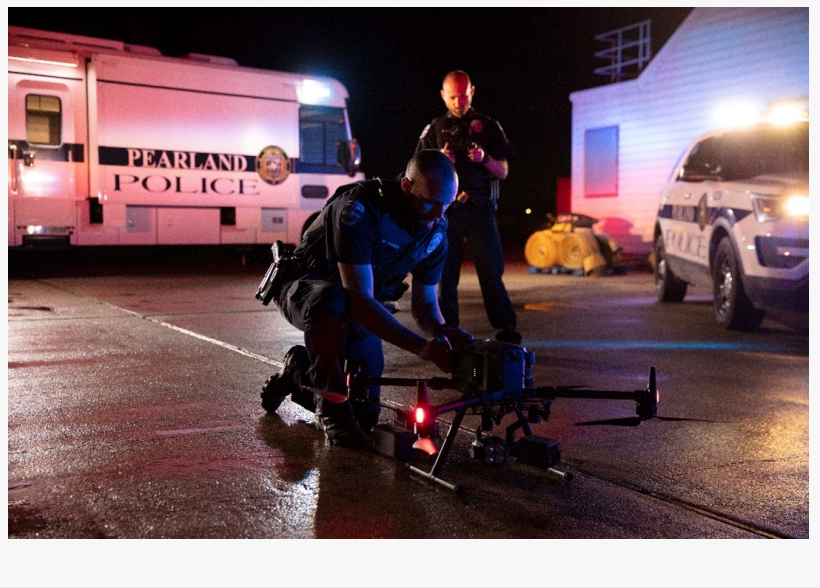


Pearland PD Leverages WhiteFox technology to Achieve First Ever DFR BLVOS Approval without Visual Observers

Ensuring safe drone as first responder operations using advanced technology from WhiteFox Defense and Iris Automation

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, March 22, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Pearland Police Department has been awarded a certificate of authorization (COA) to operate its drone as first responder (DFR) program beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operation, eliminating the need for human visual observers



(VOs). This was achieved using [WhiteFox](#) Defense for drone detection and Iris Automation's Casia G ground-based air surveillance system to detect manned aircraft.

The City of Pearland is a rapidly growing city south of Houston with a population of 129,600 and 179 sworn police officers. It covers a mostly residential area of 49 square miles, and includes major urban facilities such as hospitals, schools, colleges, and shopping centers.

Knowing the hot weather and high humidity much of the year in Pearland meant having a VO on a roof was not feasible, police officer and drone pilot, Brandon Karr (now with DroneSense), envisioned employing technology to ensure clear airspace for DFR operations. He worked first with Bill Inman, Director of Business Development at WhiteFox Defense, to deploy drone detection technology. "The WhiteFox system quickly provided the data needed to demonstrate to the FAA that we could see and avoid uncrewed aircraft [drones]," says Karr, "but we needed a solution for crewed aircraft. Bill introduced me to Iris Automation, hoping the combination of the two technologies would meet the FAA's requirements. The process took some time, but we are thrilled to have achieved this milestone that sets the stage for other departments around the country."

Pearland PD is now able to radically improve how it responds to emergency calls. Drones can be

dispatched immediately, circumventing traffic, and offering an advanced assessment of the incident scene and reducing risks to officers. It allows first responders to be 'on scene' faster than ground-based units, allowing them to observe the scene and relay critical information to other responding officers, fire, or paramedics. These 'early eyes on scene' can be the difference between life and death, allowing for the appropriate level of response, including reducing the over-deployment of resources.

This is possible using highly automated drones, centrally managed by a small number of personnel. Operating BVLOS removes the requirement for the operator to be co-located with the drone, potentially increasing the ratio of drones to operators, and exponentially improving scale and efficiency.

Quote from Chad Randall, Assistant Chief of Police, Pearland Police Department

"In a climate where personnel shortages are impacting first responders across the nation, having a fully BVLOS drone as first responder program greatly enhances resource allocation while maintaining a high level of situational awareness for first responder safety."

The approval for its Drones as First Responder (DFR) program required the use of WhiteFox drone detection system and Iris Automation's Casia G system as alternative means of compliance to the 91.113 "see and avoid" requirement. This is a significant achievement in scaling drones for public safety operations and is the first Part 91 approval secured using the two technologies in concert.

Quote from Charles Werner, Director, Drone Responders Public Safety Alliance

"This landmark approval for Pearland PD is a game-changer. It enables drones as first responders to grow exponentially, helping emergency responders to maximize resources, while making communities across the nation safer."

About Pearland Police Department

The City of Pearland is a dynamic growing city of 129,600 served by 179 sworn police officers. The department is led by Chief Johnny Spires, a law enforcement executive with more than 30 years of police experience. Chief Spires is responsible for the department's \$31 million budget, four divisions and more than 230 City employees in various areas of the police department that include: Patrol, Traffic Enforcement, Criminal Investigations, K-9, School Resource Officers, Professional Standards, Telecommunications, Animal Services, Jail, and more.

<https://www.pearlandtx.gov/departments/police>

About WhiteFox Defense Technologies, Inc.

Headquartered in California, WhiteFox's mission is to keep the sky open for responsible pilots by creating solutions that advance drone technology for a better world. As the global leader in pioneering the safe integration of drones into society and offering worldwide drone airspace

security solutions. whitefoxdefense.com

About Iris Automation

Iris Automation is dedicated to creating an aviation environment where no two aircraft ever collide in mid-air. Iris leverages innovative AI-based vision technology that enables uncrewed and crewed aircraft to mitigate the risk of airborne collisions – vital for safe, scalable, and efficient operations across countless industries. Iris' onboard and ground-based Casia systems give operators the situational awareness and automation needed to safely navigate an increasingly complex and congested airspace. Iris works closely with civil aviation authorities globally as they implement regulatory frameworks to advance safety and efficiency in aviation.

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