



A Model for America

BENS Takes Partnerships to Next Level

In recent years, BENS—and communities across the country—have come to rely on our innovative public-private partnerships in times of need, from severe storms in Georgia and wildfires in California to historic floods in Iowa and helping secure the Democratic National Convention in Denver.

But with BENS' existing partnerships moving to local ownership and with so many more communities and states seeking our advice in building similar programs, we're taking a new approach: community leadership. In the future, BENS will no longer directly manage partnerships. Instead, we'll stay connected by using our expertise and experience to teach *others* how to create and operate their *own* partnerships.

"The growing independence of our partnerships bodes well for their success," said BENS President and CEO Chuck Boyd. "Partnership operations may have outgrown BENS, but the model now belongs to the American communities it serves."

Already, BENS-facilitated partnerships are becoming independent, with the Safeguard Iowa Partnership the first to self-incorporate in February and partnerships in New Jersey and Colorado transitioning to independent entities this month. In addition, BENS continues advising new and prospective partnerships across the country on how they can learn from BENS' experience and bring business and government together to build more resilient and secure communities.

BENS Works: Business Sense for National Security

Defense Acquisition Task Force: Quenching a "Thirst" for Reform — Nearing completion of its review of the Pentagon's outdated procurement system, the BENS Task Force on Acquisition Law and Oversight held its final formal meeting Feb. 3 in Washington, DC. The group, chaired by BENS member and former Lockheed Martin chief Norm Augustine, aims to release its report and recommendations in late March. "There's a thirst in Congress for this reform," said Arnold Punaro, a Task Force member and Senior Vice President at SAIC. Senators Carl Levin and John McCain recently introduced legislation that reflects many of the Task Force's recommendations. While BENS supports the bill, we will seek Congressional hearings and urge lawmakers and the Pentagon to make additional acquisition reforms that will equip America's armed forces faster, better and on-budget.

Regional Partnership News

Los Angeles: Business Continuity Starts at the Top — In emergencies, keeping businesses up

and running requires senior executives who are trained and ready. Thanks to the BENS' L.A.-based Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC), California executives will be prepared for the worst. At the invitation of HSAC, Steve Gomez, Special Agent of the FBI's Los Angeles Counterterrorism Division, and Dr. Lucy Jones, Chief Scientist of the U.S. Geological Survey, addressed 28 BENS members and guests on January 30 on threats to the L.A. area and how to ready themselves, their employees and families for catastrophic events such as earthquakes. To continue building on business continuity efforts, HSAC is exploring a future emergency preparedness training program for member companies' employees.

Atlanta: Fueling Up for a Fuel Emergency — In addition to scores of deaths and tens of billions in property damage, last summer's Gulf Coast Hurricanes Gustav and Ike left something else in their wakes: a crippling fuel shortage in the Southeast that hamstrung daily life for weeks. Now, Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue is looking to the Georgia Business Force—a BENS Southeast program—to help plan for similar future fuel emergencies. On January 22, the Business Force assembled 14 leading companies from sectors with a vital interest in fuel supply—from utilities companies to major retailers like The Home Depot—to provide the Georgia Emergency Management Agency with private-sector input on the State's Fuel Emergency Plan. The companies provided expertise on communications between authorities and business during a shortage as well as the plan's effect on commerce. The final draft plan is currently under state review.

Event Highlights and BENS Developments

Red Flag: BENS Members Go to Air Combat Training — With BENS members looking on, B-1 bombers, F-16 fighter jets and F-22 Raptors took to the air last month for Red Flag, the world's premier air combat exercise at Nellis Air Force base in Nevada. The annual scrimmage provides realistic air combat training for the military's top pilots who, despite the cutting-edge technology on display, were the most impressive part of the trip for the 13 BENS members who got a peek Feb. 4-5 at the two-week long exercise. Hosted by Major General Steve Hoog, Commander of the U.S. Air Force Warfare Center, members were briefed on various aspects of Red Flag, watched aircraft launch and got an up-close look at combat hardware like the unmanned Predator drone.

Upcoming Events

- **Atlanta** – Lunch and book signing with Milt Bearden, Former Senior CIA Clandestine Services Officer, March 6, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., The Cherokee Town Club, Buckhead. Contact Allison Cheatham at acheatham@bens.org
- **Atlanta** – Cocktail and Hors d'oeuvres with David M. Walker, former Comptroller General of the U.S., April 20, 6:30–8:00 p.m., Buckhead Club. Contact Allison Cheatham at acheatham@bens.org
- **Kansas City** – National Security Award Dinner with Congressman Ike Skelton, April 14, Westin Crown Center. Contact Bill Lawson at 816-842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org
- **Kansas City** – Lunch with Gen. George Casey, Army Chief of Staff, May 4, 11:30 a.m., The River Club. Contact Bill Lawson at 816-842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org
- **Los Angeles** – RAND briefing with Brian Jenkins and Tom LaTourrette: Economic issues and decision-making related to security, March 12, 7:30–9:00 a.m. at RAND Corporate Headquarters in Santa Monica. Contact Tracy Hughes at thughes@hsac.bens.org