



HOMELAND SECURITY & DEFENSE BUSINESS COUNCIL

HOMELAND SECURITY AND DEFENSE BUSINESS COUNCIL CONTINUES ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH DHS BY HELPING TO ORGANIZE TOPOFF 4

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Washington, D.C. -- Today Michael Meldon, Executive Director of the Homeland Security & Defense Business Council (the Council), announced the Council's role in organizing the private sector's portion of TOPOFF 4. "We are excited about the chance to work with the Department of Homeland Security and continue building a strong partnership between the private and public sectors," Meldon announced. He added, "Leading the private sector's effort in TOPOFF 4 presents an exciting and challenging opportunity for the Council and its members."

TOPOFF 4, short for "Top Officials," is a congressionally mandated cycle of seminars, planning events, and national exercises that test the federal government's National Response Plan and other preparedness strategies to respond to terrorist attacks. It culminates in a significant simulated terrorist incident, which will occur June 21-22. A main component of the exercise tests the ability of the communications and data systems that are integral to sharing and exchanging information throughout a crisis situation. The exercise attracts top officials and key personnel that have domestic response and consequence management responsibilities from across the country. The objective is to test the preparedness and overall response capabilities of federal, state, and local governments during a complex terrorist attack scenario.

This year's exercise engages the Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, and Health and Human Services, as well as many state and local governments, and 172 private companies. Connecting both public and private sectors on a massive scale, TOPOFF 4 allows multiple companies, departments, and governments the chance to mobilize resources, establish situational awareness, and test information and communication channels. This presents an opportunity for private companies and all levels of government to interact, share, and exercise real plans for threat scenario planning. As a result of the exercise, all parties involved will have a better understanding of their effectiveness, as well as their vulnerabilities.

The Council is privileged to have seventeen of its Principal Member companies associated with TOPOFF 4. They include Accenture, Battelle, BearingPoint, CSC, Deloitte, EDS, General Dynamics, IBM, Lockheed Martin, Nortel Government, Northrop Grumman, Oracle, Raytheon, SAIC, Siemens, Unisys, and USProtect.

Meldon continued, "This reemphasizes the Council's resolve in bridging the gap between the public and private sectors. Our goal is to continue partnering with the Department of Homeland Security and I hope this creates additional opportunities to partner with DHS in the future."

About the Council: Established in June 2003, the Council engages the Department through activities that promote information sharing and issue engagement at the senior levels between the public and private sectors. These activities include executive briefings, luncheons, studies, conferences, white papers, and other events. Council representatives provide perspectives on opportunities and challenges confronting the Department. In turn, the Department engages the Council in a free-flowing dialogue on its priorities and expectations from industry.

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