

FEBRUARY 2008

UPDATE

Business Executives For National Security

“Red Tape That We Can Do Without”

BENS-Backed WMD Security Reforms Become Law

Culminating years of effort, a major package of reforms backed by BENS to strengthen America’s flagship nonproliferation effort became law with the stroke of the presidential pen January 28. Changes to the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program – which has secured and destroyed thousands of Soviet nuclear, chemical and biological weapons – remove restrictions that often delayed critical programs – described as “red tape that we can do without” by Senator Richard Lugar, a program founder.

Other provisions in the law give the Nunn-Lugar program greater ability to expand beyond the former Soviet Union and provide nearly \$100 million in new funds to secure nuclear and biological materials around the world. Using such authorities, Sen. Lugar has said the U.S. “should actively seek new opportunities to dismantle dangerous weapons programs...in the Middle East, Asia and any place else where supplies of weapons of mass destruction may be.” As we have for many years – most recently with CEO Chuck Boyd and Chairman Joe Robert’s [November letter to Congress](#) – BENS will remain a steady and strong voice for one of America’s most successful national security programs.

BENS Works: Business Sense for National Security

Message Received: Business Now “Part of the System”– Who says the government doesn’t listen? The nation’s new blueprint for responding to major disasters includes a leading role for the private sector – thanks, in part to BENS. Unveiling the [new National Response Framework](#) on January 22, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said a “core principle” is including the private sector in emergency training and exercises – which was a key recommendation in BENS’ [Business Response Task Force report](#) and in our comments during the Framework’s 2007 open review period. Citing the quick private sector response to the recent California wildfires – a response led by the state’s BENS Business Forces – FEMA Director David Paulison said that, in future emergencies, the private sector is “going to be involved very heavily.”

Business Force News

Planning for a Pandemic – Given government estimates that a virulent influenza pandemic could kill up to three million Americans in a matter of weeks, BENS continues to plan for the possibility. BENS’ Kansas City region will conduct a tabletop exercise February 6 to highlight that risk, gaps in local preparedness and ways to address the vulnerabilities, including close coordination between the public and private sectors. Mindful of a Pentagon report last year warning that military and civilian medical facilities “will be overwhelmed” by a pandemic, the exercise will stress effective communication and

coordination among private and public sectors, and include not just 40 BENS members but also representatives from FEMA Region VII, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, and the Kansas City Department of Health. For more information, contact William Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org.

Bracing for The Big One – Just months after helping lead the private-sector response to California’s massive fires, BENS is looking ahead to another potential disaster – massive floods. In its first formal exercise with Los Angeles County, the Los Angeles Business Force/Homeland Security Advisory Council will practice responding to a simulated tsunami that strikes the California coast. As the only private sector representative in the county-wide “Operation Higher Ground,” to be held over three days in February, the LABF/HSAC will test its Business Response Network resource database, which has grown to include nearly 100 companies. For more information, please contact Nancy Huynh at (213) 346-9422 or nhuynh@hsac.bens.org.

Upcoming Events

- **Kansas City – Pandemic Business Preparedness Tabletop Exercise**, Feb. 6, Jack Reardon Convention Center. Contact William Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org.
- **Washington, DC – Visit to National Cryptologic Museum**, Feb. 13, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Contact Steve Ewell at (202) 296-2125 or sewell@bens.org.
- **Atlanta – Special small group luncheon with Lt. Gen. Russel Honore, USA (Ret.)**, commander of Joint Task Force Katrina, Feb. 20. Contact Allison Cheatham at (404) 220-1135 or acheatham@bens.org.
- **Dallas – Lunch with Steven Emerson**, terrorism expert and author of *Jihad Incorporated*, Feb. 21. Contact Matthew Elias at (214) 315-2576 or melias@bens.org.
- **San Francisco – “The Future of Democracy in Southeast Asia,”** co-sponsored with the Asia Foundation, Feb. 21, 6-7:30 p.m., Asia Foundation, 465 California St. Contact Kathy Denzer at (415) 690-6254 or kdenzer@bens.org.
- **Washington, DC – Breakfast with Chris Darby**, CEO, In-Q-Tel, Feb. 21, 8 a.m., PRTM. Contact Steve Ewell at (202) 296-2125 or sewell@bens.org.
- **San Francisco – Visit to Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base**, Feb. 28-29, San Diego. Contact Kathy Denzer at (415) 690-6254 or kdenzer@bens.org.
- **San Francisco – Lunch discussion on “The Environment as a National Security Issue” with Dr. Richard Matthew**, Associate Professor & Director, Center for Unconventional Security Affairs, UC Irvine, Mar. 26. Contact Kathy Denzer at (415) 690-6254 or kdenzer@bens.org.
- **Kansas City – National Security Awards Dinner**, Apr. 8, 6:30 p.m., Westin Crown Center. Contact William Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org.
- **Washington, DC – Lauri Almann**, Permanent Undersecretary of Defence, Republic of Estonia, Apr. 24, 2 p.m., Washington Convention Center. Contact Steve Ewell at (202) 296-2125 or sewell@bens.org.