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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 16, 2011

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FIRST-EVER DJJ SERT TEAM GRADUATES AT MILAN YDC

– **5 men and women receive special tactical training to manage noncompliant youth** –

(Milan, Ga.) --- Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice Commissioner L. Gale Buckner today announced that the Department's first-ever Security Emergency Response Team (SERT) completed their extensive training on managing non-compliant youth in day-to-day facility operations.

The SERT staff also received advanced training in cell extractions, chemical munitions and special escorts and transports, offender searches, interview and interrogation techniques and security threat groups. DJJ plans to establish SERT teams at all 26 secure facilities throughout the state.

"These SERT teams enhance DJJ's ability to protect staff and youth, and deal with difficult situations safely, quickly and effectively," said DJJ Commissioner L. Gale Buckner. "We at DJJ take seriously our mission to both protect the public and operate facilities and programs that are constitutionally safe for both youth and staff while ensuring that youth take responsibility for their actions and chart a course toward a more productive life."

The Milan graduates are:

- Teri Farrow of Cochran in Bleckley County;
- Betty Jackson of Louisville in Jefferson County;
- Aaron Howard of Chauncey in Dodge County;
- Kevin Harris of McRae in Telfair County; and
- Mikolas Smith of Macon in Bibb County.

DJJ's mission is to protect and serve the citizens of Georgia by holding young offenders accountable for their actions through the delivery of services and sanctions in appropriate settings and by supporting youth in their communities to become productive and law-abiding citizens. Each day, at 26 facilities and 92 court services offices throughout the state, more than 4,000 DJJ employees work diligently to effect justice as well as redirect and shape the young lives in the agency's care so they can become contributing members of society. At the same time, DJJ seeks to protect the victims of crimes so that they can rebuild their lives.

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