

# Business Executives For National Security UPDATE

JULY 2005

## The Hometown Face of Homeland Security

### *BENS Business Force Mobilizes America*

In an unprecedented partnership between the Georgia Business Force (GBF) and the state of Georgia, Atlanta BENS members, led by GBF committee chair Anthony Begando of Tenon Consulting Services, will conduct an exercise later this month designed to test the Strategic National Stockpile dispensing system in the Atlanta area. The stockpile of medications and medical supplies, managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, can be utilized when a public health emergency overwhelms local and state supplies. The exercise will include government emergency personnel and volunteers from Georgia Business Force member companies. This unique public-private partnership for dispensing the stockpile has potential as a national model for future BENS projects.

This will be the largest exercise in the two-year history of the BENS Business Force, and the latest example of civic-minded business leaders joining with local and state officials to secure their communities against terrorist attack.

- In Kansas City, the MidAmerica Business Force has launched the first phase of the Business Response Network website that will serve as the public face of this innovative inventory of private sector assets to be made available in the event of an emergency. So far, 21 area companies have agreed to join. MidAmerica is also working with government officials to expand into the neighboring states of Iowa and Nebraska.
- Earlier this year as part of the largest counter-terrorism exercise in U.S. history, the New Jersey Business Force was assigned lead responsibility for coordinating the private sector response and “lessons learned” during April’s TOPOFF III (“Top Officials”) exercise. And almost a dozen New Jersey companies have signed up for participation and training in the New Jersey Business Response Network.
- In California, the Bay Area Business Force is gearing up to begin operations in Northern California and is advising an existing public-private partnership in Southern California about building an effective response capability.

#### BENS Works: Business Sense for National Security

**Nobody’s Business** – Who benefits from empty buildings and vacant property on military bases? Nobody. The military is saddled with facilities it can’t use, and local communities are denied assets that could help create new businesses and jobs. Whereas closing a base can leave communities with valuable real estate for local development, bases that are simply restructured or consolidated can result in military-owned warehouses and land that benefit no one. With the coming round of base realignment and closure expected to result in more realignments than closures, BENS has started drafting proposals to make it easier for communities to make smart economic use of excess military property.

#### EVENT HIGHLIGHTS AND BENS DEVELOPMENTS

**Award for Abizaid** – BENS is proud to announce that our next Eisenhower Award will be presented to General John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command and ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Gen. Abizaid, who recently testified before Congress that, “We don’t need to fight this war looking over our shoulder worrying about the support back home,” will receive BENS’ support and praise at a gala dinner this fall in San Francisco. An Arabic speaker and a veteran of the invasion of Grenada and the first Gulf War, he has been called “a leader for the 21<sup>st</sup> century” by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Watch future updates and the BENS website for a date and details as they become available.

**Letter From Iraq** – BENS member Dan Rice, currently serving in Iraq as a captain in the Army National Guard, has sent a second letter with his observations about the future of a united Iraq given wide speculation about the potential of separate Kurdish state. “The Kurdish people would love to have their sovereignty,” Rice writes. “But the costs of sovereignty outweigh the benefits.” Visit the “Highlights” section of the BENS website to read this fascinating article.

**Snakes in the Grass** – Exploiting Western political and social norms allowed the 9/11 plot to remain hidden and allows radical Islamists into America today, according to Steve Emerson, executive director of The Investigation Project, a counterterrorism research and investigative center. He spoke to a lunchtime BENS crowd June 30 in Washington, D.C. and lauded BENS for keeping the public mobilized against terrorism.

**BENS in Space** – “If you’re not in space, you’re not in the race,” according to General Lance Lord, commander of Air Force Space Command, who hosted a BENS delegation during a two-day visit to command headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado on June 23 and 24. Citing his efforts to improve acquisition of space systems, Lord welcomed “feedback from problem solvers like the BENS.” The delegation was led by BENS President Chuck Boyd, who said that the insights gained during the visit would enable BENS to “develop ideas and projects that can help the command” preserve the competitive advantage that space assets give U.S. forces on the battlefield.

**“Revell”-ations** – For Buck Revell, former Associate Deputy Director of the FBI, the time between the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the war on terrorism wasn’t a decade – it was the blink of an eye. The U.S. started fighting Islamic terrorists when the World Trade Center was attacked in 1993, Revell told a BENS gathering at a June 23 luncheon in Dallas. Revell was critical of laws that he said had handcuffed federal law enforcement agencies from performing their jobs properly and he stated that recent intelligence reforms must be a beginning, not an end, to strengthening the intelligence community. Many thanks to BENS member Jan Collmer for sponsoring the event.

**“America the Vulnerable”** – An attack by terrorists on an American port would have devastating physical and economic consequences not just for that port, but for the entire world economy. That was the warning of Steve Flynn, author of “America the Vulnerable,” who addressed BENS members and guests during a June 14 luncheon in San Francisco. Flynn highlighted the need for greater cooperation on port security – between nations and between the public and private sector – a view that BENS wholeheartedly shares as we coordinate business sector input for the National Strategy for Maritime Security with the Coast Guard and White House.

#### Upcoming Events

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- **Atlanta** – Breakfast with **Gen. Dan McNeill**, Commanding General, U.S. Army Forces Command, July 12. Contact Aimee Yrlas at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlas@bens.org.
- **Washington, D.C.** – Lunch with **Alfonso Martinez-Fonts**, DHS Office of Private Sector Liaison, July 13. Contact Steve Ewell at (202) 296-2125 or sewell@bens.org.
- **Atlanta** – **BENS USO Volunteer Day: Support the Troops**, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, July 21. Contact Aimee Yrlas at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlas@bens.org.
- **New York City** – Lunch conversation with **Col. Jack Jacobs**, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and NBC News analyst, July 27. Contact Nancy Hart at (866) 475-2085 or nhart@bens.org.
- **San Francisco** – Luncheon with **Matt Bettenhausen, Director of the California Office of Homeland Security**, July 27. Contact Anne Ferris at (650) 967-3676 or aferris@bens.org.
- **Atlanta** – **Disaster Preparedness Exercise** July 28. Contact David Maples at (404) 220-1224 or dmaples@bens.org.
- **Kansas City** – Lunch with **Capt. James Gigliotti**, commanding officer, *USS Harry S. Truman*, August 11, Marriott Downtown. Contact William Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org.
- **Atlanta** – Lunch with **Rep. John Linder** (Georgia), member of Homeland Security Committee, August 12. Contact Aimee Yrlas at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlas@bens.org.
- **San Francisco** – Eisenhower Award dinner for **CENTCOM commander Gen. John Abizaid, US Army**. Venue and date TBD. Contact Jennie Moonis at (202) 296-2125 or jmoonis@bens.org.
- **Atlanta** – **Visit to U.S Army Signal Center and Ft. Gordon**, November 3. Contact Aimee Yrlas at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlas@bens.org.
- **Kansas City** – **Oakland Raiders @ Kansas City Chiefs**, Noon, Arrowhead Stadium, November 6. Contacted by William Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org.

Any questions or comments about the BENS Update? Please contact Michael Lucinski at (202) 296-2125 or mlucinski@bens.org