



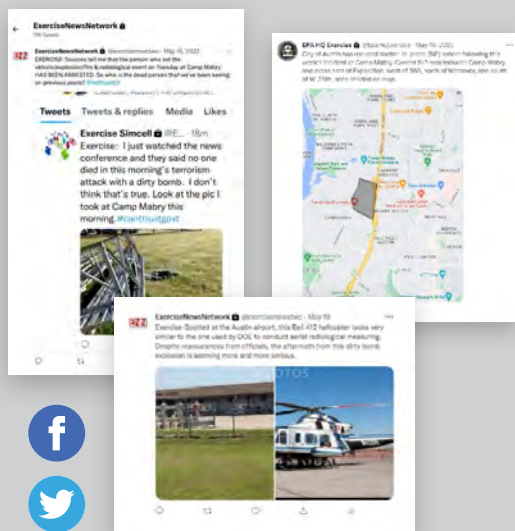
## NEWS MEDIA SIMULATION

Integrating advanced approaches and adding impact to exercises and drills is essential to developing a comprehensive emergency management program. News media simulation is a crucial element of training and emergency preparedness exercises. Testing public information capabilities by simulating interactions with the news media provides a means to evaluate responses in a controlled environment. Scenario-based news stories create the most challenging and realistic training environment for participants to practice decision-making and improve implementation of response plans.

Argonne Public Affairs Science and Technology (PAST) Fusion Academy staff use the Exercise Training Network (ETN) to simulate radio, print and broadcast news stories. An experienced cadre of former news and multi-media reporters with expertise in emergency communication provide realistic simulated news media productions. The secure, online ETN tool requires a password to access and can be customized per client needs. Within the ETN platform, exercise players are presented with dynamic, real-time news media stories as the exercise scenario progresses, including live reports, interviews, briefings and news conferences.



## SOCIAL MEDIA SIMULATION



The effective use of social media is a critical element of emergency public information. It is critical that social media plans and procedures be regularly tested in a robust and realistic exercise environment, with the goal of identifying what works well and what improvements may be necessary. As with all elements of an exercise, social media play must occur in a safe, controlled manner, to ensure that exercise communications are not mistaken for a real-world event.

With guidance and assistance from PAST staff, participants use exercise-specific accounts on real-world social media platforms (e.g., Facebook and Twitter). To keep communications secure, these accounts are closed and protected so that exercise information is only visible to approved participants. Once these accounts are established, they can be used during exercises in the same way that agencies use their actual sites in a real event – to share information, gather intelligence, engage with the public, etc.

There are several benefits to using real social media platforms in exercises rather than proprietary software tools that only mimic existing sites. These benefits include: unparalleled realism, universal accessibility, no cost, gaining valuable experience with real-world tools, and the ability to easily introduce new platforms as they gain currency within the emergency management community.

## ETN AND SOCIAL MEDIA SIMULATION PROCESS

To provide users with flexible, scalable mock media and social media simulation support, Argonne offers a range of onsite and virtual exercise options – from onsite participation in large, full-scale exercises, to virtual support for smaller drills and exercises that are part of regular community training. In all instances, PAST representatives work closely with the exercise management team during the planning phase to ensure that the mock media and social media simulation is seamlessly integrated and successfully executed, as well as offering constructive feedback during the post-exercise evaluation process.



**ETN and Social Media Virtual Support:** Argonne mock media reporters and social media SimCell staff participate remotely in training, drills and exercises, making phone calls, conducting interviews and posting news stories to ETN, as well as engaging in robust social media play. By strategically employing new technological tools and communication platforms, including ETN, the remote mock media and social media team is able to interact effectively and realistically with local participants, creating a challenging environment in which emergency public information response capabilities can be tested and validated, and areas for improvement identified.



**ETN and Social Media Onsite Support:** Mock media reporters and social media SimCell staff travel to the site. Based on scenario events and player actions, reporters produce radio, print and broadcast news stories and post to ETN for players to monitor and respond to. Mock media go to field play locations, conduct interviews and participate in news conferences broadcast live on ETN. Simulated social media messages are generated and disseminated during the exercise by SimCell and mock media staff to reflect what the public and media would be saying during an actual emergency. Some messages are scripted in advance to drive play and are injected at pre-determined times. Other ad hoc messages are injected in real-time based on how the exercise play is unfolding and in response to player actions.



## CURRENT EXERCISE SUPPORT

This approach to mock media and social media has been successfully tested and executed hundreds of times in a range of exercise environments, from small stand-alone drills that focus only on emergency public information to large full-scale exercises with multiple players participating from across agencies and jurisdictions.

Argonne's PAST Fusion Academy regularly provides public affairs exercise support to a wide range of local, state and federal agencies, including currently to the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Department of the Army, the Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration, and their many program partners. Recent national-level exercise participation has included NUWAIX, GridEx, Eagle Horizon and Cobalt Magnet.

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Contact Us](#) | [View PAST Fusion Academy Website](#) and [Course Catalog](#)  
Learn more about the [Exercise Training Network \(ETN\)](#)