APPLYING BEST BUSINESS PRACTICES TO ADDRESS THE NATION’S MOST PRESSING SECURITY CHALLENGES

**ACTIONABLE SOLUTIONS**, that utilize best business practices

**MEMBER DRIVEN AND FINANCED** where members participate in their individual capacity and government funding is not accepted

**FIERCELY NONPARTISAN**, avoiding partisan debate that take positions on the size of the nation’s security budget or specific weapons systems or strategies

**BOUND BY STRONG ETHICS** that preclude members from lobbying or engaging in business development

**A TRUSTED PARTNER** who has supplemented government efforts for nearly four decades

**COMMITTED TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT** valuing government partner and member feedback to produce ever more effective outcomes
BENS members examine the M1 Abrams battle tank with U.S. Marines at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, CA.

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Message from the
CHAIRMAN + CEO

As we close on 2019 and approach a new decade, BENS’ mission remains strong and ever more relevant. Great power competition continues to be the Nation’s foremost security concern, as China and Russia challenge our technological and operational advantages. Confronting this competition and maintaining our advantage requires public and private sector collaboration. BENS members – as they have done for nearly 40 years – are stepping up to facilitate public-private sector collaboration between the business and national security communities.

BENS continues to be the partner of choice for dozens of military and national security agencies looking to navigate today’s security landscape and tackle the unique business challenges within their individual areas of responsibility. Since our last Leadership Report in the spring, more than 200 of our members – representing all seven of BENS’ regions – participated in project work or the efforts of BENS’ three Councils. These members have been working on a range of current national security challenges, from grid security to talent management. Moreover, BENS members this past year have engaged partners at every level of the national security enterprise, hosting 125 conversations with security leaders around the country while undertaking 12 domestic and international trips with partners at home and abroad. These efforts have strengthened the bond between the national security and business communities and provided business-driven problem solving that will help keep America safe and secure.
With our gaze to 2020 and beyond, we now look to join members – new and those of longer tenure – in maintaining our meaningful momentum. The coming year marks a period of transition as BENS welcomes a new President and CEO, retired Army General Joseph Votel, and his leadership will position the organization well to continue to be the partner of choice in the months and years ahead. He brings a wealth of experience, high regard within the security community, and deep knowledge of the dynamic security challenges we face as a Nation. We are excited he has chosen to lead our organization.

Our sincere appreciation to our members for their enduring support as we strive to execute on the mission set forth by our founder, Stanley Weiss, now more than a few decades ago. With time and commitment, as outlined in this latest report, BENS is delivering on the promise to apply relevant private sector expertise and best business practice to the demand for successful outcomes facing partners across the U.S. national security enterprise.

Norman C. Chambers  
Chairman

General Norton A. Schwartz,  
U.S. Air Force (Ret.)  
President & CEO
GREAT POWER COMPETITION
FRAMING OUR KEY NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

Great power threats to U.S. economic and military advantage shape the requests that we receive from our national security government partners, and the research efforts BENS Councils undertake. The need to protect, sustain, and improve upon America’s competitive advantage permeates our work. The relevance of BENS’ mission and value that we bring to bear is evidenced not only by how the Pentagon’s *National Defense Strategy* (NDS) prioritizes the threat the U.S. faces from China and Russia, but also in how it would address those challenges: (1) building a more lethal force; (2) strengthening strategic alliances; and (3) reforming business operations for greater performance and affordability. Applying best business practices to address pressing national security challenges has never been more relevant.

Throughout 2019, government partners have sought out BENS leaders for specific, practical areas of expertise, often to help achieve strategic, enterprise-wide change, and typically in the context of addressing actions by strategic competitors. BENS organizes its project work in three major areas to respond: (1) 21st Century National Security Workforce (talent management); (2) National Security Strategic Modernization (organizational transformation); and (3) Critical Defense Challenges.

BENS' Energy, Resilience, and Technology & Innovation Councils each are initiating or advancing research intended to better position U.S. government and industry to compete more effectively and securely, generally to challenges exacerbated by Chinese or Russian moves or planning.
Recruiting and sustaining a talented workforce is critical to tackling 21st century national security challenges. Agencies in the national security space require a sustainable strategy for attracting, developing, and retaining the best and brightest. Increasingly our national security community recognizes that to compete best against foreign adversaries, they need to welcome new approaches, including exploring actions by private sector employers. BENS has worked with agencies within the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security on these tasks.

Having observed common threads in workforce queries raised by leaders across the national security community, BENS business leaders who participated in several different working sessions also saw solutions that could be broadly useful. For this reason, BENS will publish a report in early 2020 in which we offer six key recommendations that can serve as platform planks for building an effective national security talent management strategy. We encourage national security leaders to: First, make the business case for why talent management strategies are critical to the success of their organization, as is embedded within the National Defense Strategy. Second, define success factors and recruit accordingly, paying attention to why employees stay and leave. Third, determine key metrics to inform and track recruitment and retention. Fourth, emphasize mentorships, coaching, and professional development opportunities through all levels of the organization. Fifth, examine promotion/evaluation processes and reconfigure, if needed, for effectiveness. And sixth, assess where partnership help is needed and how to access it.
NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIC MODERNIZATION

Great power competition has affected fundamentally the mission set for BENS’ government partners. In this context, members of the national security community increasingly have sought BENS’ assistance in executing transformative organizational changes. National security leaders recognize they must adapt and rethink the way they carry out and achieve their missions to outcompete strategic competitors and address 21st century security challenges that countries such as China and Russia are posing. Throughout 2019, BENS has worked to help our government partners modernize their organizations, and thus be better positioned to protect, defend, and secure the United States. BENS work in this track includes challenging assignments with the defense intelligence enterprise, and rethinking the business case for operational elements within the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Veterans Affairs.

CRITICAL DEFENSE CHALLENGES

Government partners generally recognize the threat posed by China’s continued and rapid technological, economic, and military advancements. China seeks to increase its influence around the globe by leveraging tools including foreign investment, cyber, research and development, and economic espionage. BENS is focused on boosting the competitiveness of the U.S. national security enterprise by working with government partners, and thought and practice leaders focused on developing innovative public-private mechanisms to meet this challenge.
COUNCILS UPDATE

Our Councils serve as BENS’ research and development arm, drawing on BENS members’ expertise and experience. The Technology & Innovation, Resilience, and Energy Councils are each currently undertaking studies critical to outcompeting China and Russia and enhancing U.S. security and resiliency.

The Technology & Innovation (T&I) Council is exploring methodologies to secure the coming 5G network and its corresponding architecture. Through workshops, members are identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing specific vulnerabilities corresponding with the advent of 5G. By fully leveraging BENS’ ability to convene a range of key stakeholders in a trusted space, the Council aims to find pathways to improved 5G cybersecurity viable for public and private sectors.

The Resilience Council is investigating the strategic impact for the U.S. of a critical mineral supply shortage, with respect to bringing important defense and commercial products to market. Given China’s global dominance in refining and mining critical minerals, the United States supply chain faces vulnerabilities. The Council also will seek to use BENS’ convening ability to bring together key private and public stakeholders to assess paths forward to meet this challenge.

The Energy Council is evaluating efforts to secure the U.S. electrical grid from threats including those from man-made, cyber, electromagnetic disturbance, and other sources. The Council’s study has focused on several state-level public-private partnerships. The assessment identified four state-level approaches that are critical for grid resiliency, and, if practiced consistently across the country, would lead to a more resilient national grid. These practices are: (1) Examine trends to identify emerging threats to the energy grid and facilitate timely mutual sharing of threat information; (2) Identify available funding mechanisms and accelerate key commercial technologies development; (3) Ensure emergency preparedness and crisis management planning; and (4) Develop a cyber strategy, with a component that addresses supply chain challenges. The findings and recommendations of this study will be published in a report in early 2020.

Members of the BENS Tech & Innovation Council: (L-R) Lauren Bedula, Elizabeth Wharton, Rob Arnold
CONVERSATIONS

Building on the robust schedule of speakers noted in BENS’ Spring Leadership Report, members in each of our seven regions continued to host an incredible line-up of security leaders and experts throughout the second half of the year – which included a December event in New York with Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper. Members in Texas hosted senior military leaders such as General Charles Q. Brown, the Commander of Pacific Air Forces, while Chicago met with Lieutenant General Warren D. Berry, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Force for Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection. In Washington, D.C., area-members met with Lieutenant General Darrell K. Williams, Director of the Defense Logistics Agency. And in Atlanta, Major General Julian D. Alford, Commanding General of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, provided Southeast members a riveting talk on his recent experience commanding in Afghanistan. Boston and California members, meanwhile, engaged in thoughtful exchanges on security and technology with Michael Brown, Director of the Defense Innovation Unit, and Chris Piehota, Executive Assistant Director of the FBI’s Science and Technology Branch, respectively.
RECENT SPEAKERS HAVE INCLUDED:

The Honorable Mark T. Esper  
U.S. Secretary of Defense - New York, NY

Lieutenant General Darrell K. Williams  
Director, Defense Logistics Agency - Washington, D.C.

Major General Julian D. Alford  
Commanding General, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune - Atlanta, GA

Lieutenant General Warren D. Berry  
Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection, Headquarters U.S. Air Force - Chicago, IL

Christopher M. Piehota  
Executive Assistant Director, FBI Science & Technology Branch - Palo Alto, CA

James Baker  
Director, Department of Defense Office of Net Assessment - Boston, MA

Major General James Dawkins, Jr.  
Commander, Eighth Air Force, et al. - Houston, TX
BENS members complemented the conversations they are having in each region with domestic and international travel that provided an opportunity to learn and observe key military and security missions firsthand. Members took 12 national and international trips in 2019, with travel in the second half of the year stretching from unique locales such as Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska to Tolimaida Military Base in Melgar, Colombia. Members observed live-fire exercises with Marines at Twentynine Palms in California and embarked on the USCG Eagle for several days of training with cadets of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. In Washington, members visited McChord Air Force Base to learn about the strategic location and role of the 62nd Airlift Wing and toured Blue Origin Aerospace Company to better understand the steps the private sector is taking to enhance operations in space. And at U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) in Colorado, members met with NORTHCOM Commander, General Terrence O'Shaughnessy and his staff to discuss homeland defense capabilities and challenges.
A delegation of BENS members traveled to Colombia and El Salvador in October, garnering a firsthand assessment of the major issues affecting Central and South America and their impact on U.S. national security. The delegation, who were sponsored by Admiral Craig S. Faller, the Commander of U.S. Southern Command, focused much of their time meeting with senior government and civilian officials, to include Colombian President Ivan Duque Marquez. President Duque assumed office in August 2018.

The visit with President Duque preceded a daytrip from Bogota to the Colombian-Venezuelan border where the delegation met with the Deputy Director of the Colombian Migration Agency, Rafael Parada, and viewed the Simon Bolivar International Bridge. The bridge has historically been a major economic thoroughfare between Colombia and Venezuela, but has recently become a single-lane passageway for Venezuelan migrants; with some seeking food and supplies from charitable organizations, while others seek asylum. Managing a potential increase in migration could become a major humanitarian challenge for the nation.

The trip began on October 13th and continued through October 18th, and also included discussions with other key public figures such as the former Colombian President, Andres Pastrana Arango; Mayor of San Salvador, Ernesto Luis Muyshondt; and the General Commander of the Colombian Military Forces, General Luis Fernando Navaro.

ON-THE-GROUND IN COLOMBIA AND EL SALVADOR
We now stand ten years past the midpoint of a century that has witnessed four major wars among great nations. Three of these involved our own country. Despite these holocausts America is today the strongest, the most influential and most productive nation in the world. Understandably proud of this pre-eminence, we yet realize that America’s leadership and prestige depend, not merely upon our unmatched material progress, riches and military strength, but on how we use our power in the interests of world peace and human betterment. Throughout America’s adventure in free government, such basic purposes have been to keep the peace; to foster progress in human achievement, and to enhance liberty, dignity and integrity among peoples and nations.

Eisenhower Award honorees Charles Phillips (left) and General Paul Nakasone (middle) with dinner emcee and “fireside chat” moderator, Lesley Stahl.
On October 30th, before a crowd of nearly 500 industry and national security leaders, BENS presented its semi-annual Eisenhower Award to General Paul M. Nakasone, Commander of U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) and Director of the National Security Agency, and Charles E. Phillips, Chairman of Infor. The evening focused on American leadership in cyberspace and digital technology.

“When we speak of American excellence in the 21st Century, we speak not just of our entrepreneurial excellence or our innovative excellence, but of our digital excellence. And, there is no greater testament to that fact than [Gen. Nakasone and Mr. Phillips],” remarked BENS President and CEO, retired General Norton Schwartz at the event.

Emmy Award-winning journalist Lesley Stahl served as the event’s emcee and moderated a discussion between the CYBERCOM Commander and Infor Chairman. The discussion, which was a highlight of the evening, hit on a range of topics; from cyber defense and the role of public-private partnerships in U.S. cybersecurity strategy, to the challenges posed by great power competition from nations such as China.

The evening also offered recognition of U.S. Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer James Gose, an exemplar military cybersecurity professional and invaluable member of the U.S. cybersecurity community.
STAYING CONNECTED
BENS maintained an informed and connected community throughout 2019, outpacing industry averages for both open and click rates for our e-communications. Moreover, internal and external publications received praise throughout the year for their informative content, intuitive layouts, and modern design. BENS will continue to employ best-in-class communication practices in all our efforts, and strive to always meet the professional standards members and other stakeholders have come to expect.

Percentages note open and click rates for 2019. Triangle represents growth YOY. Dash represents fixed rate YOY.
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