

Safest in America

A Publication of The Pittsburgh Regional Business Coalition for Homeland Security

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COALITION TO PARTNER WITH REGION 13 TO CREATE AN ASSET AND SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT DATA BASE

The Coalition has, for some time, discussed the creation of a data base of private sector resources which could be called upon by our region's emergency managers in time of disaster. We are pleased that the Coalition and Region 13 Task Force will launch this initiative in January, 2007.

"An important first step will be reviewing our initial plans with Region 13 emergency personnel to ensure their involvement in the

process. Region 13 emergency responders will be one of the primary users of this new system, and it's important that we listen to their ideas as we begin to formulate our plans," said Mike Comiskey, Coalition Executive Director.

This project will help regional leaders and first responders identify the types of resources (equipment, tools, subject experts, etc.) that reside within the private sector and that can be made available for use by our

emergency responders in time of disaster. The Coalition will take the lead on communicating these needs to the private sector organizations and obtaining their commitments to the

use of specific resources, when needed by our emergency responders.

Coalition member company, SSI Services, Inc. has agreed to provide, as a contribution to the Coalition and Region 13, the needed systems support and modifications to Region 13's "Knowledge Center".

"By using Region 13's Knowledge Center we will be able to create a completely integrated and interactive resources data base to those already in place covering region 13 public sector assets," said Comiskey. "Region 13's business community has long been the beneficiary of our region's outstanding emergency response organizations. Providing these resources to region 13 not only recognizes that past support, but ensures it will only become even more effective in the future."

"We welcome the opportunity to work with our business partner, the Pittsburgh Regional Business Coalition for Homeland Security, in this important effort," added Region 13's Chief Bob Full. "Having these resources available in time of disaster will be a significant assist to our response and recovery efforts."

Look for a public announcement of this project following our reviews with Region 13 emergency personnel.

database resources include...

equipment
vehicles
supplies
facilities
personnel

“Over 60 members and non-members attended the first member meeting”

FIRST MEMBER MEETING HELD

In November, the Coalition hosted the first official member meeting with over 60 member and non-member company representatives in attendance.

Board chairman, Dr. Roth gave an overview of the Coalition’s strategic plan and the value of a public/private partnership. He also answered specific questions related to pandemic.

Bob Winters Protective Security Advisor, Pittsburgh District, U.S. Department of Homeland Security discussed infrastructure protection, and he explained DHS’s role in coordinating and facilitating the protection of Western Pennsylvania’s critical infrastructure.

Robert Full, Fire Marshal/EMA Coordinator, Department of Emergency Services for Allegheny County answered questions related to emergency preparedness in the region. He noted the vital link businesses play in assisting first responders with crisis management.

Mike Comiskey presented a look back over 22 months of Coalition progress, including the coalition’s membership growth from 7 to 45, its outreach initiatives, its communications vehicles, its establishment as a key

business interface for Region 13 emergency management and its development of several disaster planning tools including a workbook and information CD.

Looking ahead to 2007, the Coalition reviewed its plans to further develop its business to Region 13 interface role, implement a resources data base for Region 13 use in time of disaster, actively participate on the Region’s Joint Readiness Center Task Force and expand its education, outreach and communications initiatives.

“Our members gained first-hand information from top leaders in this region,” said Coalition Executive Director Mike Comiskey.

“This was a unique opportunity to hear from these people directly.”

The Coalition is continuing to raise the level of awareness that disaster planning is absolutely critical for all region businesses. “The level of consciousness is greater than a year ago, but not yet where it needs to be. People want to understand specifics and know the alternative courses of action and prevention they can take to better prepare for an emergency.” Much work is still to be done.

The Coalition plans to host future member meetings in 2007.

50TH MEMBER JOINS COALITION

SSI became the 50th member company to join the Coalition.

You may remember that Region 13 selected SSI's "Knowledge Center" for incident and event management, and the 2006 Major League All-Star Game was the first major use of the system.

The Knowledge Center provides our region's emergency managers with tools for decision support, information management, analysis, and communications - integrating resources at the local, county, state, and federal levels through a 'virtual collaborative environment'.

More recently the system was used during an October disaster drill, "Urban Thunder". Centered in Westmoreland County, the disaster drill involved over 30 agencies, including

healthcare organizations and all levels of government including municipal, regional, state and federal groups.

You will also read about the "Knowledge Center" in this issue's discussion of our new initiative to assist Region 13 in the development of an asset and subject matter expert data base.

SSI is a subsidiary of the Vanadium Group which provides a wide range of general and specialized services necessary to operate, maintain, and enhance a variety of facilities and assets in government, transportation, higher education, public utilities, and private industry including Infrastructure Management Services, Outsourcing, and Telecommunications Consulting Services.



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Common Myths About Disasters and Preparedness:

- It will never happen to my company...
- It's all insured so I'm OK...
- I'm sure we would all cope...
- You can't plan for the unforeseen...
- If I don't have a disaster I've wasted my money...
- The government will take care of us right away...

NEW COALITION MEMBERS



Comcast is the country's largest provider of cable services - and one of the world's leading communications companies. They are focused on broadband cable, commerce, and content.

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PENNSYLVANIA BUSINESS & HOMELAND SECURITY INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP

For Business Leaders, preventing and responding to a variety of security exposures, breeches and emergencies means having the right people with the right skills in security positions. This takes on increasing importance in a post 9/11, post Katrina world.

Areas in which businesses want to have qualified individuals providing protection include: cyber/information systems, financial data security, industrial espionage, information /trade secrets protection, physical protection of personnel & assets, loss prevention, shipping/transportation security, corporate security, and gaming surveillance.

The Pennsylvania Business & Homeland Security Industry Partnership (PABHSIP) is an initiative funded by the PA Department of Labor & Industry, and supported by PEMA, the Department of Homeland Security, and county emergency management groups. The purpose of the PABHSIP initiative is to bring together private industry leaders (supported by security and law enforcement and other public sector agencies, and providers of training and workforce resources) to:

- (1) identify high priority occupations and critical skills needed in the security arenas,

- (2) identify career progression opportunities for people in these positions,
- (3) address workforce development needs such as training, recruitment and retention of employees in key positions to respond to security concerns and support a viable & robust economic/business community.

PABHSIP provides professional resources and training subsidies to industry partner members to support the accomplishment of these objectives.

The Pennsylvania Business & Homeland Security Industry Partnership has launched operation in Region 13 -- covering southwest PA, and it is currently recruiting more companies as partners/members. Please contact 412-861-0013 or deb@winnets.com for more information about PABHSIP and membership.

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