempting to gain access to show a valid state issued identification card as well as some type of document or proof they have a reason or interest to enter the impacted area. Types of documentation to validate the need for entry for these individuals include but are not limited to driver's license or state issued identification with an address in the impacted area, property deed, recent utility bill verifying address, current voter registration card, recent property tax statement, business credential or pay stub from local business.
 - d. Phase III may have specific restrictions in place such as:
 - 1) Limited to portions of the impacted county
 - 2) Restrictions allowing access only during day-light hours



- 7. PHASE IV.
 - a. Phase IV Defined: This is the final phase of reentry in which local officials may determine portions or the entire County are relatively safe for the general public to enter.
 - Phase IV ID Requirements: NO SPECIAL ID REQUIREMENTS. Phase IV may continue specific restrictions such as:
 - 1) Limited to portions of the impacted county
 - 2) Restrictions allowing access only during day-light hours
- F. Returning Evacuees from Inland Shelters. As soon as possible during Phase II, Evacuees transported to inland shelters from the Evacuation Assembly Area (EAA) will be provided transportation back to Chatham County.
 - 1. The Decision to Return. The CPG will authorize the return of evacuees from their inland shelter locations based on the recommendations made by the EOC Manager. Returning the Evacuees during Phase II may be delayed depending on the level of damage to the infrastructure required to support their return.
 - 2. Coordination. Depending on available communications, and the amount of support being provided by the host jurisdiction at the shelters, it may be necessary for a team from the ERB to travel to the host jurisdiction to coordinate the return. If ground transport is not available or not practical, the Air Support Operations Center (ASOC) may coordinate transportation for the team to the host jurisdiction and back.
 - 3. Procedures.
 - a. When Phase II is announced, Evacuees who used public transportation to evacuate Chatham County will have the option to make their own return arrangements. If Evacuees chose to leave the inland shelters and return on their own, they must follow the shelters' established accountability procedures (checkout).
 - b. Preparing the Evacuees for their return to Chatham County is primarily the host jurisdiction's responsibility as coordinated with the ERB. When practical, the concepts and



procedures used during the evacuation process will be applied during the return operations.

- c. Only the people and pets evacuated from Chatham County via the EAA are eligible to utilize public transportation to return to Chatham County. The original Evacuation Rosters and the most recent shelter registration records will be used to verify Returnee status.
- d. Pets. Provisions will be made for pet owners to pick up their pets from established pet shelters prior to returning to Chatham County.
- e. Excess Luggage. There are no provisions to provide additional transportation assets to accommodate additional/excess luggage/baggage obtained by Returnees while sheltered at host inland locations.
- 4. Return Routes. Once general access back into the County is allowed, major roadway networks available from inland locations will be utilized. See Tab A.
- Traffic and Access Control. Outside of Chatham County, traffic and 5. access control in the region will be the responsibility of both State and local jurisdictions. County and municipal law enforcement agencies have primary responsibility to control access to affected areas within their respective jurisdictions. Within jurisdictional boundaries, law enforcement officials may establish and enforce access restrictions which may include the use of roadblocks, control access points, and/or security checkpoints as needed on designated roads and highways in Chatham County. These controls may be established as far out as Chatham County's Additional perimeter roadblocks and jurisdictional boundary. security checkpoints may be established as required by individual jurisdictions at designated locations based on the emergency and circumstances.
 - a. Roadblocks and Access Control Points. Roadblocks and access control points may be established to prevent the uncontrolled, premature access back into the affected area(s) by the civilian population which may hinder the efforts of first responders and emergency personnel. These controls are also an efficient way of deterring looting and other acts of lawlessness.



- Roadblocks. The strategic location of roadblocks is an important part of controlling access to specific areas. Roadblocks are commonly used to prevent entry into the affected area(s) and may be manned or unmanned (barricades).
- 2) Access Control Points. Access control points are manned roadblocks which allow for the access of authorized personnel into a restricted area.
- b. Checkpoints. Checkpoints may be established to verify the identification of those persons attempting to gain access to the affected area. Every effort will be made to assist residents, property, and business owners during their return. Jurisdictional law enforcement agencies will be responsible for establishing and staffing checkpoints controlling access into their respective municipalities/jurisdictions.
- 6. Reception. If conditions allow, Chatham County may establish a Returnee Reception Center (RRC) to assist returnees. The location of the RRC will be determined post event based on remaining infrastructure availability and suitability. When established, Chatham Area Transit bus routes will be modified as needed to include the RRC to provide returnees transportation back to their original points of embarkation or to established temporary shelters.
- 7. Temporary Shelters. There are no pre-designated, post-event, temporary shelter locations in Chatham County. In the event the area has experienced wide spread damage and destruction, it may be necessary for inland shelters to remain in operation, and any return operations delayed until such time provisions can be made to establish temporary County shelters and/or housing.
- G. Logistics and Resources
 - 1. CEMA in coordination with local emergency management partners will identify resources needed to respond to, recover from, and mitigate incidents both man-made and natural in occurrence. List of potential resources for available use or need will be compiled based on past incidents, past full scale exercises, and current best practices risk analysis.



- 2. Known resource short comings based on hazard impact, response, and recovery needs are identified and a source for such items will be identified. Additional, the request for such resources will follow standard operational guidelines for resource request (i.e. ICS form 213 RR). It will then fall upon the logistics section for the incident to identify a resource for procurement.
- 3. Private agencies play a critical role in providing resource need in support of an emergency incident. These relationships between the public and private sector are established before an incident occurs or a resource is needed. As a resource need is identified during the mitigation phase of planning and such resources are not obtainable through public means, private sources are then identified are able to provide such resources. Memoranda of Understanding and contracts identifying the availability and cost of resources during critical times are than procured
- 4. Logistical support of engaged assets is the responsibility of the jurisdiction to which the asset belongs. Records and logs will be maintained in order to identify agencies utilizing these facilities.
- 5. Logs and records are used in order to track financial responsibilities. If these resources are secured through the EOC Logistics Section, this Section will be accountable for record generation and retention. If these resources are secured through other coordination efforts, the entity responsible for receiving the resource will have accountability for record generator and retention.
- H. Training and Exercises. Training and exercise help to ensure effective implementation of this Appendix.
 - 1. Training. A properly trained staff provides the framework for functionality and expedites operational tactics during the reentry process. Minimum training requirements for each person supporting this Appendix are defined under National Incident Management System.
 - 2. Exercises. Reentry and Return Procedures must be exercised in accordance with the County Emergency Operations Plan, Annex E Training and Exercise. Modifications to this Appendix, or any part within, require exercise to practice/test those modifications. The exercise may only test the specific modified section of the Appendix, or it may test the entire operational plan. The magnitude of an exercise will be dictated by the significance in revision of the existing plan.



VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. EOC Manager. The EOC Manager is the primary conduit between the CPG and EOC Staff. Upon receiving the directive from the CPG to restrict access to the County or to begin the phased reentry, the EOC Manager will execute the action through EOC General Staff and manage the overall process. The EOC Manager will provide regular updates to the CPG each Operational Period.
- B. EOC Panning Section Chief (PSC). The PSC is responsible for coordinating the overall Reentry Plan. The plan will be based on information provided by first responders and emergency personnel participating in Phase I of the reentry plan. The PSC shall also ensure the objectives from the CPG are incorporated into the Operational Period's Incident Action Plan and execution of theses objectives are summarized in follow up Operational Period Situation Reports.
- C. EOC Operations Section Chief (OSC). The OSC is responsible for executing the overall reentry process. The OSC shall monitor the process and provide regular updates to the EOC Manager and the PSC.
- D. Evacuation/Reentry Branch Director (ERBD). The ERBD is responsible for coordinating both Reentry and Return Operations. The ERBD is the OSC's primary point of contact regarding Return Operations. Groups will be assigned to the Branch as required, and the ERBD will coordinate directly with Group Supervisors to accomplish assigned tasks.
- E. ERB Transportation Coordinator. When assigned, the ERB Transportation Coordinator will coordinate with supporting partners to ensure a sufficient number of buses and drivers are available and prepared to return Evacuees from the inland shelters (including maintenance concerns and/or fuel issues). The ERB Transportation Coordinator will also insure other transportation provisions outlined in this Appendix are initiated.
- F. ESF-06, Mass Care and Sheltering Group Supervisor. As needed, ESF-06 will coordinate and establish temporary shelters, as well as other support needed for Returnees as required.
- G. ESF-13, Public Safety and Security Group Supervisor. In addition to conducting routine law enforcement activities throughout the County, law enforcement agencies will be responsible to support reentry operations. ESF-13 will assist these agencies by coordinating the manpower and resources required to support the traffic and access control procedures outlined in this Appendix and as needed by local jurisdictions.



- H. ESF-15, External Affairs Group Supervisor. In conjunction with ESF-02, ESF-15 will be the primary group providing information to the evacuated population of Chatham County regarding Return Procedures.
- I. ASOC Air Boss. The ASOC Air Boss coordinates requests from the Operations Section for air support during reentry operations. The types of missions requested by Operations may include route reconnaissance, traffic monitoring, and providing air transport for EOC Staff traveling to inland locations to conduct pre-event (Return) coordination.

IX. APPENDIX MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- A. Executive Agent. CEMA is the executive agent for Appendix management and maintenance. The Appendix and supporting documents will be updated periodically as required to incorporate new directives and changes based on lessons learned from exercises and actual events. This section establishes procedures for interim changes and full updates of the Appendix.
- B. Types and Changes. Changes include additions of new or supplementary material and deletions. No proposed change should contradict or override authorities or other plans contained in statute, order, or regulation.
- C. Coordination and Approval. Any department or agency with assigned responsibilities within the Appendix may propose a change to the plan. CEMA is responsible for coordinating proposed modifications to the Appendixes with primary agencies, support agencies and other stakeholders. CEMA will coordinate review and approval for proposed modifications as required.
- D. Notice of Change. After coordination has been accomplished, including receipt of the necessary signed approval supporting the final change language, CEMA will issue an official Notice of Change. The notice will specify the date, number, subject, purpose, background, and action required, and provide the change language on one or more numbered and dated insert pages to replace the modified pages in the EOP, Annex, or supporting documents. Once published, the modifications will be considered part of the EOP for operational purposes pending a formal revision and re-issuance of the entire document. Interim changes can be further modified or updated using the above process.
- E. Distribution. CEMA will distribute the Notice of Change to participating agencies. Notice of Change to other organizations will be provided upon request. Re-issuance of the individual Appendixes or the entire EOP will take place as required. Working toward continuous improvement, CEMA is responsible for an annual review and update of the EOP to include related



annexes, and a complete revision every four years (or more frequently if the County Commission or Georgia Emergency Management Agency deems necessary). The review and update will consider lessons learned and best practices identified during exercises and responses to actual events, and incorporate new information technologies. CEMA will distribute revised EOC Annex and Appendix documents for the purpose of interagency review and concurrence.



TAB A RE-ENTRY CHECK POINTS



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TAB A RE-ENTRY CHECK POINTS

ROUTES	TABLE 2 REFERENCE
I-95 from South Carolina	1
State Road 21 from Effingham County	2
State Road 30 from Effingham County	3
US 80 from Effingham County	4
I-16 from Effingham County	5
State Road 204 from Effingham County	6
John Carter Road from Bryan County	7
I-95 from Bryan County	8
US 17 from Bryan County	9
US 17 from South Carolina	10
State Road 25 from South Carolina	11

Table1. Return Routes



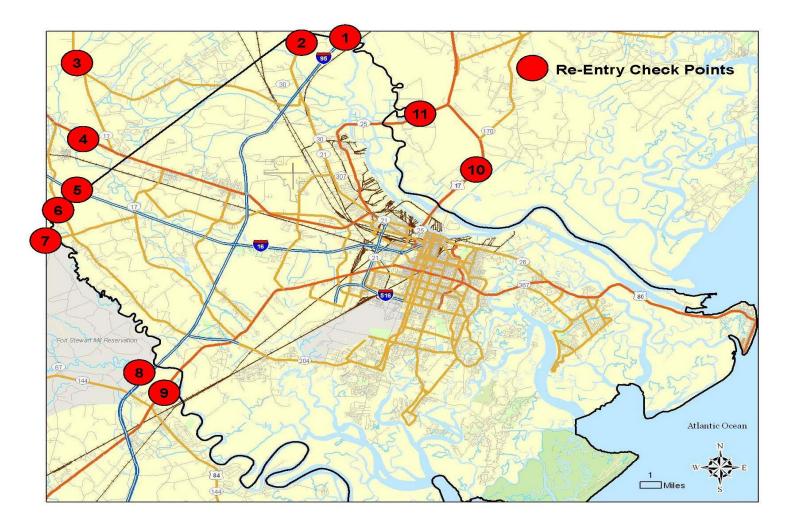


Table 2. Map – Re-Entry Check Points