

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHERIFF SEEKS \$340,000 IN FEDERAL GRANT DOLLARS

Grants Would Bolster Anti-Gang Response & Emergency Software

Burlington County Sheriff Jean Stanfield today announced she is seeking two federal grants totaling \$338,723, one of which will assist two municipalities in disrupting gang activities, and another that will enable the County to more readily access crime data, high-tech aerial photos, and other information during emergency situations.

Stanfield said that \$29,453 is being sought to enhance gang disruption activities in Pemberton and Willingboro Townships. The monies will cover 450 hours of police overtime, providing for special patrols and more of a police presence when gang-related activities are anticipated.

A separate \$309,270 grant would enable the County to bring all its existing emergency, crime-related data, and other information under one software system – and make it readily available through the mobile command post run by her office, and hand-held devices in the field.

“We’ve identified federal grant dollars which, we believe, address real needs in Burlington County,” said Stanfield. “Identifying, discouraging and disrupting gang activity is an ongoing initiative of every law enforcement agency in Burlington County.

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“Separate and apart from that, we are seizing upon an opportunity to secure federal dollars that will assist all those who respond to major incidences, by making it possible for them to quickly access the information they need,” she added.

On the municipal grants, Stanfield previously assisted Pemberton and Willingboro in securing federal dollars targeted toward mentoring young people most vulnerable to gang influence. Typically, officers visited recreation centers and playgrounds where they could interact with youth, and discourage gang involvement.

“This additional grant is really providing another tool by enabling local police to target existing gangs, secure intelligence, establish a street presence, and disrupt gang activities within the towns,” she said.

The funds are being sought through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program administered by the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance. A copy of the grant application is available for public review in the freeholders’ office.

The larger grant would be awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. It is being sought with the assistance of Drakontas, LLC, a Camden-based firm that has developed the type of software to be used.

NCIC crime data, high tech aerial photography, GIS (Geographical Information System) data, floor plans for schools and other facilities, and a variety of other existing resources and data systems would be integrated under one software system with these federal dollars.

The equipment to access this data would be available to law enforcement, SWAT teams, hazardous material response personnel, fire services, and other emergency personnel during major incidences.

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