

## Pilot Program for National Security

With many New Jersey residents concerned about terrorism, it may be comforting to know that Business Executives for National Security (BENS), a nationwide, non-partisan organization, is sponsoring a New Jersey pilot program called the **New Jersey Business Force**. While BENS has existed for approximately 21 years, the New Jersey Business Force, at press-time, was just launched.

"This is a first-of-its-kind," says Brian J. Dunlap, executive director. "We're essentially pioneering the concept of how to bring private corporations together with the state and local governments . . . to make our state safer and [to] better to respond to terrorism and catastrophic events."

One of New Jersey Business Force's programs will be the New Jersey

Business Response Network. Dunlap says the force is creating a web-based information database that will connect emergency management personnel to needed resources within New Jersey -- whether they are goods, tools, capabilities and functions, or volunteers who can assist during a state of emergency.

"This has not been done before," says Dunlap. He adds that many large corporations have their own security personnel, CPR volunteers, fire marshals, etc., but that those individuals focus internally and that this program will tie them to the outside.

Another related program is the Business Volunteer Training Program, which partners with the Department of Health and Senior Services and requests that corporations provide volunteers who are interested in being trained on how to respond to an emergency.

"What we [will be] offering," Dunlap says, "is some basic response training in which the state would run programs in . . . corporations to train people who



Brian J. Dunlap, executive director of the New Jersey Business Force.

would want to volunteer as part of the corporation in their particular local community."

A third program will involve using businesses to help distribute pharmaceutical stockpiles during an emergency.

While Dunlap is just getting started, he says he will be establishing a northern New Jersey office and hiring a small staff. He adds that Automatic

Data Processing (ADP), Verizon and 10 other companies have already stepped-up to join the force.

"What excites me," he says, "is being able to take the core competencies we have [in New Jersey's] large corporations and the capabilities and plans that the state has, and tie those two together in a collaborative effort . . . this is giving back to our state. It's a driving model for the country at the state level . . . I think responding to terrorism and a catastrophic event is going to be most effective at the state and local level."

Interested companies can contact New Jersey Business Force at (908) 403-0464.