

Government Education and Training Network (GETN)

The Government Education and Training Network (GETN) is a network of Federal Government agencies using a common satellite carrier for interactive television (1-way video, 2way audio). This interoperable network allows the various user agencies to share distance/distributed learning programs and use common facilities. This ITV service is provided by AT&T in partnership Convergent Media Systems, and is offered through a GSA FTS niche contract. Audio interaction is achieved using one of two systems: a push-to-talk system provided by A.T. Products (used by all DOD and a few other agencies), or a student response unit provided by One Touch Systems (used mostly by civilian agencies).

GETN was conceived in 1992 at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, by the Air Force Institute of Technology's Center for Distance Education and with the pioneering efforts in digital technology of the National Technological University of Ft Collins, Colorado. Development began with initial funding by the Air Force's Acquisition Professional Development Program and in partnership with the Army Logistics Management College at Ft Lee Virginia. GETN has grown from 2 uplinks in 1993 to 15 digital-Ku-band satellite uplink broadcast centers reaching over 1,300 fixed-dish downlink sites located throughout the CONUS, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. GETN broadcasts approximately 10,000 hours per year. Department of Defense agencies include US Air Force, with 5 uplinks (14 channel capacity) and 150 downlinks; US Army, with 1 uplink (3 channel capacity) and 70 downlinks; Air National Guard, with 3 uplinks (6 channel capacity) and 195 downlinks; Air Force Reserves, with 46 downlinks; Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, with 1 uplink (1channel capacity) and 2 downlinks; Defense Logistics Agency, with 2 shared uplinks (USAF & USA) and 36 downlinks; Army National Guard, with 2 shared uplinks (USA & ANG) and 94 downlinks; US Navy, with 4 downlinks; and Defense Information Services Agency with 21 downlinks.

Civilian Federal Government agencies include Federal Aviation Agency, with 1 uplink (4 channel capacity) and 60 downlinks; Dept of Energy, with 1 uplink (1channel capacity) and 29 downlinks; US Courts, with 1 shared uplink (ANG) and 301 downlinks; Department of Justice, with 1 uplink (2channel capacity) and 220 downlinks; US Coast Guard ,with 1 shared uplink (DEOMI) and 9 downlinks; Environmental Protection Agency, with 1shared uplink (FAA) and 110 downlinks; and US Fish & Wildlife Service, with 1 uplink (1 channel capacity) and 16 downlinks; and National Park Service, with 1 shared uplink (USF&W) and 100 downlinks.

With the new PowerVu platform from Scientific Atlanta, GETN will soon have the capacity to store-and-forward digital video programs as well as datacast Internet Protocol courseware to servers across the world. GETN, therefore, will not only offer its traditional ITV courses, but will become the bypass technology to the public Internet to offer distance learning *anytime, anywhere, anyway*.

As an outgrowth of using GETN, an organization was formed to encourage collaboration among the various Federal Government agencies in the use of video technologies. This organization is called the Government Alliance for Training & Education (GATE) (www.fgdla.org). More information on GATE and GETN can be obtained from Mr. Ed McDowell, President of GATE, who is also the Director of Operations, Satellite Education Network (SEN), (804) 765-4004 or DSN 539-4004, e-mail mcdowe@lee.army.mil, or from Dr. Philip Westfall, Director, Air Technology Network (ATN), Air Force Institute for Advanced Distributed Learning, (937) 904-5479 or DSN 674-5479, e-mail: philip.westfall@atn.wpafb.af.mil.

Courses: Contracting & Acquisition Management, Environmental, Hazardous Waste Mgt., Air Pollution, Warehouse Mgt., Safeguards & Security, Aircraft Maintenance and Repair, Professional Military Education, Professional Continuing Education, parenting courses, communication courses, Air Traffic Control and related courses, diversity courses, Equal Opportunity Training (EOT), legal, medical, and chaplain courses, management and leadership courses, and so forth.

Location: CONUS, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands. The Air Force's ATN can also broadcast any GETN program to a total of 8 sites in Germany, England, and Italy; and will soon be able to reach 6 more sites at AF installations in Guam, Korea, and Japan.

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