NEMA PIO Subcommittee Social Media Survey Report May 2016

The purpose of this survey was to determine the social media channels being used by emergency management agencies for public information use. We also asked states to break down what types of posts were the most effective, challenges they face and needs they have to be more successful.

SUMMARY:

38 States responded:
Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, DC, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Wyoming.

Eight have been using social media since 2006, 23 since 2009, six since 2012.

Types of social media platforms:
- All are using Facebook.
  - Tops are New Jersey with 106,000 and Mississippi with 84,000.
- All are on Twitter.
  - Tops are Massachusetts with 69,000, Minnesota with 60,000 and Alabama with 35,000.
- 31 use YouTube-recorded videos.
- 17 use Instagram-photo sharing.
- 15 have blogs-basically online columns.
- 12 use Periscope-live video.
- A few use other platforms like Flickr, Tumblr, Pinterest for pictures, Vine for videos and photos.

Effectiveness:
- Posts get the most attention that have:
  - Photos, maps, graphics, videos. S0 really need to make things visual.
  - New Jersey has reached the most people 21 million with a single post.
  - Many states have reached at least one to two million people during big events.
  - Indiana reached more people than the state's largest newspaper during their 2012 tornadoes.

- 35 of the 38 responding states allow public comments on Facebook.
- Five of the 38 do not allow comments on Twitter.

Challenges:
- Lack of time and staff/resources.
- Ever changing landscape and staying current with the latest trends.
- IT/security concerns within government network systems.

Needs:
- Internal support for the importance of social media.
- Training and development.
- Development of Virtual Operations Support Teams (VOST).
  - Florida and Colorado have two of the most robust VOST programs through universities.
  - Approved volunteer students can assist with social media monitoring and posting.

Conclusion:
Social media has proven to be a valuable tool for sharing information about all phases of emergency management. The multiple social media platforms allow agencies to reach large numbers of the population with no editing of the intended message by traditional media outlets. The NEMA Public Information Subcommittee believes a commitment to training, at both the state and federal level, is essential to growing the understanding and use of the constantly evolving technology.

Survey Specifics:

Q1: Contact Information

- Name
- Agency
- Title
- City/Town
- State/Province
- Email Address

Q2: How long has your agency been using social media tools as part of your communication program?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Since 2015	7.9%	3
2012 through end of 2014	7.9%	3
2009 through end of 2011	60.5%	23
2006 through end of 2008	18.4%	7
Before 2006	5.3%	2
Our agency does not use any social media tool	0.0%	0

How long has your agency been using social media tools as part of your communication program?

- Since 2015
- 2012 through end of 2014
- 2009 through end of 2011
- 2006 through end of 2008
- Before 2006
- Our agency does not use any social media tool
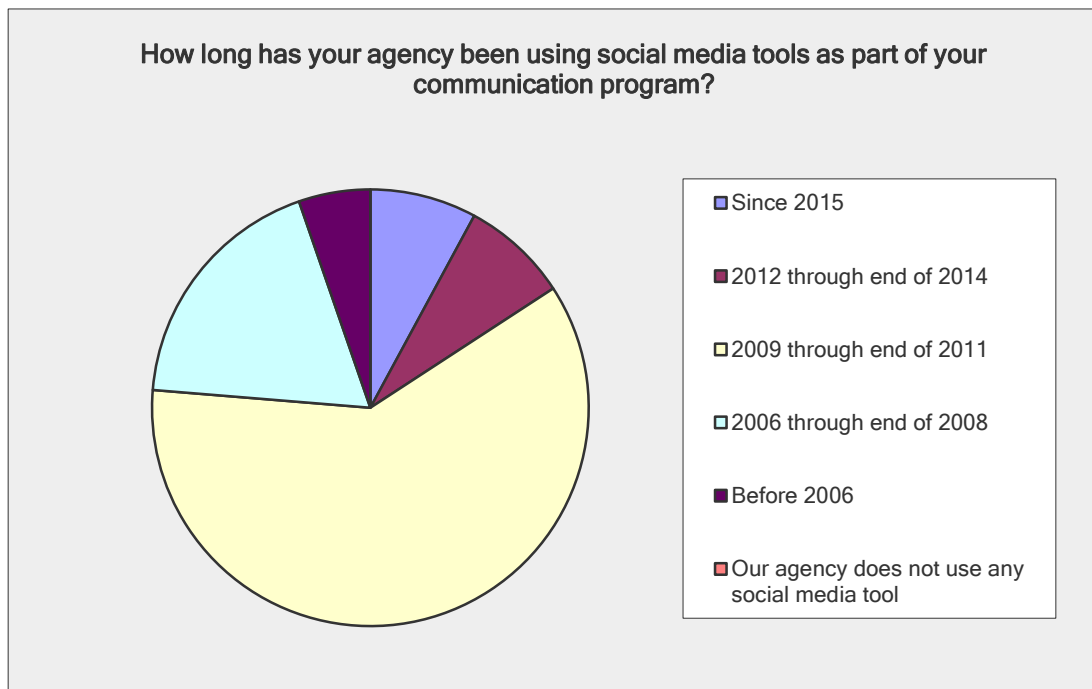
Q3: If your agency is not using social media tools, please indicate reasons below.
Survey report indicates all respondents are using Social Media.

Q4: Which social media platforms does your agency currently use?
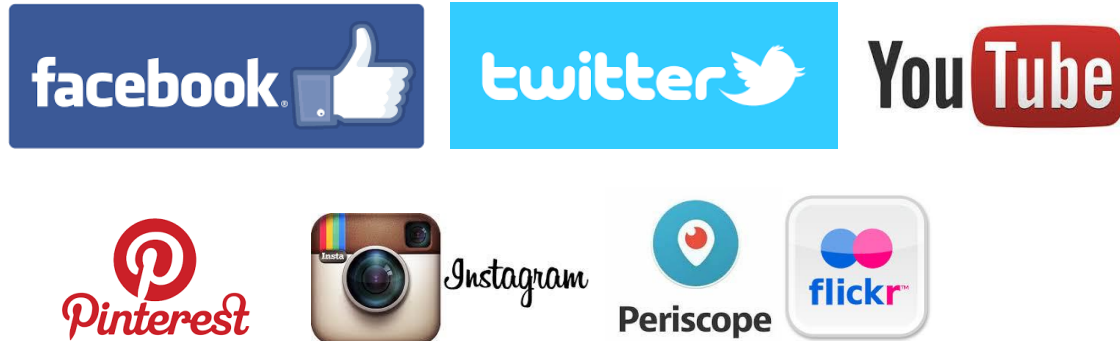
Q5: Current number of "Likes" or followers/subscribers on each platform

Answer Options	Response Average	Response Total
Facebook	21,844.21	830,080
Twitter	15,791.08	584,270
Instagram	335.39	6,037
Periscope	417.57	5,846
YouTube	483.65	12,575
Blog	736.90	7,369
Other Platform 1	402.00	4,824
Other Platform 2	58.00	464
Other Platform 3	88.00	616

Q6: On average, what type of posts (pictures, maps, videos, graphics, etc) generate the most amount of interaction?
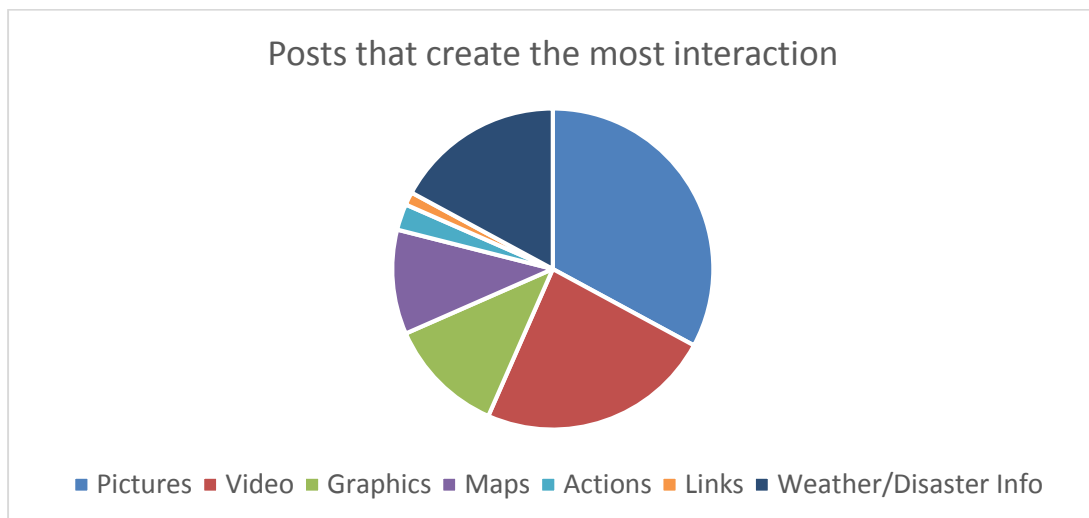
Q7: Does your agency allow one-way communication (no comments or responses) or two-way communication (allow comments/responses) on each of your platforms?

Answer Options	Yes - we do allow comments	No - we do NOT allow comments
Facebook	35	3
Twitter	32	5
Instagram	16	0
Periscope	10	1
YouTube	17	4
Blog	5	6
Other Platform 1	6	0
Other Platform 2	4	1
Other Platform 3	2	1

Q8: Which platform generates the most number of reaches for your agency when a disaster/emergency is NOT occurring?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Facebook	68.4%
Twitter	28.9%
Other Platform 1	2.6%

Q9: On average, which platform generates the most number of reaches when a disaster/emergency HAS occurred?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Facebook	65.8%
Twitter	31.6%
Other Platform 1	2.6%

Q10: In total, how many social media channels/accounts does your agency have? This would include all accounts from every communication stream associated with your agency.

Averages about six social media channels per responding state

Q11: Please list the following: 1) specific disaster and 2) specific platform that 3) resulted in the highest number of reaches for your agency.

US Ecology Industrial fire in Beatty, Nevada - Facebook -
1) January 22-23 2016 NYC Blizzard 2) Facebook 3) received more than 2000 reaches
1.) Feb 2016 snow storm 2.) Facebook 3.) 85,300 reaches
Winter Weather Advisory map/graphic on Facebook - reached 86.5k
Emergency.la.gov
winter storm (can't remember which one), reach of 100000 plus
The ice storm of 2014 caused a spike in our Twitter and Facebook followers. The October flooding generated additional followers, but had a further reach.
Spring flooding in southern Minnesota gave us the highest number of reaches on Facebook.
1) Southern Indiana Tornado Activity, 2012 2) Facebook and Twitter 3) The posts were reaching more people than the largest newspaper in the state.
Flooding/Facebook
April 27, 2011 DR-1971 Facebook and Twitter
Snow Storm 2015 Facebook
Lusk Flood, Facebook
Irene, Sandy, October Snowstorm
Jan. 2016 severe winter storm, Facebook
tornado outbreak in 2014 we saw huge increases in all platforms
We had Facebook posts with lots of people during the wildfires recently and one preparedness post reach 1.5 million+ people following the tsunami scare last year in Chile.
1) Probably avian influenza, 2) Twitter, 3) I'd have to check
Wayne and Pilger tornados
Snow Storm - Twitter
reschedule of 2015 statewide tornado drill; Facebook
1) Tractor Trailer accident shut down I-95 in both directions 2) Facebook 3) Posted safety information and reach 272,400 people
specific disaster
2013 Floods / Twitter/ Twitter most reach and interaction
Nov. 2013 flooding, Facebook, disaster pictures
Hildale Flooding Sept. 2015, Facebook page, peak of 31,000 in one day
11. Boston Marathon Bombings/2015 Blizzards (We had over 1M hits in Mid-July when the 7-story snow-pile in Boston finally melted)
TS Erika on Facebook
1. Typhoon related incidents 2. Facebook 3. Reaching 11,000+ views and being shared to other pages.
December 2015 ice storm/flooding (DR4256) on Twitter -- about 42,000 engagements over 3 days
Map about Severe Weather in Feb. 2016 on Facebook. Total reach: 847,523 with 21,956 reactions, comments and shares.
1) Wallow Fire (2011) 2) Facebook
Snow Storm 2016, Facebook, 1,000,000+ reach
Winter Weather - Twitter
Ice Jam Video April 2015 - Facebook
Tropical Storm Irene resulted in greatest number of reaches on DEMHS Facebook
I can't really pick one, but any weather-related posts over the last two months generated tremendous reaches on FB (much less impact on Twitter)

Q12: Please list by title who in your agency has administrative privileges (can post material) to your social media sites?

Examples include PIO's communication director, chief of staff, deputy director, web coordinator, external affairs director.

Q13: What are your on-going challenges with using social media?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of policy	5.3%	2
Lack of time/staff/resources	76.3%	29
IT security concerns/social media restrictions	13.2%	5
Lack of management interest/support	2.6%	1
Unfamiliarity with social media options/changing landscape	13.2%	5
Other (please specify)	34.2%	13

Q14: Please share a social media/innovative tool success story.

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|---|
| I have been using Hootsuite for several years it has been an extremely helpful tool. All social media platforms are loaded which makes it easy to manage and monitor. I created an annual messaging cycle plan comprised of local, state and national information, activities and events.

Every activity is recorded in the appropriate month and is color coded by priority to determine the level of promotion required. Script is prepared and scheduled daily through Hootsuite. I.e. Red is a Priority and requires heavy promotion. Components to include: Proclamation, weekly/monthly press releases, website presence, social media messaging, events/ activities, PSA, media invitations, interviews, agency partnerships and media partnerships. |
| Posting stories and photos about the New York State Preparedness Training Center that trains first responders. |
| To get more likes and reaches the use of a single word on important posts: "Share" |
| Sharing of disaster related messaging for a current flood event |
| We've created maps of entire state with areas shaded to indicate expected rainfall, snow, warning area, etc. Since most TV and NWS offices focus on single media market, the maps have been shared/viewed extensively as a 'big picture' look at entire state. |
| We used social media to post information about the dangers associated with October's flooding. Residents in turn would see that information and use the comment feature or reply to the tweet to let us know that they or a loved one was in danger. We were then able to contact local teams in the area to send help to the survivors. Members of the media were a part of the online discussion so multiple outlets saw emergency management in action live in real time. |
| We find success in having our resources out in the field take photos and video. No matter the quality, this helps people feel connected and helps them understand the severity of a problem. |
| We used Periscope following the Feb. 24, 2016, tornadoes to show the governor's visit to the impacted sites. The live feed showed the damage and an impromptu media briefing on site. This was the day after the 8 tornadoes hit several areas of the state. |
| One thing we do every Christmas eve is "follow Santa" in Wisconsin. We use Hootsuite and have preprogrammed for every 5 minutes from 8 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. info on where Santa is in the state. We have fire and law enforcement depts. send us pictures ahead of time and we program that information in. The Governor issues a press release on Dec. 23 promoting this and that he ordered the National Guard and Emergency Management to help Santa. It is a big success and everyone has fun with it |
| We were able to communicate evacuation plans on social media during our recent wildfires to great success. |
| Coordinated approach with other District agencies to share same message. |
| To help build interaction between the public and the larger Department of Public Safety; QuizDay Wednesdays, with answers given on Thursdays |
| Getting buy-in from our state partners has been key. Having limited time I can simply amplify their information instead of reinventing the wheel. A great example is the Zika Virus. I can amplify the info being put out by the NJ Department of Health.

We also exploit opportunities with trending hashtags. We try to be somewhat humorous to engage the audience. We also try to show support during world disasters as a show of solidarity. Since we are in the shadow of Philly and NYC, we live in a huge melting pot. We are mindful that world events touch our followers. For that reason we also have a large international following on Facebook. |
| During recent superstorm directed Twitter and FB followers to official WV state FB page, gained around 125 new followers |
| Posting updates to Twitter as they happen. Use of google maps to share public information maps. |

We've had a chance to use humor effectively when we had a tiny earthquake that people felt. We tweeted a picture of a lawn chair tipped over with the caption "we will rebuild." that got 100+ retweets. Also, just the quick messaging we can do during incidents is great. I've been able to support local agencies that aren't active on social media and those agencies are very complimentary when their phone calls go away because the info is on social media.
VOST - FDEM has a partnership with FSU Center for Disaster Risk Policy to monitor social media during a large event
There is not one instance to share but social media has allowed us to reach multiple constituents across all age levels. People are also able to share complaints or suggestions for how we can improve as an agency, which is welcomed.
OEM has started using Storify to highlight social media posts (FB, Twitter and IG) from local emergency managers, other agencies and citizens to document the event to increase situational awareness. The Storify feed can be posted internally or shared externally.
Our social media capability and following continues to explode. During some incidents, we are reaching up to 1/3 -of our state's population. With great following comes great responsibility. We are continuing to develop a strategy to keep followers engaged. We are constantly talking with followers about how to develop their own emergency plans and helping them know how to prepare during a disaster.
Two graphics posted ahead of the Star Wars. The Force Awakens release (https://www.facebook.com/ArizEIN/photos/pb.128529883967.-2207520000.1457382644./10153942985013968/?type=3&theater) and for Read Across America Day (https://www.facebook.com/ArizEIN/photos/a.430761573967.217510.128529883967/10154118523268968/?type=3&theater) reached 57,500 people on Facebook.
Integration of bi-lingual liaison to assist with social media monitoring.
Nothing is coming to mind - only that as we have posted more frequently we have more followers.
Aerial photos of flooded roads side-by-side with a Google Earth image of the road before get a huge response.

Q15: Please list any other innovative tools not already mentioned that your agency uses to reach the public.

During emergencies, we will often record a video with sign language interpreters using many of the key messages we are telling the public. The videos are closed captioned and shared on social media.
We have a program called Readywarn that automatically posts any tornado watch, tornado warning, or thunderstorm warning and pushes it out on our Facebook and Twitter.
We have live-streamed Q&A sessions during disaster using Ustream
I rely heavily on Tweetdeck and I am working on getting a subscription for Hootesuite. With limited time and personnel it is easier for me to schedule postings this way.
WVDHSEM website
DHSEM Public Information Officer Training 200+ local PIOs a year to use social media for disaster response and recovery has had a tremendous positive impact with our state.
Dedicated emergency information website: emergencyinfoutah.com (outside of the Utah.gov domain). IPAWS, Ready-op (alerting software). We also have a Nixle account. Utah has launched a Virtual Operations Support Team, or VOST, which is just ramping up. We're behind other states, but we're excited to be in the VOST world.
Preparedness campaigns with sports teams around the state that provide messaging through radio, television, in-stadium promotion, interviews with the Director, and outreach events at the pre-game. Currently have 9 sports team contracts. The Division worked into the contract access to their social media followers in the event of an activation.
1. All Hazards Alert Warning Systems (Sirens) 2. Close relationships with print, television, and radio media 3. Community engagement (i.e. schools, events, seminars, etc.) 4. Disaster kids mascots
OEM has begun creating season or hazard specific social media toolkits to share with local emergency managers. We have also created a toolkit to solicit damage photos and information for a pending IA declaration appeal.
We have a mobile application that is under review to see if we can update the information. It is a great tool with about 15,000 downloads, but needs to be re-worked.
News and calendar entries that are put out automatically when added to website

Q16: Would you be interested in more in-depth training related to social media monitoring or social listening (aka monitoring social media platforms to hear what is being said)?

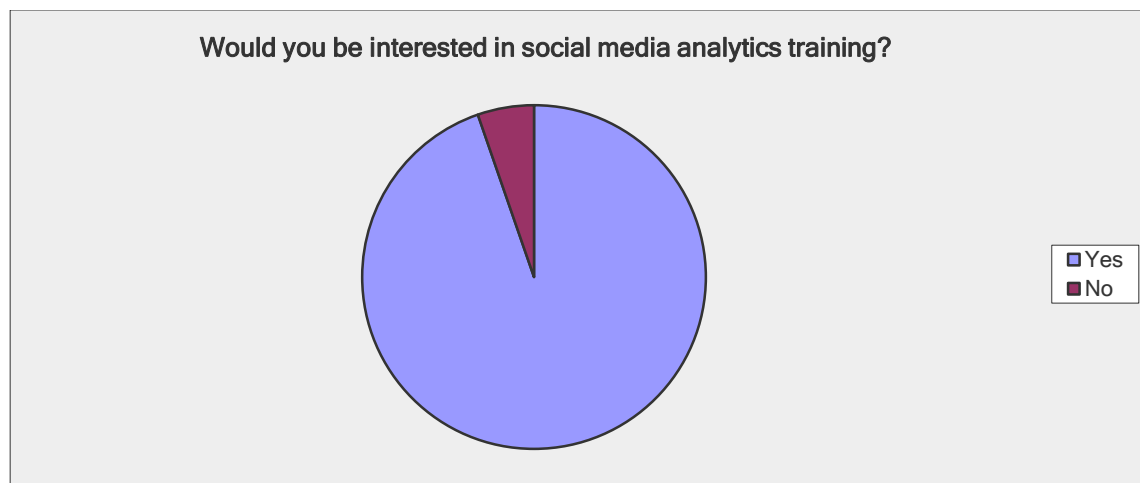| Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	97.4%	37
No	2.6%	1

Would you be interested in more in-depth training related to social media monitoring or social listening (aka monitoring social media platforms to hear what is being said)?
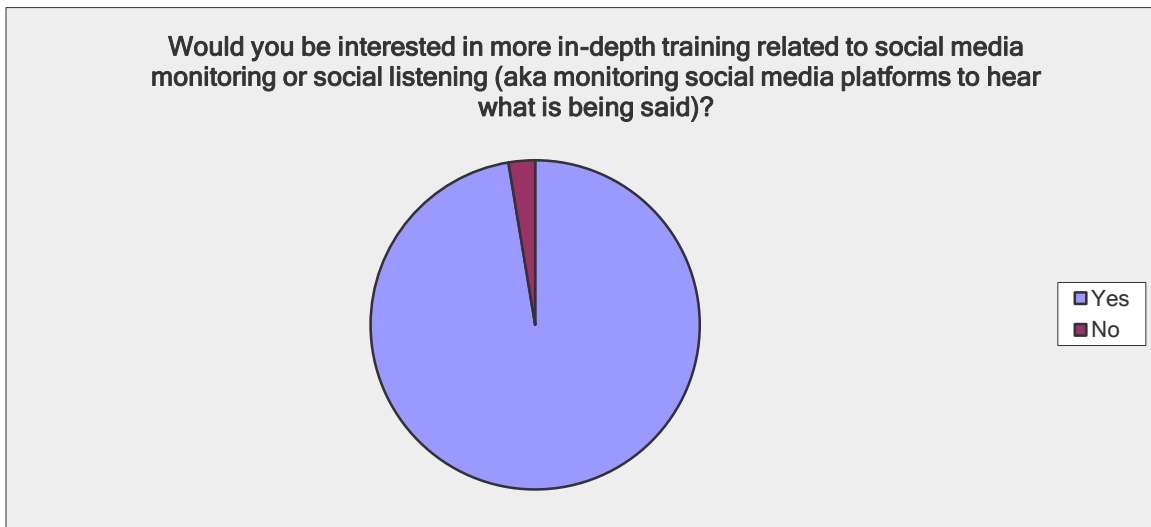
Q17: Would you be interested in social media analytics training?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	94.7%	36
No	5.3%	2

Would you be interested in social media analytics training?

Q18: Would you be interested in training related to creating a VOST for your state?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	76.3%	29
No	23.7%	9

Would you be interested in training related to creating a VOST for your state?

☐ Yes
■ No

Q19: Is there any specific social media training or course you would recommend? Why this particular one?

Any and all, I always learn something new.
CSEPP Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Public Affairs Course, Oakridge, TN
We teach an Intro to Social Media class that was developed in house that is designed for the local emergency manager that knows they have to have a social media program, but has no idea how to start. This course includes a live exercise that uses social platforms as response agencies during a simulated local emergency, like a tornado.
Often times, the JIC is asked to monitor social media for situational awareness for leadership in addition to the monitoring the JIC would normally do for rumors, misinformation and potential PR issues. It would be good to have a training that shows how to do both types of monitoring. A VOST is often used for situational awareness monitoring, which we have used it for, but there needs to be a distinction between the types of monitoring. Maybe also have a training on how to quickly put together graphics for posts. We use Canva and we are not graphic designers. I know there are other websites that provide similar services.
Use of programs such as Hootsuite and Tweetdeck
look outside emergency management for training - look for private companies that focus on crisis communication tools and social media
PIO/Social Media exercises using a simulator tool
None that I can think of. We are constantly monitoring other agencies to see what is working and to remain on top of the social media game.

Q20: Please add any other comments

I am keenly interested in using Periscope or Vine in the near future when time allows.
We believe in a very proactive approach to using social media, but for us it's another tool in the PIO toolbox alongside the news release, the EAS message and the public meeting.
We hired a social media expert from the tech college who did a survey of our social media and helped us add on Instagram...which we just started. I would be happy to share that report. It has some good general information we didn't realize...