



FFI Forsvarets
forskningsinstitutt

Mitigation through simulation: An evaluation of the Simulator social media training tool in the Norwegian Armed Forces

Silje Lensu Dåbakk
Cyber-social Propaganda and Influence
Total Defence

Social media as an enabler of CogWar

The Somulator: A social media simulator to train and mitigate CogWar

- Inspired by previous simulations of social media used in Trident Juncture in 2019
- Emulation of five different platforms: Twitter/X, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and online newspapers
- Managed through an exercise control panel that administers all the content in the simulator



First-time use in a military exercise in Norway

- In spring 2023, the Somulator was used for the first time in a military exercise at the Norwegian Armed Forces University College (FHS)
- Included to simulate the whole media-play
- Used Twitter/X clone and newspaper simulations
- Represented a new way to do media play in the exercise
- The overall purpose was to use the Somulator to illustrate the possibilities and limitations that media and social media provide to an operational environment

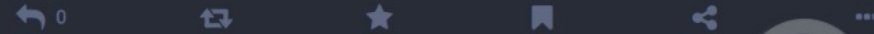
Lokal tidslinje



Media SouthEast
@media_southeast

3. mai

Escalating conflict between NATO and Aquila!
news.cs3.dyn.ncr.ntnu.no/node/...

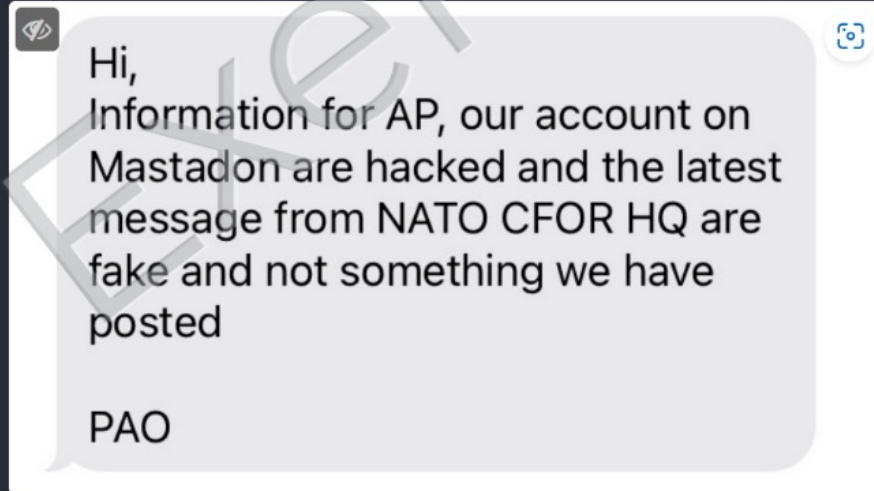


Western News and Media channel
@news_media

3. mai

! NATO confirms lack of cyber security in their HQ !
In a SMS to Aquilian Post just now, the NATO PAO informs us that their account has been hacked and the accusations are fake.

More to come.



RQ1: What training opportunities did the Somulator enable in the exercise?

RQ2: How can these training opportunities be enhanced to advance training to mitigate and respond to CogWar?

Some key findings:

Social media simulation enabled the following training opportunities:

- Possibility to enhance SA
- Feedback mechanism for decision-making and stratcom
- Adds the possibility to navigate and make sense of a complex information environment, including one with adversarial activity

How to enhance these training opportunities:

- Need to define who the training audience is
- Content needs to be voluminous, personas realistic, and they need to have a history
- Coordination between trainers, Directing Staff, and Somulator staff needed to tailor situations

Implications

Resources:

- Content creation
- Operationalisation

Target audience: Who do we need to train to respond and mitigate CogWar in Social Media?