



## Chairman's 2010 Message

As I begin my tenure as your new chairman, I am reminded and humbled by the history of our association and the honor you have given me. Over a quarter of century ago, eleven forward thinkers got together in a room in southern California to ponder what might happen if business became dependent on the computer, the internet and electronic commerce when very few people even knew what those things were. Their concerns and discussions have become present reality, and that small group became today's ACP. As we approach our 30-something years, I hope we retain that out-of-the-box thinking and creative approach to tomorrow's challenges.

At our recent National Leadership Conference (NLC) in San Antonio, the keynote speaker reminded us that as a result of everything that has happened, people now get what we as contingency planners do and the value we bring to the table. As tragic as it is, that paradigm shift is the result of events like 9/11, the Northeast power outage, Katrina and now Haiti. It is not your mother's world, things have changed, and the public knows it. Since our audience now understands the threat and the need for action, what do we as a profession need to talk about? Your leaders tackled that challenge in setting this year's goals for ACP at the NLC (see the 2010 Goals section elsewhere in this month's eNews).

I sensed an energy and enthusiasm among the NLC attendees that make me believe positive change is underway for ACP nationally. I trust the attendees will carry that message of collective commitment back to the chapters. We are scheduling a shorter teleconference for chapters who could not attend the NLC to catch them up on all that happened. In addition, we plan to emphasize this new approach in the monthly Presidents Council and Director meetings with counterpart chapter members so everyone remains current with our national goals and initiatives. I want to address two of those efforts here because I think they are fundamental to our change in direction.

To get back to our creative, out-of-the-box thinking, the national board has re-structured itself to add value to the heart and soul of ACP – its members and its chapters. Borrowing on our corporate business roots, we have formed seven standing committees of directors focused on ACP's core constituencies (concerns). These committees (Finance, External Relations, Communications, Stakeholder Relations, Administrative Services, Governance and Executive) are empowered to act for the board and the association as a whole. As a result, your national ACP should be more nimble, effective and efficient in addressing member and chapter issues, just as members have come to expect from your local chapter boards. Your chapter presidents have the background detail on the board changes to discuss with you locally.

Perhaps more important was the challenge we heard at the NLC to find a way to make ACP "relevant and engaged" in today's new world. As the largest organization of its kind, ACP is perhaps the least known to those outside and internally the value of having a national association is not well understood by our members. I think we must change both views to remain viable as an organization. Stated another way, ACP must become relevant to its stakeholders both internally and externally. One of the best ways to do that is to become engaged. That is why we are reaching out to DHS/FEMA on a role for ACP in PS-Prep and finding new ways for chapters to connect regionally to add value to ACP beyond the local level. To succeed, it will take everyone's help. ACP is only as good as our combined efforts will make it. As members, I encourage your participation in these new efforts in your local chapter, regionally and nationally. If we only take and do not give back, one day there will be nothing left. As your new board and the NLC attendees have done, let us all be collectively committed to each others success and the success of the new ACP.