

Nevada's Retired First Responders and Military Veterans Pioneering Railroad Public Safety

See Something Say Something Campaign with the RAT PACK

RENO, NV, UNITED STATES, October 16, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A remarkable and innovative initiative is transforming Nevada's rail landscape as retired first responders and veterans unite to safeguard the state's railroads. These seasoned professionals, with a wealth of experience in dedicated service, public safety, and emergency response, are taking on a novel and indispensable role.



Safely observing the rail infrastructure

Under the auspices of the Washoe County Sheriff Office's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), the Rail Auxiliary Team, affectionately known as the [RAT PACK](#), is emerging as a trailblazing force in railway public safety and their ability to report suspicious activity to the appropriate agency with accurate and timely information.

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Rich Gent

The RAT PACK is laser-focused on enhancing the safety, security, and integrity of the railroads in Washoe and Storey Counties in Nevada. Leveraging the extensive backgrounds and expertise of retired first responders, they bring an unparalleled level of knowledge and dedication to the task.

However, their role extends beyond physical monitoring.

RAT PACK members actively contribute to public safety measures through education and the implementation of reporting methods aimed at reducing or eliminating train/trespasser

incidents. They serve as a vital bridge between the community and law enforcement, positioning the counties proactive approach against potential rail public safety issues as well as suspicious activities on or near the tracks.

Trespasser deaths and suicides by train not only devastate the trespassers' families but also have traumatic effects on train engineers, conductors, first responders and witnesses who must deal with the aftermath.

Nvrailaware.org, the State suicide prevention agency, along with railroads across the United States and Europe, are working diligently to reduce trespasser deaths, suicides, and suicide attempts through awareness campaigns, employee education, interventions, and mental health promotion.



Focusing on local rail operations

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on mental health, resulting in a significant increase in attempted suicides, suicides, and mental illness across all demographics, affecting the rail and transit industry as well. NVrailaware.org is committed to fostering collaboration among industry stakeholders to tackle suicide prevention, promote mental health resources, and implement mitigation initiatives.

To prepare these professionals for their pivotal roles, retired first responders undergo comprehensive training modules tailored to the intricacies of railroad public safety and what could be considered suspicious activity supporting the See Something Say Something campaign. This comprehensive curriculum covers a wide range of topics, including general rail safety, basic railroading, and the legal aspects of railroad private property. An innovative aspect of the training is the ability of this group to report any rail public safety issue effectively, efficiently, and accurately to the appropriate agency for action.

In addition to rigorous on-site training, RAT PACK members are required to receive 8 hours of rail-specific training as well as monthly on-line or face-to-face training. This resource, delivered through computer-based instruction and streaming video, offers a flexible and convenient learning model accommodating individual paces and preferences.

The RAT PACK's innovative approach not only equips retired veterans and first responders with new skills but also presents a practical, comprehensive solution to maintaining the safety of Nevada's railroads. These dedicated professionals continue to serve their communities, collaborating closely with railroad asset protection and local law enforcement to preserve the integrity of vital rail infrastructure.

The concept of harnessing the experience of retired first responders for community betterment is not entirely new, but its innovative application in rail public safety monitoring is a game-changer. This initiative enhances rail system public safety while allowing these veterans to extend their service, making their retirement years meaningful and productive.

The potential for broader application of this model is substantial, offering a blueprint for replication in other states and industries. It underscores the power of experience and knowledge transfer for community well-being and safety enhancement. As the RAT PACK's unwavering commitment to safety and security and service garners recognition, Nevada's retired first responders and military veterans are exemplifying that retirement years can be a testament to continued service, further enhancing the safety of the state's railroads and underscoring their dedication to the community.

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