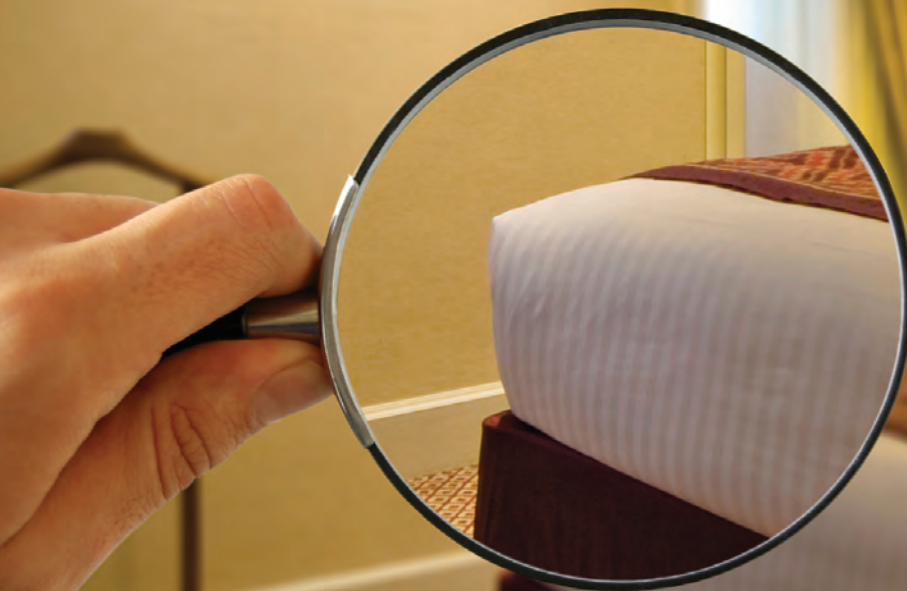




## What You Can't See, **CAN HURT YOU**



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# CEAS & PERSIST

Harvey Betan



## Why you should consider the CEAS (Corporate Emergency Access System) credential.

When an incident occurs and you can't get to all, or part, of your facility, what are you going to do? Whether on your way to work in between buildings, or having just been evacuated, now you cannot get to where you need to be. First responders and security officials are turning people away at the doors. Wouldn't it be advantageous in such a situation to have a way of identifying yourself to the authorities to allow you access? That's what CEAS (Corporate Emergency Access System) is all about, and here's an introduction with answers to some common questions.

### Who, What and How?

CEAS is an access control system. It is recognized by local authorities through written agreements, providing identification for individuals and allowing access to areas restricted from the general public. Further, it is a secure ID for "secondary responders" allowing priority emergency access once immediate safety concerns have been mitigated.

CEAS is best defined with this description by Jeffrey Shaw, president of BNET, as a "partnership [that] acknowledges [the] integral role that business continuity plays [in the] big picture of disaster recovery. It creates [a] tangible bond between the public and private sector that elevates businesses to their place during an emergency or disaster, not as sideline observers or as suppliers of 'stuff,' [but] as true partners in response and recovery."

And just what is BNet? BNet is the Business Network of Emergency Resources, a not-for-profit organization with the goal of promoting "practical and effective emergency and crisis management solutions through partnerships between the public and private sector." The organization's aim is to

"relieve the government burden" in establishing such partnerships. Since its inception in 1999, BNet has forged effective public-private partnerships by promoting the use of emergency management credentialing solutions for the private sector through its Corporate Emergency Access System (known as CEAS). The system can help to facilitate business recovery by bringing business leaders and local government officials together and creating a pre-event credentialing system that can be followed at the time of an event to allow access to facilities once they have been deemed safe to enter. Without such a system, access to buildings may be denied, slowing or even halting operations. BNet was established to help create partnerships to overcome such obstacles.

As of this writing, CEAS is used in New York State by Nassau, Suffolk, and Erie County, Buffalo and New York City, and in several other locations and states: Boston and Cambridge, MA, Baltimore, MD, Philadelphia, PA, and Stamford, CT. The State of New Jersey is expected to roll out CEAS in the fourth quarter of 2010.

### Why and What's in It for Me?

Incidents are never convenient, and investigation and access restrictions can continue for an extended period. Most likely, there will be something remaining in the restricted area that you want or need to get to. And in most cases, if you do not have a recognizable means of identification, you will not be able to access your facility.

Let's say there is a water main break close to your office. Access will be denied while repairs are made. Your building may not be damaged, but you still won't be able to get into it... unless, of course, you have a CEAS ID, which would allow you access for a short period of time as soon as the site is deemed safe.

Why is that important? While the area is closed to the general public, you will be able to enter and retrieve valuable assets and vital records. You can access the facility to power down any networks, mainframes, servers, or other equipment that may be operating on restricted power. You can retrieve

items such as laptops or even servers. Access will allow you to provide fuel to generators or other equipment which may have depleted its power. You can begin to assess damage and initiate any insurance or other claims processing. Key personnel and resources may be permitted access to alleviate your operation. Access can be provided to vendors and others whom you deem as necessary to your operation. You may even be able to restore some operations and customer service. In short, having access sooner through the use of CEAS can minimize your potential financial loss and put you in a more positive position to retain your customers.

There are a number of objectives the program seeks to meet. First, it quickly establishes the credibility of critical private-sector employees. It also expedites access after an event, which may help ensure the survival of critical infrastructure and vital lifelines. Additionally, CEAS can reduce the socio-economic impact of a disaster and improve the flow of commerce. By pre-enrolling, selected staff can return to a facility prior to open public access.

Once you are pre-enrolled, you are given a tamper-resistant ID, which is recognized by the authorities and will allow you temporary access to the facility. The ID provides a methodology for controlled phased-in reentry into the evacuated area by local authorities.

### Who Cares?

When you enroll in CEAS you are actually easing the burden on police and other responders by providing rapid and verifiable credentials. The CEAS card is designed so that it is highly resistant to unauthorized duplication.

Your organization should care too, since the program fosters corporate planning by ensuring the right people respond to the situation and reducing panic and confusion. Additionally, CEAS provides you with an edge by allowing you and your partners (vendors) improved access capabilities. Lastly, CEAS provides government officials a path for better plans and controlled phased in re-entry to facilities and areas affected.

Once some order has been established after an incident, authorities look for life to return to normal. Use of CEAS can speed up the recovery of privately-owned operations, assisting in restoring the public infrastructure. Credentialing via CEAS can help speed up the recovery as vital lifelines and normalcy are restored when restrictions are lifted.

Access via CEAS can aid in reduction of the long-term financial impact and tax/revenue loss to the local economy as organizations are more resilient. CEAS provides a unique tool for controlling reentry and lessens the burden on authorities at the scene. But, best of all, CEAS comes at no additional cost to the government.

### Show and Tell

Figure 1 shows a standard CEAS card. The card displays a picture for individual identification, determines access level, organization name, organization affiliation, access location, and optionally a seal or holographic laminate. There is also an area that can be scanned as an additional authorization step. The expiration date is set two years after print date. There are currently five access levels:

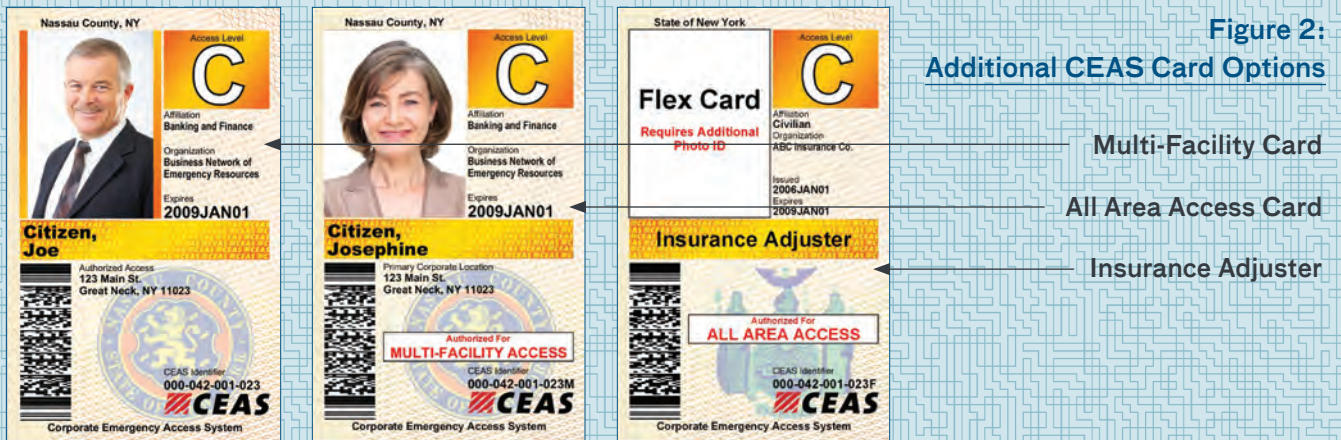
- Level X** - No entry permitted or program not activated
- Level D** - Direct Mitigation of Hazards. Only those agencies/organizations directly involved in scene stabilization
- Level C** - Critical Infrastructure and Critical Industries, as defined by local government
- Level B** - All CEAS Businesses
- Level A** - Restricted vehicular access.



Figure 1: CEAS Card

As you can see in Figure 2 on page 12, there are a number of access options as defined by different cards. If you have multiple locations or facilities you might opt for a "multi-facility" card. If you need to further define the access areas, you might be interested in the "all area access" card (authorized by local authorities). An important factor in credential access is allowing some vendors entry to your facility. Your essential service providers may apply for CEAS cards as well, or you may authorize vendors to have a CEAS card under your company's application if appropriate. The insurance adjuster card





**Figure 2:**  
**Additional CEAS Card Options**

Multi-Facility Card

All Area Access Card

Insurance Adjuster

(New York State only) permits special access for insurance companies who enroll in the program. Some CEAS jurisdictions permit the use of a “Flex Card”, which is a non-picture ID permitting access to a single worksite and may be issued to any employee or essential service provider for access to the assigned facility.

Most CEAS cards have a two-year subscription and the current subscription cost structure is:

- Single Card \$50
- Multi Facility Card \$100
- All Area Access Card \$100
- Flex Card (if applicable) \$70.

The number of cards that can be allotted to an organization is dependent upon its size.

Employees at Work Site	Max. Cards Allowed
<20	25%
21 – 100	20%
101 – 1,000	15%
1,001 +	10%

Allotments for property/building management personnel are based on a facilities square foot area as:

Building Sq. Footage	Max. Cards Allowed
<250,000	12
250K – 500K	24
500K – 1M	45
1M – 1.5 M	50
>1.5 M	55

How does it work? In the event of activation by local officials, an announcement will be activated by the authorities. Officials will determine the activation, access levels and checkpoint locations for cardholder entry. BNET will also notify corporate coordinators directly of CEAS activation.

Obviously, there are some things an organization will be responsible for to ensure the program’s success. The main requirement is to have a single “corporate coordinator.” This person will be the key contact for all CEAS issues and will be responsible for management of the process within the organization, including the enrollment process, selection of card holders, management of the cardholders, handling of renewals, deactivation and replacements, and determination of access within the organization. The coordinator is also responsible to ensure candidates complete on-line training in use of CEAS.

There are three main administrative requirements to taking part in the CEAS initiative. The participating organization must prove indemnification by signing a participation agreement with CEAS. Secondly you must provide proof of insurance by way of a valid insurance certificate with coverage amounts based on the size of your organization. Lastly, you must purchase the cards in advance as the CEAS program is supported entirely through per-card costs. If you want to know more about CEAS, visit [www.bnetinc.org](http://www.bnetinc.org) and [www.ceas.com](http://www.ceas.com). **CI**

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Harvey Betan is an associate principal at Risk Masters Inc. and a business continuity consultant, with extensive experience in recovery of both technology and business functions. He was responsible for restoration of a large insurance company with a major presence in the World Trade Center on September 1, 2001. His career has spanned a dozen years in business continuity after a 15-year career as a senior manager in information technology. He is an instructor in the Norwich University Online Masters in Business Continuity program and a member of the “ask-the-expert” panel at TechTarget magazine. He can be reached at [HarveyBetan@gmail.com](mailto:HarveyBetan@gmail.com).