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UPDATE

25 YEARS
SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE

Business Executives For National Security

BENS Takes the Hill

Task Force Leaders Testify on Business Role in Crisis Response

Under the hot lights of an oak-paneled Senate hearing room June 21, it became clear Congress agrees with what many already know: BENS is *the* national model for public-private partnering in homeland security.

That afternoon, the work of BENS' Business Response Task Force featured heavily before a standing room-only crowd at the inaugural hearing of the public-private preparedness subcommittee of the Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee. To an enthusiastic reception from the senators, Task Force Chair Duane Ackerman, former chairman and CEO of BellSouth, wasted no time in driving home the central point: "The private sector must be included in the planning, practice, and execution" of any disaster response scenario. Ackerman highlighted the Task Force recommendation that companies not only get a seat in states' Emergency Operations Centers, but that parallel Business Operations Centers (BOCs) be created to coordinate business response and link it with government. Read his full statement at http://hsgac.senate.gov/_files/062107Ackerman.pdf.

In addition, Task Force co-chair John Breaux, former senator from Louisiana, warned that any disaster one fails to learn lessons from is a "double disaster." Focusing on legal and regulatory issues that impede effective business response to emergencies, he advocated creating a nationwide body of "disaster law," arguing that private-sector involvement "must be more formalized, institutionalized, and in writing." Read his full statement at http://hsgac.senate.gov/_files/062107Breaux.pdf.

From the subcommittee members' familiarity with the Task Force and its report, [*Getting Down to Business*](#), to their interest in the recommendations, to the fact that an overwhelming majority of the questions were directed at BENS' witnesses - it was obvious that senators trust BENS as the authority in this area. BENS won similar praise from Department of Homeland Security and Federal Emergency Management Agency witnesses, who emphasized their partnership with BENS in putting those ideas into practice. Look for future updates as this important work with both the executive and legislative branches continues.

BENS Works: Business Sense for National Security

BENSMatch.com – Although barely a stone's throw across the Potomac River, the Defense and State Departments can at times – particularly to observers outside the Beltway – seem worlds apart. BENS helped explode that myth May 31 with a bit of "matchmaking," leading a delegation of both State and Defense officials to Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) in Suffolk, VA, for a demonstration of best practices in global risk assessment and management. Briefed by Rear Adm. Tim Moon, USN of JFCOM, State's Director of Crisis Management Support and five others saw cutting-edge uses of information technologies to improve collaboration between and within agencies, expand training and distribution of lessons

learned, and link disparate agencies into effective risk evaluators and crisis responders. This event, part of BENS' work to bolster the State Department's crisis management structures, will be followed by more visits to both public- and private-sector experts in this field.

Business Force News

Stirred Before Shaken – Want to guess where three of the four largest earthquakes ever to hit the lower 48 states took place? If you said California, you'd be wrong – it's actually the New Madrid Fault Line near southeastern Missouri, where past quakes were powerful enough to shift the course of the Mississippi River. With scientists predicting up to a 40 percent chance of a magnitude 6.0 or greater tremor in the next 50 years, BENS' MidAmerica Business Force is leading the private sector in preparing to respond to this potential catastrophe – most recently, by spearheading business participation in Missouri's June 19-21 New Madrid Earthquake Exercise, a massive simulation of the devastating scenario. Ameren Utility, AT&T, Kansas City Power & Light, and Yellow Roadway were among 20 member companies manning business seats in the state's Emergency Operations Center, providing situational awareness reports and identifying crucial response resources for key government partners. This kind of drill, and those to follow, are important practice for if and when the next "big one" strikes – be it natural or man-made.

Survival of the Fittest – In a major disease pandemic, the Internet could slow or halt entirely if most businesses – and millions of home-bound employees – are forced to shift all of their operations online. The consequences of such a disruption, and recommendations for mitigating it, are the sobering contents of "Will the Internet Be There When You Need It?" a new white paper from BENS' New Jersey Business Force and SunGard Availability Services. Drawn from a February symposium of the same name (also with AT&T), the white paper captures its dramatic findings, including the following: faltering networks could lead to economic "survival of the fittest," with the best-surviving companies being those best prepared to expand bandwidth, reduce vulnerabilities to cyber attacks, and educate employees on how to weather the storm. For more of this must-read, go to http://www.bens.org/mis_support/Internet-Pandemic-White-Paper.pdf.

Event Highlights and BENS Developments

Iraq to the Future – When a seven-member BENS delegation led by CEO Chuck Boyd and Chairman Joe Robert sat down with Gen. David Petraeus and Amb. Ryan Crocker in Baghdad on June 18, the message from America's top representatives in Iraq was one of patience and guarded optimism: they are seeing measurable progress, but it is not irreversible and will take some time. Variations on that theme were repeated throughout the June 16-18 trip to Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Fallujah, in meetings with U.S. generals and Iraqi politicians alike. **For all interested BENS members, Chuck Boyd and Joe Robert will provide a thorough debrief of their impressions and takeaways in two conference calls, Monday, July 2 at 10 AM, and again Tuesday, July 3 at 10 AM. Feel free to join them by calling (877) 641-0091.**

"A Job Well Done!" – BENS Atlanta members' "outstanding contributions and support to the U.S. military," through homecoming welcomes for troops as part of the USO's "Operation R & R," were honored June 12 as the Georgia USO recognized its 500,000th relief flight. In almost-monthly visits since January 2003, nearly 50 percent of the Atlanta membership has greeted and thanked thousands of soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan through Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. For their service, the U.S. Army and others, "with great pleasure," commended BENS and its members for "a job well done!" Upcoming welcome visits are planned for July 16, August 30, and September 11; contact Aimee Yrlas Simpson at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlassimpson@bens.org for more details.

Upcoming Events

- **Dallas – Lunch with RADM Harry Harris, USN**, Director of Operations, U.S. Southern Command, and former Commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Jul. 2, 11:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Hotel Crescent Court. Contact Matthew Elias at (214) 315-2576 or melias@bens.org.
- **Washington, DC – Lunch with Maj. Gen. Thomas Wilkerson, USMC (Ret.)**, CEO, U.S. Naval Institute, Jul. 11, 12 p.m., Army-Navy Club. Contact Steve Ewell at (202) 296-2125 or sewell@bens.org.
- **Washington, DC – Lunch with Don Semesky**, Chief, DEA Office of Financial Operations, Jul. 24, 12-2 p.m., location TBA. Contact Steve Ewell at (202) 296-2125 or sewell@bens.org.
- **Atlanta – Visit to Fort Benning**, Jul. 27. Contact Aimee Yrlas Simpson at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlassimpson@bens.org.
- **Kansas City – Breakfast with Monte Strait, Special Agent in Charge**, FBI-Kansas City, July 31, 7:30 a.m., The River Club. Contact William Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org.
- **Atlanta – Lunch with Dr. Robert R. Friedman**, Director, Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange, Aug. 14, Four Seasons Hotel. Contact Aimee Yrlas Simpson at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlassimpson@bens.org.
- **Atlanta – Visit to Robins Air Force Base**, Nov. 8. Contact Aimee Yrlas Simpson at (404) 220-1268 or ayrlassimpson@bens.org.