

Meet the Virtual Social Media Working Group Series: Wendy Harman, Maggie Silver, and Jason Lindesmith

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Recognizing the need to address the challenges associated with social media for emergency response and public safety, the DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) established the Virtual Social Media Working Group (VSMWG). The group's mission is to provide recommendations to the emergency preparedness and response community on the safe and sustainable use of social media technologies before, during, and after emergencies.

Drawn from a cross-section of subject matter experts from local, state, and federal responders from across the United States, VSMWG members are establishing and collecting best practices and solutions for the Nation's first responders and the emergency preparedness and response community.

Members of the VSMWG were selected based on their experience in leveraging social media technologies to pursue the missions of their agencies. Many VSMWG members have served as speakers, trainers, and subject matter experts at major homeland security-related workshops, roundtables, and conferences on the topic of social media.

This post is the fourth in a series of articles which will include the biographies and photos of each VSMWG member. For more information and to participate in ongoing discussions with the group, please join DHS First Responder Communities of Practice at www.communities.firstresponder.gov.

Wendy Harman, Director, Social Strategy, American Red Cross HQ

Wendy Harman is a proud Red Crosser and a "digital nerd." As the Director of Social Strategy, her goal is for

the American Red Cross to be a social organization ready for 21st century humanitarian work. She is responsible for the organization's national social media presence, including the listening program, social content, and community engagement. She frequently speaks and writes about issues at the intersection of nonprofit organizations, technology, and the social web. In 2010 and 2011, she was named to the Nonprofit Times Power and Influence Top 50 list.



Before joining the Red Cross in 2006, Wendy managed operations for Future of Music Coalition and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, in addition to creating her own artist management firm.

Maggie Silver, Public Health Communications, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office of Public Health Preparedness



Maggie Silver graduated from the University of Georgia with a Master of Public Health degree and a focus in health behavior and promotion. After graduating, she went to work for the Office of Inspector General under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) where she conducted large-scale program evaluations of HHS operating divisions, focusing on Medicare fraud and abuse and emergency preparedness programs. In 2010, Maggie had the opportunity to work on the "other side," taking a position at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response.

Meet the Virtual Social Media Working Group (continued)

Maggie is now a health communication specialist for CDC, where she conducts media relations, public health messaging, and internal communications. She is a key contributor to CDC's award-winning zombie apocalypse campaign. She also manages the CDC blog, Public Health Matters, and functions as her Center's social media lead.

**Jason Lindesmith, Social Media Lead, Federal
Emergency Management Agency, External Affairs**



Jason Lindesmith works in digital communications at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He manages several areas of the agency's online communication efforts, including the blog, Facebook page, Twitter

account, YouTube channel, videos on disaster operations, and content on the fema.gov homepage.

Before coming to FEMA, Jason completed his Master of Business Administration at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. His professional experience includes disaster public affairs and knowledge management at the American Red Cross national headquarters and internal communication at the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company.