

Public Television Datacasting Foils Simulated School Shooting In Adams County, Indiana

Monroe, Indiana – Wednesday, October 24, 2018 – A partnership of federal and state public safety officials, local school staff and public television engineers today conducted a groundbreaking exercise demonstrating the power of datacasting to quickly identify and neutralize threats to school safety.

The simulated school shooting incident was conducted at the Adams Central Community Schools. School administrators and teachers participated in today's demonstration, but students were not on campus.

Datacasting uses public television broadcast infrastructure and spectrum to enhance public safety communications capabilities and send encrypted, targetable data streams to designated public safety personnel to help swiftly locate and neutralize threats to the public.

Today this data stream was used to share critical information from the simulated incident with first responders and public safety officials from multiple agencies. This information included live video from multiple cameras, school blueprints and other information that would be essential for responding to and resolving an actual school shooting threat.

The exercise was sponsored by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T), in collaboration with the Integrated Public Safety Commission, Adams County Sheriff, Adams County Emergency Management Agency, and Adams County School District.

PBS 39, the public television station serving Adams County and headquartered in Fort Wayne, provided the datacasting equipment and expertise. America's Public Television Stations, the national organization representing more than 300 stations in all 50 States, is a strategic partner with the Department of Homeland Security in promoting the public safety benefits of datacasting nationwide.

Datacasting's "one-to-many" communications architecture makes it possible to send huge streams of information quickly to an unlimited number of law enforcement officers and first responders without risk of the congestion and system failure often associated with cellular networks during emergencies.

"The support, participation, and significant contributions of numerous agencies and personnel involved in today's exercise made it a great success," said DHS S&T Program Manager Cuong Luu. "The willingness and dedication of Indiana and Adams County first responders, as well as DHS partners and performers, has facilitated the development of innovative technology that will help the nation's first responders become better protected, connected, and fully aware to maintain the safety of American lives

and communities. None of what we do would be possible without working together closely with first responders, academia, research and development, and the innovation community.”

“America’s Public Television Stations are proud to be a partner in today’s successful simulation of a well-coordinated response to a school shooting threat,” said APTS President and CEO Patrick Butler. “When a school shooting happens, every second counts. Today’s exercise shows that public television’s datacasting capabilities can share critical information with first responders on the ground quickly and efficiently, saving time and saving lives. Today’s historic event is another important step forward in public television’s growing mission of protecting communities and keeping Americans safe.”

“I’m convinced that state and local first responders can truly benefit from this public television station/public safety partnership,” said David W. Vice, Executive Director, Integrated Public Safety Commission. “The Indiana Department of Homeland Security and the Integrated Public Safety Commission have been working behind the scene for months on this pilot project, and we’re gratified to see it in action today.”

“Datacasting has the potential of providing key visual information to first responders for incidents where this technology is used,” Shane L. Rekeweg, Sheriff, Adams County, Indiana. “Both quality as well as quantity of information is important to first responders for a rapid and decisive response where other current technology fail to provide. A rapid response is needed by first responders in order to save lives. Today’s demonstration showed that datacasting does in fact provide the quality and quantity that first responders need for faster response resulting in saving more lives in critical incidents.”

“Adams Central Community Schools are extremely grateful for the opportunity to host this datacasting/active shooter exercise,” said Chad Smekens, Middle School Principal, Adams Central Middle School. “We believe the training benefits to local safety personnel, and the datacasting technology now in place, will help us protect the lives of students and staff at Adams Central long into the future. The Adams Central community is honored to work with the professionals at PBS39, the Department of Homeland Security, Indiana Dept. of Homeland Security, John Hopkins University, SpectraRep, and the many local and state agencies taking part in this exercise!”

“PBS39 is proud to be a part of this school safety exercise,” stated PBS39 General Manager Bruce Haines. “Datacasting is an important public television service that provides real world benefits far beyond the fine programming and educational services for which we are best known. As a tool for first responders, datacasting enhances the safety of the communities we serve and the people who live there.”

For two years [DHS S&T and its technical performers Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory and SpectraRep, LLC., have been collaborating with APTS on a series of pilot projects demonstrating datacasting’s compelling public safety use cases](#)

in various parts of the country. These included flood response and recovery in Houston; multiagency collaboration and interoperability among five federal and state agencies in Boston; search and rescue of missing persons in rural Grant County, Washington; and over-water emergency communications many miles into Lake Michigan from Chicago. In addition, local public television stations have implemented datacasting capabilities to assist with massive crowd control in Washington, D.C., enhance 911 responsiveness in North Carolina, and improve the development of early earthquake warnings in California.

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About DHS S&T

The Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate is the research and development arm of the Department of Homeland Security. It supports DHS components, the nation's first responders, and the homeland security enterprise by investing in new technology or leveraging existing technology. For more information, visit: <https://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology>.

About America's Public Television Stations

America's Public Television Stations is a nonprofit membership organization ensuring a strong and financially sound public television system and helping member stations provide essential public services in education, public safety and civic leadership to the American people. For more information, visit www.pts.org.

About IPSC

IPSC is the state agency tasked with coordinating interoperable communications between local, state and federal public safety agencies. For more information, visit www.in.gov/ipsc.

About PBS39

PBS39 is the northeast Indiana region's only public television station and its sole locally owned-and-operated television station. It broadcasts daily over four channels: PBS39/Channel 39.1; PBS39 Kids/Channel 39.2; CreateTV/Channel 39.3 and 39Explore/Channel 39.4. For more information about PBS39, contact them via phone at [\(260\) 484-8839](tel:2604848839) or via email at info@wfw.org.

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