



ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
Atlanta Field Division

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www.atf.gov/
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ATF NATIONAL RESPONSE TEAM ACTIVATED TO LEARY

LEARY, Ga. – The National Response Team (NRT) from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) along with ATF special agents from the Atlanta Field Division have entered the investigation of the Dec. 8, 2007, Spring Creek Missionary Baptist Church fire at the request of the Georgia State Fire Marshal's Office.

Vanessa L. McLemore, Special Agent in Charge of ATF's Atlanta Field Division, said that, although no injuries occurred as a result of the fire, early estimates of damages are in excess of \$3 million. ATF is requesting members of the public with information regarding the fire and those who witnessed the fire in its early stages, including initial 911 callers, to please contact ATF's toll free hotline number at 1-888-ATF-FIRE (1-888-283-3473).

Since 1978, ATF's NRT brings definitive expertise and an array of state-of-the-art equipment to the investigation of major fires and explosives incidents. Four regional components, organized geographically, to cover the United States comprise the NRT. The team can respond within 24 hours to assist state and local law enforcement or fire service personnel with onsite investigations.

The responding NRT component normally has 13-18 members, including veteran special agents who have post-blast and fire origin-and-cause expertise; forensic chemists; explosives enforcement officers; fire protection engineers; accelerant detection canines; explosives detection canines; and intelligence, computer forensic and audit support. A fleet of fully equipped response vehicles strategically located throughout the United States to provide logistical support.

ATF's partnership with federal, state and local officers is vital to the most effective processing efforts at an explosives or fire scene. The NRT capitalizes on that by working alongside its partners in reconstructing the scene, identifying the seat of the blast or the origin of the fire, conducting interviews and sifting through debris to obtain evidence related to the explosion or fire.

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In addition to investigating hundreds of large fire and explosives scenes, the NRT trucks were deployed for the 2001 terrorist attack on the Pentagon, the Olympics and other major sporting events in the United States, presidential inaugurations and the national political conventions, and major international conferences.

This is the fourth NRT activation in fiscal year 2008 and the 643rd since the program began in 1978.

****MEDIA ALERT****: ATF officials will be available for comment today (12/10/2007) between 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm, on scene, at 3558 Highway 55, Leary, Ga.

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