Public Information Officers' Quick Reference:
Social Media Guidelines for Discussing Automated Vehicles

SAFE-D
SAFETY THROUGH DISRUPTION

The Safe-D UTC conducts innovative research, education and technology transfer guided by a vision of systemically safe transportation.

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

VT VIRGINIA TECH TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE
VIRGINIA TECH

Safety through Disruption (Safe-D)
National University Transportation Center

When You're Writing Social Media Copy

- Present automated vehicle (AV) crashes like other types of crashes
- Be consistent in how you use AV terms (see below)
- Use the industry-preferred term "Automated Driving System" when possible
- Avoid using the word "fault" in your copy
- Post within the first five days of a crash
- Practice patience with yourself and others

When You're in Social Content Strategy Meetings

- Educate the public about AVs on a regular basis
- Schedule out a new AV series on the content calendar

When You're Planning Internal Communication Initiatives

- Increase employee awareness about AVs
- Equip advocates within different departments

When You're Coordinating External Collaborations

- Partner with AV companies to help share information
- Build collaborative relationships on social media

Sources

https://safed.vtti.vt.edu/projects/data-mining-twitter-to-improve-automated-vehicle-safety

https://www.nhtsa.gov/technology-innovation/automated-vehicles-safety#topic-road-self-driving

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S221242091830030X

AV Terms and Definitions

Automated*
A vehicle in which some safety functions, like steering or braking, occur without the driver's input.

Driverless**
A robotic vehicle designed to travel between destinations without a driver.

Connected*
A vehicle that communicates with other vehicles, infrastructure and devices via wireless network technology.

Self-Driving
A vehicle that drives itself without needing a driver's input under a limited set of conditions.

Autonomous**
A vehicle that senses its environment and navigates without a driver's input after a destination has been selected.

* *A vehicle can be connected but not automated, automated but not connected, or both connected and automated.*

** *This term is easily misunderstood and is not used by industry experts.*