



June 2006

President's Report Cites' BENS Business Force

Since Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in August 2005, there have been three major reports on what went wrong and what we need to do better next time. The U.S. Congress issued a report in January 2006, the President released his report in February, and the U.S. Senate completed its report in May 2006. Hurricane Katrina prompted an extraordinary national response that included all levels of government—Federal, State, and local—the private sector, faith-based and charitable organizations, foreign countries, and individual citizens. People and resources rushed to the Gulf Coast region to aid the emergency response and meet victims' needs. Their actions saved lives and provided critical assistance to Hurricane Katrina survivors. Despite these efforts, the response to Hurricane Katrina fell far short of the seamless, coordinated effort that had been envisioned by the federal government with the creation of a National Response Plan in February 2003.

Yet Katrina creates an opportunity—indeed an imperative—for a national dialogue about true national preparedness, especially as it pertains to catastrophic events. We are not as prepared as we need to be at any level within the country: Federal, State, local, and individual. Hurricane Katrina obligates us to re-examine how we are organized and resourced to address the full range of catastrophic events—both natural and man-made. The storm and its aftermath provide us with the mandate to design and build such a system.



In the President's report, the BENS Business Force program is cited as a best-business practice for creating public-private partnerships at the state level in support of disaster preparedness initiatives. The report recommends that, "All States should consider existing models to coordinate and integrate non-governmental resources in disaster planning and response, recognizing that business – government partnerships require a level of trust and agility most easily built at the regional level." **"One such model which has proven successful is the Business Executives for National Security (BENS) Business Force."**

The full report can be viewed at www.whitehouse.gov/reports/katrina-lessons-learned.pdf.

Missouri Embraces a Business Response Network (BRN) Capability

The State of Missouri had asked BENS Kansas City to play a leadership role in assisting the state to design an operational asset management tool to support emergency preparedness and response. This effort follows our previous work to demonstrate the value and worth of developing a proactive private-sector response capability to support state efforts. The Business Response Network (BRN) would connect emergency management personnel

to needed private sector resources (goods, services, equipment, volunteers) quickly and effectively during a catastrophic event. The state will take this program even further by including local and state "first response" assets and tying the entire program together for information sharing purposes.

History shows us that private sector companies, working in partnership with state and local governments, can play a critical role in responding to disasters and other emergencies within their communities or across their regions and that people want to help. More than 12,000 volunteers and rescue workers helped at the 1995 Murrah Building

bombing in Oklahoma City, and tens of thousands of volunteers showed up to give blood, donate materials, distribute supplies or do whatever they could after the attacks in New York City on September 11th. During Hurricane Katrina, the Nation mobilized over 40,000 companies to support the disaster recovery and relief efforts.

In particular, Hurricane Katrina and 9/11 revealed the need for timely access to and response by private sector resources in the event of a natural disaster or terrorist incident. Significant excesses of response capability in some areas and gaps in others marked these responses across our Nation. Excesses in availability of goods and/or services created enormous waste and clogged transportation routes making it difficult for first responders to do their jobs. In addition, first responders spent crucial hours filling gaps where more effective planning and preparation for the utilization of the private sector potential could have assisted in the reduction of injury, loss of life and waste of resources. Generally, these were all a reactive approach to disaster response – what is needed is a proactive approach to marshalling response capabilities well ahead of the event, and creation of an active private-sector database and implementation plan.

In this regard, Missouri is taking a proactive approach to both preparation and response to major incidents of natural disasters or terrorism. Such proactiveness is absolutely critical for the protection of the people and infrastructure of the state as well as recovery from the effects of such an incident. Recent disasters, both in and out of the State of Missouri, have made clear the need for an effective proactive partnership between public emergency responders and the private sector to assist the state in these efforts.

The Business Response Network (BRN) ideally will be an information network of private sector resources that businesses have agreed to make available to emergency management officials in the event of a natural disaster or terrorist attack. The BRN database will be operated by state or local emergency management agencies. In an emergency, responding agencies must identify “surge” assets quickly, but often the resources they need are in short supply or their location and how to obtain them is unknown. To address these issues, public sector organizations and private-sector businesses are partnering in response to disasters

and other emergencies within their communities. The BRN is a proactive approach to this effort by providing a faster response and more efficient access to private-sector resources for emergency managers.

Businesses participate by agreeing to provide these resources during an emergency – subject to their availability - reducing response time, saving lives and speeding economic recovery. An operational BRN will provide a needed asset surge capability that government leaders have identified as a serious gap in their response to catastrophic events, either natural or man-made. The BRN should allow for detailed pre-incident planning by bringing substantial, private-sector skills and assets to support local and state government emergency response efforts. The BRN will provide an efficient and effective use of total community resources in times of need.

Shook, Hardy, Bacon Aids BRN

Shook, Hardy, Bacon LLP, a BENS Business Force member, has generously agreed to assist us in looking at state and regional legislative statutes that may impact business concerns for BRN response. We believe there are probably some state legislative issues that must be readdressed from a state liability perspective to assure liability protection of people, companies, and organizations responding from the community. We sincerely appreciate the assistance of SHB in this effort.

Operation Resilient Guard

The MidAmerica Business Force, in partnership with its members, is initiating a community wide program to raise awareness of the need for planning and preparation in order to respond to natural disasters, or terrorist attacks. The overarching goal will be the implementation of an ongoing public/private partnership to mobilize the resources and expertise of the community, in advance, to improve our disaster response capability, which is the foundation concept of the BENS MidAmerica Business Force. This would be the first in a series of crisis management programs.

Involvement would come from all sectors, including government, business, and academia. Government could include state and local homeland security; emergency management, law enforcement, fire, and public health officials; U.S. Representatives and U.S.

Senators. Special emphasis will be placed on local elected officials and state representatives.

Shook, Hardy & Bacon and Fleishman-Hillard will be the lead organizations for this event.

We have selected ten potential threats that we may want to eventually target for this program. Business Force members have decided that the most logical choice for the initial program would be a potential avian flu pandemic.

A series of planning meetings are underway with our members to prepare for a fall avian flu pandemic program.

MidWest Consolidated Security Forum

BENS participated recently with members of the metropolitan Kansas City security community to launch the inaugural event of the Midwest Consolidated Security Forum (MCSF). Besides BENS, participating organizations included The American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS), InfraGard, Information Systems and Control Association (ISACA), the Information Systems Security Association (ISSA), MidAmerica Regional Council (MARC), the Kansas City Security Council, High Technology Crime Investigation Association (HTCIA), and the Partnership for Emergency Planning (PEP). The forum was held May 10-12 at Cerner's Riverport Landing and attracted over 250 participants.

Rumsfeld Visits Kansas City

BENS members in Kansas City were afforded the unique opportunity on 2 March 2006 to attend an invitation only reception and policy discussion with Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. The reception and speech was held at the Harry S. Truman Library in Independence, Missouri. Each member had the opportunity to meet and shake hands with Secretary Rumsfeld and have their picture taken with him. He seemed to thoroughly enjoy the reception and was extremely gracious to everyone who met him.

His speech began with several references to President Harry Truman, his deep admiration for him, and to Truman's fearless determination to be willing to make very difficult decisions, even in the face of what he knew, in some cases, would be fierce opposition. Rumsfeld said, "Let there be no

doubt – the United States did not win the Cold war by luck, and our victory was not inevitable. It took perseverance and confidence in our course, despite the many uncertainties, and there were uncertainties throughout. He referred to Truman as an epic figure in history.

Secretary Rumsfeld then moved on to the war on terrorism and specifically, to events that are unfolding in Iraq and Afghanistan. He contrasted the terror under which Iraqi and Afghani peoples had been living prior to liberation by American forces and insisted that they were now infinitely better off. He also made a strong case that while we face a very determined enemy who will continue to fight us and attack us, as in previous world struggles and conflicts. "Both required our Nation to grid for a long, sustained struggle, punctuated by periods of military conflict."

Terrorism Early Warning Group

The Kansas City Regional Terrorism Early Warning Group (KCTEW) brings local, state and federal law enforcement officials together with public and private organizations to detect, deter and respond to terrorist threats in the Greater Kansas City community. This new initiative will help enhance preparedness in the metropolitan area.

The KCTEW, one of several TEW groups in metropolitan areas across the Nation, was created in response to presidential directives to increase information sharing. Its primary goal is to detect and prevent planned acts of violence through enhanced analytical capabilities. The TEW will provide a means for more complete and productive exchange and analysis of information between agencies and across disciplines. This initiative also involves a business and community outreach program that provides preparedness information and resources. BENS has been designated as the coordination agency to develop a private-sector network of security professionals that will be linked to the TEW. BENS is also a member of the Executive Committee that provides governance for the TEW.



Information reported by the public through the Web site and through member organizations will assist the group's analytical efforts to detect, deter and

respond to threats. For more information about the KCTEW Group, visit the Web site at www.kctew.org.

State of Nebraska News

In April, BENS participated in the Nebraska Infrastructure Protection Conference in Omaha, NE. We presented a briefing on “Bridging the Gap – Building Public-Private Partnerships, which was well received. We are currently working directly with Lieutenant Governor Rick Sheehy to prioritize efforts to support the State of Nebraska.

BENS Supports Kansas Exercise.

In March, the Adjutant General of Kansas, Major General Tod Bunting applauded BENS and the MidAmerica Business Force members for their support of Operation Vigilant Guard, an Agroterrorism exercise held in Salina, Kansas. Vigilant Guard is a series of nationwide training exercises to insure that Soldiers and Airman of the Guard are ready to meet the threat posed by terrorism on American soil. The exercise held in Salina had a regional focus of Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska, the four states that comprise FEMA Region VII and the MidAmerica Business Force. The exercise simulated a foreign animal disease outbreak.

BENS was asked to coordinate private sector participation and review of this exercise. Our ten members were treated as VIPs as they observed table top exercises and were given the opportunity to critique the operation by participating in an after action review.

Holcom Joins National BOD

Mr. Thomas H. Holcom, President / COO, Pioneer Financial Services, Inc., has spent the past four decades in financial services with an entrepreneurial spirit and a ceaseless drive to make a difference. He will now apply these same principles in his role as a member of the Board of

Directors of Business Executive for National Security (BENS). “Our company has spent the past twenty years exclusively serving the military community, and I have gained some unique insights into the lives of military families and I hope they will be a valuable addition to the BENS board,” said Holcom.

Lawson noted that “Tom Holcom brings a breadth of business and community experience and he will be invaluable in helping BENS and our MidAmerica Business Force create a model of best practices for disaster response.”

The Kansas City region, now, has three members on the national BOD, Landon H. Rowland, BENS National Vice-Chair; David Beaham, President, Faultless Starch; and Tom Holcom.

Business Force Online

We have two dynamic web sites online that provide additional information on the MidAmerica Business Force and explain the development of the Business Response Network. These websites can be viewed at www.midamericabusinessforce.org and www.businessresponsenetwork.org.

Business Response Task Force

BENS has formed a Task Force to review and recommend to the US Congress steps to integrate the capabilities of the private sector—principally that of the business community—as a critical component of a comprehensive disaster response mechanism. Membership is comprised of senior business leaders from US industries closely tied to disaster response: telecommunications, supply chain logistics, utilities, real estate management, etc. Business leaders understand the need to ensure the continuity of their community in order to maintain their own business continuity, however currently business-government collaboration in major disasters is largely disorganized. The Task Force will recommend solutions to these issues.



William F. Lawson
Regional Director
Business Executives for National
Security
104 W. Ninth Street, Suite 10
Kansas City, Missouri 64105
(816)-842-1778
wlawson@bens.org

David N. Guthrie
Director
MidAmerica Business Force
Business Executives for National Security
104 W. Ninth Street, Suite 10
Kansas City, Missouri 64105
(816)-842-1779
dguthrie@bens.org