



ARLINGTON PD EXPANDS “DRONE AS A FIRST RESPONDER” PROGRAM, IS AMONG FIRST AGENCIES IN U.S. TO RECEIVE SPECIAL WAIVER FROM FAA



Recognizing the tremendous value and effectiveness UAS technology brings to public safety, the Arlington Police Department is excited to announce the expansion of its Drone as a First Responder (DFR) program.

To enhance officer response on the ground when a call for service comes in, APD employees who are licensed UAS pilots can fly a drone to a scene, scope out the area from above, and provide important, real-time information to the responding officers. Because drones are oftentimes able to reach scenes more quickly than a patrol vehicle navigating city roadways can, this approach can help officers more swiftly identify and locate suspects, make better-informed decisions, and better protect themselves and community members.

The department initially rolled out its DFR program to help respond to the influx of fireworks calls during the 4th of July and New Year’s Eve weekends. Now, DFR can be used to respond to a variety of in-progress calls including burglaries, aggravated assaults, missing persons, and more.

Additionally, APD is among the first law enforcement agencies in the U.S. to receive a Beyond Visual Line of Sight waiver from the Federal Aviation Administration. This allows APD drone pilots to fly drones greater distances than what is typically authorized and to remotely pilot drones from inside the department’s Real Time Crime Center (RTCC), boosting the overall effectiveness of the DFR program.

APD has installed DFR docks at two strategic locations within the city where RTCC personnel can instantly launch a drone. The drones can fly up to a 1.5 mile radius from the docks and reach speeds of up to 50 mph.

"I want to be clear that DFR does not replace our traditional police response. But this technology presents significant opportunities for us to better serve our community, which is why we are embracing it. The faster we can put eyes on a situation, the safer the outcome for everybody."

- Chief of Police Al Jones

APD is committed to protecting the privacy rights of community members and has set up multiple safeguards to ensure the DFR program is appropriately administered:

- The program adheres to all local, state, and federal regulations.
- Each flight must be logged and documented, and is subject to auditing.
- DFR can only be used to respond to calls for service and is not authorized for general surveillance or indiscriminate monitoring.
- The drones do not record video in transit and will only begin recording video at a scene if there is a legitimate law enforcement reason for doing so.

APD is also required by law to submit a biennial report to the state detailing all drone deployments. The latest version of that report is publicly available on the [APD website](#). For more information on the "Drone as a First Responder" Program, click [here](#) to view the video.

CALENDAR	June 7 Downtown Arlington Classic Car Show 9:00 am - 3:00 pm Vandergriff Town Center 200 N. Mesquite St.	June 7 Community Fun Fest 11:00 am - 3:00 pm Dream City Church 507 W. Road to Six Flags