



**SHERIFF JOHN MILES**

**CANDLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 693 • METTER, GEORGIA • 30439**

**CONTACT:** Capt. Justin Wells

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE:** April 24, 2024

**PHONE:** 912-685-2568

**\*\*Sheriff Creates Special Response Team\*\***

Candler County Sheriff John Miles is proud to announce the creation of a Special Response Team, S.R.T.

Sheriff Miles has created a new Special Response Team to prepare the agency better for critical incident response in our community. The S.R.T. will be comprised of Sheriff's Office deputies, reserve deputies, volunteers, Emergency Management personnel, and others with skills, assets, and attributes that bolster response capabilities. The S.R.T. team will be deployed during critical incidents such as missing persons, including the elderly and children, man tracking, woodland operations, domestic terrorism incidents, hostage situations, violent criminal acts, natural disasters, and other law enforcement and emergency management operations. The team will ultimately have assets such as UAVs, emergency management capabilities, tracking K9s, apprehension K9s, emergency medical, law enforcement tactical elements, tactical law enforcement equipment, and more. The S.R.T. is in the early stages of creation; however, it has already been deployed on several man-tracking incidents this year.

We will operate the team using existing funding, equipment, and assets at the Sheriff's Office. This includes the critical incident response equipment that the Candler County Board of Commissioners worked with us to acquire over the past two years. We also seek funding through multiple grants and private donations to help fund additional team capabilities.

The primary mission of the Candler County Sheriff's Office is to maintain public safety within prescribed ethical and constitutional limits while providing professional law enforcement services. Within the primary mission, the Sheriff's Office has numerous responsibilities to the citizens in which we serve. Among the most significant responsibilities are preserving life and property for the 11,000-plus citizens of Candler County and over 26,300 daily travelers using the Interstate system, which extends through the county. The Sheriff's Office is also responsible for the safety of the school system complex, which can have a daily population of over 2500.

In recent years, The United States has seen an extreme uptick in violent crime. This violent crime includes a litany of particularized methods utilized. The most dangerous methods involve using firearms to commit these violent acts. Sadly, we have also seen an uptick in violent crimes perpetrated against law enforcement officials. Forty-seven law enforcement officers



**SHERIFF JOHN MILES**

---

**CANDLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 693 • METTER, GEORGIA • 30439**

have lost their lives in the line of duty so far this year. One hundred thirty-seven officers perished while on duty in 2023, and 1,801 within the past five years. In 2021, deputies with the Candler County Sheriff's Office were involved in a very dynamic situation, which resulted in the first officer-involved shooting the office has seen in recent history. This incident involved the suspect kidnapping a victim, shooting at law enforcement, fleeing from officers in a multicounty pursuit, and other dangerous acts. This situation ultimately ended with a deputy from another county utilizing a patrol rifle to end the violence. Violent Crime seems to be on the rise, which places our deputies and the public at increasing risk.

In 2024, our community is seeing unprecedented growth in the area. We are within 40 miles of the Hyundai Meta Plant, slated to bring thousands of people to the area. Candler County is already experiencing growth. We currently have three large plants under construction, estimated to produce 500 + additional jobs. We are also seeing housing development, commercial development, and general interest in the county that we have not seen in decades. With the unprecedented growth anticipated for our community, we seek to prepare our public safety personnel for increased and more frequent critical incidents.

The creation of this team will significantly improve the public safety response that Candler County citizens deserve. If anyone has questions regarding the team, please contact Captain Justin Wells or Captain Stanley Slater.

###