

DRONERESPONDERS and National Real Time Crime Center Association Announce Strategic Operations Agreement

Strategic Partnership Will Advance Interoperability between Drone as a First Responder and NRTCC Operations across the U.S.

WILLIAMSBURG, VA, UNITED STATES, March 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Real Time Crime Center Association ([NRTCCA](#)) and [DRONERESPONDERS](#) today announced a national operations agreement designed to strengthen collaboration and accelerate the integration of Drone as First Responder (DFR) programs with real-time crime center operations across the United States.



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*Chief Charles L. Werner (Ret.),
Director of
DRONERESPONDERS*

The announcement was made at the DRONERESPONDERS National Conference ([NACON](#)) at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Virginia, where leaders from across the public safety, drone, and technology sectors have gathered to advance the future of unmanned systems in emergency response.

The agreement marks a significant step forward in aligning the operational expertise, training resources, and best practices of both organizations to enhance real-time situational awareness and improve decision-making for public safety agencies nationwide.

The collaboration will support agencies as they move from concept to implementation, strengthening response efficiency and community safety outcomes through the coordinated use of DFR programs and real-time operational platforms.

As part of the partnership, the NRTCCA and DRONERESPONDERS will establish a joint DRONERESPONDERS/NRTCCA Working Group. The group will focus on capturing, developing, and sharing best practices for effectively integrating DFR programs with real-time crime center operations, with emphasis on policy development, governance, staffing models, technology integration, and sustainable program design.

“The merging of real-time crime centers and DFR programs elevates both capabilities and significantly enhances the safety of the communities served,” said Chief Charles L. Werner (Ret.), director of DRONERESPONDERS. “This partnership allows agencies to leverage proven operational frameworks while responsibly expanding the use of unmanned aircraft systems in public safety.”

Captain Abrem Ayana, director of Drone as First Responder for the NRTCCA, emphasized the operational focus of the collaboration. “This partnership is about closing the gap between innovation and day-to-day operations,” Ayana said. “DRONERESPONDERS brings extensive experience in UAS policy, training, and program development, while the NRTCCA focuses on how real-time tools are used when seconds matter. Together, we are giving agencies a clearer, more practical path to implementing DFR programs effectively.”

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to responsible technology adoption, transparency, and operational effectiveness, ensuring agencies can deploy advanced capabilities in ways that are both mission-ready and publicly accountable.

Public safety professionals interested in participating in the DRONERESPONDERS/NRTCCA Working Group or learning more about the partnership can visit www.nrtcca.org.

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More than 500 first responders from the United States and beyond gathered at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Virginia, for the DRONERESPONDERS National Conference (NACON), where public safety leaders, and technology experts advance the use of UAS in emergency response.

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