

SENIOR FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

Alert. Relaxed. Collegial.



Recap of 2/17/21 conversation with Chris Sigle: What is the FEB?

Dear Senior Fellows and Friends,

A member of this network, Dr. Christopher Sigle, is wearing several hats this year:

- Chief, Facilities Operations Division–Boulder, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Adjunct Faculty Member, Norwich University MPA program
- FY2021 Chairman of the Colorado Federal Executive Board

Chris, who provides logistical support to all the Department of Commerce agencies located in Boulder, became interested in the Colorado Federal Executive Board and asked what it would take to become an FEB officer. That led him to embark on several years of service culminating in his chairmanship this year. His experience positioned him to kick off our robust discussion about the 28 Federal Executive Boards around the country, located among the largest concentrations of civilian and military personnel, whose mission is to:

- Communicate emergency information
- Coordinate local engagement and community service efforts
- Collaborate delivery of leadership and common needs training

He began by providing an overview of the **Colorado FEB** (see slides). What became evident, as he talked about emergency management planning with “Dr. Cog” (DRCOG – The Denver Regional Council of Governments) and local businesses, and working with tribal governments in South Dakota, is that this work is really about building connective

infrastructure in the form of trusted personal relationships across governmental and private sector organizations. Chris said his work also entails branding to make potential partners aware of the FEB and show them how it can help, as well as making leadership development available across agencies by means of a new, two-tiered program.

Another colleague told us about working through the **Dallas FEB** while setting up the [Hassle-Free Communities](#) initiative of the National Partnership for Reinventing Government during the 1990s. The FEBs helped bridge the distance between federal, state, and local government agencies and community organizations, so that the latter could have a greater impact on problems such as keeping children out of the juvenile justice system.

A participant who works at Blue Cross Blue Shield in Sacramento told us that the **San Francisco FEB** has invited them in as an FEHB carrier to present on health and wellness education.

A former EPA HR administrator who served in New England mentioned attending presentations sponsored by the **Boston FEB**.

A Senior Fellow told us about leveraging the **Philadelphia FEB** while he was a Coast Guard officer stationed at Cape May, New Jersey. It involved nominating the technical staff for the FEB's Region 3 award in order to recognize and reward them without spending funds he didn't have. The staff subsequently won the award. Now teaching leadership and management at the Securities & Exchange Commission, he also mentioned that the **Atlanta FEB** has a robust leadership development program.

The full potential of an FEB during a regional emergency was shared by a senior leader in HHS Office of the Secretary who has extensive firsthand experience. As Regional Health Administrator in New York during Hurricane Sandy in 2012, she drove some of the action at the **New York FEB** by, among other things, recruiting temporary partners including the Sesame Street Foundation. In response to a question about whether the DHS Fusion Center and FEB networks are aware of each other, her response was that there was some cooperation during the hurricane and its aftermath. She also mentioned a non-emergency role that resonates today: setting up a photo session with agency leaders getting their annual flu shots to encourage staff to follow suit.

In answer to the question, how closely do the FEBs work with the governors, our HHS colleague's experience was that the Regional Directors and the Regional Health Administrators had direct connections.

One of the takeaways from this session was that each of the FEBs, although loosely connected by biweekly information-sharing calls with OPM, operates somewhat differently. Based on the stories told by Chris and other participants, I surmise that this is due to (1) the quality of relationship cultivation among local agency representatives and community linchpins and (2) the extent of collaborative capability building that's occurring.

Some colleagues who had not been aware of the FEBs or understood them merely as “some loose association of SES’ers,” left with an appreciation for the substantial collaborative possibility that these boards represent.

Participant affiliations

ASPA National Capital Area Chapter
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association
BM Martin Solutions
Charlestown, RI Town Council
Department of Commerce
Department of Energy
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Homeland Security
Department of Veterans Affairs
Securities and Exchange Commission
Strengths Coach, Facilitator & Organization Development Practitioner
The Public Sector Consortium
U.S. Army

Participants joined from Sacramento, CA, Pullman, WA, Denver and Colorado Springs, CO, New York, NY, Wickford, RI, Cambridge, MA, and the DC Metro Area.

There were interesting overlaps in participant knowledge and experience. We discover some connections and warm up the space by beginning with a round of introductions each time. Please consider joining us in the future.

Sincerely,
Kitty Wooley

