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**IT IS ONLY A
MATTER OF TIME**

Business owners, executives, boards, and risk managers need to start developing their disaster preparedness plan now before it is too late. The October 16th Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announcement in the Federal Register of a new proposed standard for private sector disaster preparedness has generated a great deal of interest within the Certified Professional Continuity Planning community. The DHS announcement is seen as the first tangible step in a process that will lead to the certification of company disaster preparedness. To reach this point has taken considerable time and effort. We continue to monitor the developing & emerging standards for the business continuity community.

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Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation and Certification Program and the Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation and Certification Program (PS Prep) is mandated by Title IX of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (the Act). Congress directed the Department of Homeland Security to develop and implement a voluntary program of accreditation and certification of private entities using standards adopted by DHS that promote private sector preparedness, including disaster management, emergency management, and business continuity programs.

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**“Forewarned, forearmed;
to be prepared is half the victory.”**

~ Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

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THE THREE IDENTIFIED PREPAREDNESS STANDARDS ADOPTED BY THE DEPT. OF HOMELAND SECURITY THAT PROMOTE PRIVATE SECTOR PREPAREDNESS ARE:

- Disaster Management
- Emergency Management
- Business Continuity Programs

The purpose of the PS-Prep Program is to enhance nationwide resilience in an all-hazards environment by encouraging private sector preparedness. The program will provide a mechanism by which a private sector entity (a company, facility, not-for-profit corporation, hospital, stadium, university, etc.) may be certified by an accredited third party establishing that it conforms to one or more preparedness standards adopted by DHS.

Currently, there is no comprehensive set of standards by which American businesses and other private sector entities can assess their preparedness for all hazards. Having a plan to reduce the impact of all hazards on business and protect employees can help ensure that a business is able to recover and reopen following a disaster or other emergencies.

VOLUNTARY PROGRAM

Participation in the PS-Prep program is completely voluntary. No private sector entity will be required by DHS to comply with any standard adopted under the program. However, DHS encourages all private sector entities to seriously consider seeking certification on one or more standards that will be adopted by DHS.

DESIGNATION OF PREPAREDNESS STANDARDS

Congress directed DHS to designate one or more standards for assessing private sector preparedness. The standards will be used by accredited certifying entities to evaluate and certify compliance by private sector entities with the standards adopted by DHS. Although DHS intends to select only the three identified preparedness standards at this time, it may select additional standards in the future.

As the program develops, DHS remains committed to ensuring that PS-Prep is developed and standards are selected in close coordination with the private sector and other interested stakeholders.

For further information please e-mail: PrivateSectorPreparedness@hsi.dhs.gov.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Private sector entities may get involved in PS-Prep by submitting comments on the identified standards, suggesting additional private sector standards to be adopted by DHS, and participating in future public meetings on the topic. Details will be posted at: www.fema.gov/privatesectorpreparedness. DHS has posted the Federal Register notice at: www.regulations.gov. Comments may be submitted to: www.regulations.gov or FEMA-POLICY@dhs.gov. (Identify Docket ID FEMA-2008-0017).