

Joint News Release

American Institute of Architects • Society of American Military Engineers • American Society of Civil Engineers • American Council of Engineering Companies • Federal Emergency Management Agency • U.S. Army Corps of Engineers • Federal Facilities Council • Naval Facilities Engineering Command • Associated General Contractors of America

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Design and construction experts form partnership to improve security

WASHINGTON, DC (November 20) – Leading design and construction industry groups and several federal agencies have agreed to collaborate on issues related to the security of the nation’s structures and other types of man-made infrastructure in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The Infrastructure Security Partnership (TISP) decided to work collectively to assist the nation’s war on terrorism. It has formed a steering committee to guide the collaborative efforts.

“It’s going to take both government and the private sector working together to meet the challenges we face as a nation,” said Robert F. Shea, Acting Administrator of FEMA’s Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration. “We need to find a role for all who want to help.”

In its charter, the group’s key objective is using the collective technical expertise of professionals in the design and construction industry and government, as well as the group’s research and development capability. Members will engage in regular forums to share information and build professional relationships, working cooperatively to protect America’s citizens. The partnership plans to hold quarterly discussion forums on key issues, as well as a yearly conference.

“Events have provided the engineering community – the professions, the industries and all public and private entities – an unprecedented opportunity to combine and share their enormous capabilities to serve our nation and free world,” said Retired Lt. Gen. Henry J. Hatch, P.E., Chairman of the Federal Facilities Council. “Not since World War II has a renewed collaboration been so needed.”

Over 40 organizations have already expressed interest in joining TISP and many more are expected to respond to letters of invitation.

“We must examine the vulnerability of our infrastructure systems,” said H. Gerard Schwartz Jr., President, American Society of Civil Engineers. “The events of Sept.11 have issued a wake-up call to the nation, providing a unique opportunity to the civil engineering profession to take a leadership role in responding to the need to protect and enhance our infrastructure.”

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The partnership's steering committee authored the charter and will be planning the initial forums. The steering committee consists of representatives from the American Institute of Architects, the Society of American Military Engineers, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Council of Engineering Companies, the Associated General Contractors of America, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Facilities Council, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command.

"Together, we are a tremendous resource of expertise," said Retired Army Maj. Gen. Pat Stevens, Executive Director of the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME). "Our Society has stood for engineering in the nation's defense for over 80 years and brings thousands of military and civilian engineers and over 2,400 corporate members to the table, so of course we are eager to build a more secure environment for our nation and its people. Perhaps the partnership can even assist the new Office of Homeland Security."

The partnership has the strong support of Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers, commander of the Army Corps of Engineers, who visited the World Trade Center's ground zero in the days following the attack. "If architects and engineers can work together to prevent another disaster like this one, we should not hesitate," he said. Dwight A. Beranek, P.E., Flowers' chief of Engineering and Construction, proposed establishing TISP Sept. 21 at a joint forum where the idea received unanimous support.

The steering committee membership's first discussions involved the scope of the partnership, which they decided to limit to the built environment. "The more you think about security, the bigger it gets," said Beranek. "We decided we had to focus on our source of expertise – security in design and construction – without losing sight of all the factors that can influence that."

A signing ceremony involving all the participating organizations is tentatively planned for late January 2002. For additional information contact Lawrence P. Delaney, AIA, Chief Architect of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at 202-761-4945 or email lawrence.p.delaney@usace.army.mil

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