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DHS Science and Technology Directorate

First Responders Group International Activities

Leveraging International Partnerships to Advance Public Safety



The [First Responders Group \(FRG\)](#) collaborates with the international public safety research and development community, including industry, through various activities, all closely coordinated with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate's (S&T) [International Cooperative Programs Office \(ICPO\)](#). FRG's carefully developed international research agreements help share resources and costs for research and product development, help build the American safety industrial base and most importantly assure that first responders have the best possible equipment to operate safely and efficiently to protect lives and property.

Binational Israel-U.S. Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation

The [BIRD Foundation](#) promotes collaboration between U.S. and Israeli technology companies for joint product development for first responders. It provides grants of up to \$1 million for approved projects and also serves as a networking platform. The following four S&T technologies are currently under development through BIRD Foundation awards: Indoor first responder tracking (2016); Unmanned Search and Rescue Systems (2017); Handheld Biodefense Diagnostic Platform (2017); and Autonomous drone based search and rescue (2017).

International Forum to Advance First Responder Innovation (IFAFRI)

[IFAFRI](#) is an organization of international government leaders focused on enhancing and expanding the development of affordable, innovative technology for first responders worldwide. IFAFRI engages with first responders and industry primarily through its Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC) and various government engagement groups. It has members from 14 nations in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as the European Commission, to address common public safety capability gaps through collaboration with industry to develop new technologies.

The Five Country Research and Development Network (5RD)

The 5RD is a group of government agency representatives from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom

(U.K.) and the United States that cooperate, collaborate, and exchange information to ensure efficiency and coordination of applied research and development (R&D) work relevant to a variety of domestic security topics. S&T leads the group which first met in 2015 to discuss best practices and lessons learned from international partners in countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts. The 5RD participants communicate regularly to share information and coordinate efforts to develop new technologies to prevent crime, ensure security, and protect citizens.

Technologies and Products for International Collaboration

Natural disasters and some emergency situations have no boundaries. Information sharing and effective international collaboration across all levels of governments and with international partners can be a challenge. FRG has technologies and knowledge products that contribute to its international activities aimed at closing this public safety gap: The [Next Generation Incident Command System \(NICS\)](#); Incident Management and Information Sharing - Capability Maturity Model (IMIS-CMM); [Crisis Information Management Framework for Regional Disaster Resiliency](#); [Mutual Aid Resource Planning Tool \(MARP\)](#). These technology and knowledge products are currently in use in two significant international projects:

- [Canada- U.S. Resiliency Experiment Series \(CAUSE\)](#)
- [NATO Advanced Regional Civil Emergency Coordination Project \(ARCECP\)](#)

Bilateral Agreements

FRG actively supports the DHS S&T [International Engagement Strategy](#) to build and execute meaningful bilateral agreements that provide direct benefits to the homeland security mission. FRG efforts have included: co-development of new capabilities for bomb disposal robots with Israel; testing of new first responder personal protective equipment with Sweden and the U.K.; cooperation on development and testing of techniques to defeat improvised explosive devices with the U.K.; and full time assignment of a Canadian senior exchange officer on site with FRG.



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To learn more about FRG's international programs, contact first.responder@hq.dhs.gov.