

Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness

SUCCESS STORY

NEBRASKA

Meta-Leadership Augments a State Dedicated to Preparedness

Contributor: Lieutenant Governor Rich Sheehy

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One of Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy’s primary responsibilities is to serve as the Director of Homeland Security, which involves the overall coordination and management of public safety and public health agencies across the state. He is both passionate and well-prepared for this position as a result of over 20 years’ experience in paramedic services.

Meta-Leadership resembles efforts already underway

Since 2005, the Lt. Governor has been working in collaboration with the offices of the US Attorney, District of Nebraska to convene regular meetings of the Nebraska Infrastructure Protection Conferences (NIPC). The group hosts a conference annually, with additional smaller meetings held in between. The events focus on identifying community-based risks related to the overall safety and well-being of Nebraskans and engaging in conversations to build solutions and plans prior to emergency. Participants include government, industry, law enforcement, emergency response personnel, as well as private industry partners, especially those with a key role in maintaining the state’s critical infrastructure. Over the past seven years, the conferences, which typically attract 200 participants, have discussed topics such as pandemic influenza, terrorism, agricultural disease outbreaks, and have been successful in creating stronger public/private partnerships.

Meta-Leadership boosts participation from private business

Lt. Governor Sheehy participated in and spoke at the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness Summit and Post Summit Activity outside of Omaha in 2011. The mission of the Meta-Leadership Initiative mirrored the goals and vision of the Nebraska’s Homeland Security Program and the NIPC. In fact, the Summit held in April 2011 and the Post Summit Activity, which was held in August 2011, both occurred the day following an NIPC conference, showing alignment and congruence between the efforts. Lt. Governor Sheehy credits the Meta-Leadership Initiative for introducing community partners who were not yet involved to the state-wide preparedness discussions. The Lt. Governor noticed an increase in participation of faith-based organizations and non-profits such as the Salvation Army as well as private businesses such as insurance companies. As Lt. Governor Sheehy explains, “I think the Meta-Leadership events piqued the interest of others in sectors that were not steadily involved in preparedness conversations and got them involved in the critical discussions we all need to have prior to a community-wide event. It allowed those new to the discussions to hear scenarios, engage in discussions with veterans in the field, and to share information and best practices.”

Lt. Governor Sheehy is encouraged that the “new” participants will continue to stay engaged in preparedness events and discussions since the Meta-Leadership events.

The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness empowered business, government and nonprofit leaders to act together in times of crisis. The five-year initiative connected 5,000 business, government and nonprofit leaders in 36 communities. For resources and more information about Meta-Leadership visit the [CDC Foundation Meta-Leadership Website](#).



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