

# Business Executives For National Security UPDATE

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JULY 2006

## “Business Plays a Critical Role” *BENS Task Force Aims to Improve U.S. Disaster Response*

With its unique array of equipment, assets and expertise, the private sector must be better integrated into local, state and federal emergency response efforts. How to best harness the capabilities of business during natural disasters and terrorist attacks was the key question addressed at the first meeting of the BENS Task Force on disaster response, held June 22 in Washington, DC:

- Task force chair **Duane Ackerman**, Chairman and CEO of BellSouth, noted that “business plays a critical role in response to every major disaster” and called for “actionable, short-term results” as well as long range structural changes to make business “an integral part of government response plans.”
- Co-chair **Newt Gingrich**, former House Speaker, said that involving the private sector in emergency response “is a key strategy toward designing a 21<sup>st</sup> century intelligent, effective government.”
- Co-chair **John Breaux**, former Louisiana senator, observed that “government cannot do everything by itself” and that there must be an “incredible, coordinated effort” between government and business.

To develop its recommendations, the 12-member Task Force has formed three working groups focusing on public-private collaboration, business supply chains, and legal and regulatory issues. The Task Force is also considering the views and recommendations of executives from critical U.S. industry sectors, now being surveyed by the BENS staff with help from Deloitte & Touche, LLP, Patton Boggs, LLP, and SAIC.

In addition to corporate leaders, the Task Force is being advised by distinguished experts, including Tulane University President Dr. Scott Cowen; former Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Admiral Jim Loy, USCG (Ret.); and former Northern Command commander General Ed Eberhart, USAF (Ret.).

The Task Force will continue to solicit the insights of all BENS members, as it did during a July 11 conference call update for members. The panel is scheduled to issue its final recommendations in September following its final meeting August 17.

### [BENS Works: Business Sense for National Security](#)

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**Last-Minute Deal Saves Weapons Destruction Program** – An eleventh-hour deal between U.S. and Russian officials on June 16 avoided a shutdown of the hugely successful program that destroys nuclear, chemical and biological weapons in the former Soviet Union. Disagreement between the U.S. and Russian governments over liability and other legal matters had threatened to halt the Cooperative Threat Reduction program within days, despite its record of destroying thousands of Soviet-era weapons and securing dangerous nuclear material. While deferring final resolution of the disputed technical issues, the agreement renews for seven years a vital national security program of which BENS has been a long and vocal advocate.

### [Business Force News](#)

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**Getting Ready at the Grassroots...** – A deadly storm or terrorist attack strikes your community. What do you do? Starting in October, the MidAmerica Business Force will help local governments, businesses and academic institutions across the greater Kansas City region prepare for domestic disasters and learn how they can help improve local emergency response efforts. This “continuity of operations” initiative follows a March 2006 National Guard foreign animal disease exercise supported by executives from ten MidAmerica Business Force companies and a pandemic animal health symposium that the Business Force sponsored with the Chamber of Commerce last month. Dubbed Operation Resilient Guard, this new initiative will begin Oct. 25 with a series of crisis management programs, the first of which will

focus on the threat of an avian flu pandemic, with sponsorship by Business Force member companies Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP and Fleishman-Hillard.

... **at the TOP...** – Meanwhile, the MidAmerica and New Jersey Business Forces participated in a federal exercise in June simulating terrorist attacks involving a weapon of mass destruction on U.S. soil. At BENS' invitation, eight companies from Connecticut, Missouri and New Jersey rehearsed their internal crisis management plans as part of the congressionally-mandated TOPOFF program, which tests the readiness of top federal, state and local officials. Sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security, the TOPOFF program will conduct a major full-scale exercise in several states next spring with likely involvement by Business Force member companies.

... **and in the West...** – The Bay Area Business Force is beginning to play a leading role in California's plan to respond to a potential pandemic flu. At the Business Force's invitation, 30 local business continuity and corporate security executives joined California's lead public health official, Dr. Howard Backer, at a June 19 meeting hosted by Gilead Sciences to discuss government-business cooperation in crisis response situations. John Barry, author of the best-seller *The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History*, described how, with nearly half of shipyard workers off the job, the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic created economic havoc. To improve economic resilience in any major crisis, the Bay Area Business Force is adapting the business operations center concept developed by the Georgia Business Force to integrate the private sector into California's emergency management system.

### Event Highlights and BENS Developments

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**BENS to Honor Pacific Commander Fallon** – BENS is pleased to announce that our 2006 Eisenhower Award will be presented to Admiral William J. Fallon, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command on October 17 at the Nob Hill Ritz Carlton in San Francisco. Adm. Fallon, whose Pacific Command includes 50 percent of the world's surface and 60 percent of its population, including North Korea and China, will be honored for his nearly 40 years of military service to the nation.

**Two Partners vs. the "Three Cs"** – The federal government faces three main challenges in protecting the public health – *Complacency* by Americans about potential public health threats, the *capacity* of government and society to prepare for threats like a pandemic flu, and the *connectivity* of a world where disease spreads faster than ever. Dr. Julie Gerberding, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), addressing BENS members in Atlanta June 21, argued that the private sector can help deal with these "Three Cs." In particular, Dr. Gerberding praised BENS' partnerships with the CDC in Georgia and California that are working to more rapidly distribute the nations' stockpiled supply of emergency medicines.

**All Eyes on Iran** – U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton addressed the diplomatic impasse over Iran's nuclear program during a luncheon meeting with BENS members in New York on June 26. Bolton rejected the Iranian government's claims that its nuclear program is for peaceful energy purposes, noting that Iran has oil reserves that will last hundreds of years. Iran has rejected calls by the U.S. and European Union to suspend its enrichment of uranium, and has yet to formally respond to a recent U.S./EU package of incentives for ending its nuclear program.

### Upcoming Events

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- **Kansas City – Dinner with Lt. Gen. Joseph Inge, USA**, Deputy Commander, U.S. Northern Command, July 19. Contact Bill Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or [wlawson@bens.org](mailto:wlawson@bens.org).
- **Palo Alto – Lunch with Hoover Institute Research Fellow Dr. Abbas Milani**, July 26. Contact Anne Ferris at (650) 967-3676 or [aferris@bens.org](mailto:aferris@bens.org).
- **Atlanta – Lunch with U.S. Central Command deputy director of operations BGen. Mark Kimmit**, August 22. Contact Aimee Yrlas at (404) 220-1268 or [ayrlas@bens.org](mailto:ayrlas@bens.org).
- **Kansas City – Tentative Lunch with Gen Jim Jones NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe**, September 22 (t). Contact Bill Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or [wlawson@bens.org](mailto:wlawson@bens.org).
- **San Francisco – Eisenhower Award Dinner honoring Admiral William J. Fallon**, October 17. Ritz-Carlton, San Francisco (on Nob Hill). Contact Jennie Moonis at 202-296-2125 or [jmoonis@bens.org](mailto:jmoonis@bens.org).
- **Atlanta – Visit to Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base**, Nov. 16. Contact Aimee Yrlas at (404) 220-1268 or [ayrlas@bens.org](mailto:ayrlas@bens.org).

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