

Regional Partnership-South Central PA Region Task Force

Summary

The South Central PA region recognized that 85% of our nation's critical infrastructure is privately owned or operated by business and industry. SCTF also recognized the important role that private sector plays in providing the necessary services and products needed for public safety agencies to effectively respond in emergencies and disasters. It is for these reasons that the Business, Industry & Infrastructure Subcommittee was started by the Task Force back in 2005. The most effective way to protect our community is to have public safety personnel partner with their private sector peers to detect, prevent and prepare for all disasters. The Business, Industry & Infrastructure Subcommittee has grown to over 150 members to include the family owned corner store to the larger industries such as those that provide our food, gas, water, electricity, transportation and telecommunication needs.

Background

The South Central PA region recognized that 85% of our nation's critical infrastructure is privately owned or operated by business and industry. SCTF also recognized the important role that private sector plays in providing the necessary services and products needed for public safety agencies to effectively respond in emergencies and disasters. It is for these reasons that the Business, Industry & Infrastructure Subcommittee was started by the Task Force back in 2005. The most effective way to protect our community is to have public safety personnel partner with their private sector peers to detect, prevent and prepare for all disasters. The Business, Industry & Infrastructure Subcommittee has grown to over 150 members to include the family owned corner store to the larger industries such as those that provide our food, gas, water, electricity, transportation and telecommunication needs.

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain situational awareness for the BI&I members by providing them with security sensitive information.
- Provide training to the BI&I members to prepare them for all types of hazards-manmade (accidental & intentional) as well as natural.
- Provide a conduit for the private sector to help shape public policy involving emergency preparedness.
- Establish relationships between the private sector and public safety personnel.

Description

The BI&I Subcommittee is very active and meets monthly to share information and discuss initiatives to advance the goals of the subcommittee. Examples of current and past initiatives:

- Facility & Vulnerability Assessment Program

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This program takes advantage of the BI&I member's significant amount of experience and education in their position. Examples include expertise in the field of fire protection, cyber security, physical security, business continuity and emergency preparedness. The members volunteer their time to conduct a facility vulnerability assessment to organizations that requests one from the Task Force. The assessment results in a confidential report that provides the organization with various options for consideration to improve upon their program. Priority is given to organizations that are critical infrastructures or key resources in the Region. There is no charge to the organization for this service.

- Quarterly Training Programs

Once per quarter the BI&I Subcommittee offers training to members and non-members from the State and Region. Examples of training programs include:

Soft Target Awareness
Business Continuity Planning
Conducting Facility Vulnerability Assessments
Bomb Making Awareness
Surveillance Detection/Protective Measures
Emergency Plan Development
Pandemic Preparedness
Cyber Security
Faith based Organization Workshops
Workplace Violence/ Active Shooter

- Homeland Security Conference

Annually, the Task Force conducts a 4 day Homeland Security Conference. One day is dedicated to Business & Industry. This brings in nationally recognized speakers in the field of emergency preparedness to share information on topics of interest to the private sector.

- Shaping Public Policy

BI&I has been active in the development of statewide policies such as:

- Working closely with the PA Food Merchants Association and the State Department of Agriculture resulted in the development of the Emergency Food Distribution Plan.
-Drafted a policy that provides a process for authorizing essential private sector personnel onto roads ordered closed by the state. This resulted in a State issued Directive recognized by law enforcement to allow personnel with the proper credentials to access these closed roads provided that no life safety issues exist.

Requirements for Success

- Continued DHS funding to the Task Force
- Continued cooperation of law enforcement and intelligence agencies to receive situational awareness updates

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- Continued support from SCTF County Emergency Management Agency Directors
- Continued partnerships with DHS Protective Security Advisors, FBI, State Police
- Continued recognition by the State (Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency) of the important role that private sector plays in emergency response.
- Continued support from the private sector to recognize the importance of participating in BI&I programs

Resources

SCTF has the following resources available through its partnership- Resources to help prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters; web resources; tools and templates; training; drills; and facility vulnerability assessments.

Training and Exercises

SCTF hosts and participates in joint training exercises with the private sectors.

Communication Tools

SCTF uses the following methods of communication with their public/private sectors; email alerts; text message; in-person meetings; teleconferences; video conferences; and website.

Links

<http://www.ready4business.org/>

Contact Information

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