



SOUTH FLORIDA LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, November 15, 2023 @ 10:00 AM

South Florida Regional Planning Council
One Oakwood Blvd, Suite 250, Hollywood, FL 33020

www.sofalepc.org

This meeting was conducted in-person and virtually via Zoom.

1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance (LEPC Chair)

The LEPC Chair, Chief James Russo, opened the meeting and welcomed the members at 10:01 AM. The LEPC Chair led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence to honor the brothers and sisters who have made the supreme sacrifice and are no longer with us.

2. Meeting Instructions (Charlene Burke)

Charlene Burke instructed all participants to keep their microphones on mute to eliminate feedback and unnecessary noise from disrupting the meeting. During roll call, votes, and when making comments microphones may be temporarily unmuted. All attendees were notified that the meeting would be recorded.

3. Roll Call (Charlene Burke)

PRESENT:

Stephanie Alami (Alt), Broward County Public Schools

Junieth Arana, DHL Express Hub & Aviation

Ryan Bally, FL Dept of Transportation District 4

LEPC Vice Chair, Lt. Brian Brown, Hollywood FR

Camile Campbell, Broward EMD

Alain Donderiz, Miami-Dade Environmental Resources Mgmt.

Rebecca "Georgie" George, FDEP

Lisa Gordon, USCG Auxiliary, Interested Citizen

Grace Holloway, Broward EMD

Francisco Jaconetta, FL Dept of Transportation District 6

Jaimie Johnson, Allied Universal

Doug LeValley, Seminole Tribe of Florida

Yvette McLeod, Broward County Public Schools

LEPC Training Task Force Rep, Chief Oscar Rodriguez, Margate FD

LEPC Chair, Chief James Russo, Hollywood FR



Dan Scarborough, Miami-Dade EM
William Senyshyn, FL Dept of Health Reg 7
Marie Sullin, Aon
Keith Westin, Miami-Dade Office of Safety
Dee Dee Williams (Alt), Gordon Food Services
Ali Younes (Alt), Broward County Resilient Environment Dept
Battalion Chief Gabriel Zahora, LEPC EM Liaison, Fort Lauderdale FR

ABSENT:

Ray Aguilera, BSO FR Hazmat
Rick Barrett, Energy Transfer
Miguelangel Becerra, Dean Foods
Tiphanee-Brown Francis (Alt), Florida Atlantic University
Neil Buckeridge, City of North Lauderdale Public Works Utilities
Patrick Collins, Cliff Berry
Shannon Davis-Weiner, Monroe County EM
Joseph DeLuna (Alt), FDEP
Lt. Mike Dominguez (Alt), BSO
Lt. Maikel Garcia, Miami FR
Josh Green (Alt), EM Planner City of Miramar FR
Jon Hines (Alt), Cliff Berry
Troy Johnson (Alt), Miami-Dade EM
Jeasy Justiniano, Dean Foods
Chief John Johnson (Alt), Marathon FR
Charles Lankford, Baptist Health South FL
Romeo Lavarias, Miramar FR
Michael Laycock (Alt), Energy Transfer
District Chief Doug LeValley, Seminole Tribe of Florida FR
Shamila Lutchman (Alt), FL Dept of Health Reg 7
Battalion Chief Craig Marston, Monroe County FR
Julio Melendez (Alt), Miami-Dade FR
Greg Namoff (Alt), Allied Universal
Amed "AJ" Navarrete, Sentry Industries
Jesus Olivo (Alt), Brenntag
Martha Payan (Alt), Memorial Healthcare System
Deran Ramkissoon, Gordon Food Services
Axel Rodriguez, Brenntag
Adam Rohlinger, FL Dept of Transportation District 6
Chris Runte (Alt), Miami-Dade Office of Safety
Crystal Schaefer (Alt), FL Dept of Transportation District 6
Vincent Shanberg, FL Dept of Environmental Protection



Carl Sidelko (Alt), Sentry Industries
Natasha Strokin, Memorial Healthcare System
Jose Tovar, Miami-Dade Water & Sewer
Louis Valdes (Alt), Seminole Tribe of Florida FR
Jaeson Weber, Florida Atlantic University
Richard Whitehurst (Alt), Baptist Health South FL

EXCUSED:

n/a

STAKEHOLDERS: Rudy Albert (American Airlines), Matt Currie (DHS-CISA), Lt. Sergio Lambo (Training Division Hazmat Coordinator, Hialeah FD), Alisha Lopez (SFRPC staff), David Reynolds (Ft. Laud FR), Kelly Gibbs-Winiarz (DHS-CISA).

4.

• **Approval of minutes from the August 16, 2023, SoFlaLEPC Meeting**

Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes from the August 16, 2023, meeting. Motion to Approve Minutes (Rebecca George), second (Gabriel Zahora)

5.

Membership Changes

Mike Moore (Mem), Aimee Hernandez (Alt), Broward College, Education, Jaylin Martir (Mem), Armando Villaboy (Alt), South Florida Water Management District, Oscar Rodriguez, Margate Fire Department Training Chief, SERC Training Task Force Representative

6.

Presentation by Chief Oscar Rodriguez, SERC TTF Rep

Chief Oscar Rodriguez presented Lithium-ion (li-ion) 101 including primary goals, mitigation, and hazards. Thermal runaway in a battery is a chemical process that produces heat and chemical gases quickly in a self-propelling loop and that is very hard to stop. The thermal runaway may not be recognized as gases may initially be invisible. As more gases and thermal energy are released there is a greater potential for hazards and explosion risk. Starts with single cells and spreads. A discussion of the five major causes of thermal runaway included: environmental (cannot change), mechanical (cannot change), aging, design/manufacturing, electrical. Every time a battery is charged it produces heat. If not controlled, it will produce dendrites that will pierce the safety separator and cause internal shorts or internal micro shorts that may present future problems. As first responders, it is critical to recognize when thermal runaway may occur. Propagation leading to a thermal runaway event can occur in 175 seconds or less. Five key factors of hazardous scenarios are: thermal runaway gas flammability, thermal runaway propagation, ignition sources, gas confinement and pressure venting, enclosure strength. Plan for thermal runaway gas flammability and ignition sources when responding to all li-ion battery incidents. Li-ion thermal runaway events emit more than 100 toxic gases that can affect the body and environment, are highly flammable, and will contribute to thermal runaway events. The greater the state of charge the more violent the fire. Avoid overcharging devices. As part of the plan for scene mitigation, NFPA 855 standard for the installation of stationary energy storage systems was discussed. New York City code was



also discussed including mobility devices, battery inspection, battery charging areas, storage areas, addition of Cause Code 242 under electrical section. Tools for mitigation were covered including appliance and blankets and the value of communications with towing companies was stressed. Moving forward, we need to work with partners in on plans, safe transportation, recycled or disposed of. How we get there will require relationships, policies, training. As technology advances so must training and tactics. With interactive relations with the product manufacturers and oversight departments, the migration of most of these events can have a safe resolution.

Chief Russo asked about PPE. Chief Rodriguez noted the need for SCBA, proper gloves, and thermal imaging. Working with thermal imaging manufacturers to address the ability to see gases better is needed. Chief Russo discussed the importance of Incident Commanders and Fire Investigators to set hard rules on wearing respiratory PPE, and proper attire, especially, during increased work cycles. Chief Rodriguez noted, Fire Investigators must be vigilant with PPE. The product stays around a long time and if water is added it becomes hydrofluoric acid and can degrade. For example, during shipboard firefighting metal underneath you can be compromised. Another concern during response is when only the carbon monoxide (CO) detectors go off and no fire is visible. CO is an off gas. Items plugged in produce heat that, in turn, produce CO. This is common in warehouses running tools like forklifts. Unplug the tools and move outside. Chief Russo added that for non-li-ion events such as structure fires to be on the lookout for larger li-ion batteries close to the fire that create potential for a second thermal event.

Lt. David Reynold asked if manufacturers provide first responders with li-ion batteries to practice for a thermal runaway event. Chief Rodriguez suggested working with local building departments and FP&L to identify permits pulled for installed power generations systems at residences. Businesses may be in Tier II, residences may not. Chief Zahora stated this information would be useful in the Flow MSP app. Chief Rodriguez noted residences may be tagged during response as a possible second hazard, and that cities are also tagged in CAD. Chair Russo reminded residential has no Tier II reporting requirement. Junieth Arana suggested training for the private sector. Chair Russo posited a workshop or class supplemented with outreach materials and PSAs an option provided there was ample team support to host.

7. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes from the May 17, 2023, meeting. Motion to Approve Minutes (Lt. Brian Brown), second (Francisco Jaconetta).

8. Membership Changes

LEPC Chair announced membership updates for both members and alternates made in coordination with the LEPC Coordinator. Changes align with SERC rules, help to fill gaps in membership, and chart a better course for moving the LEPC forward including, to ensure the membership roster is up-to-date and that meetings achieve the required quorum. Three (3) nominations were included in the agenda package which consisted of one member and two alternates.

9. Chairs Report



Chair Russo provided highlights from SERC, SERC Training Task Force (TTF), and SERC LEPC meetings in Sandestin. A continued emphasis is on lithium-ion & associated emergencies. Reported that approximately 250 attended the Lithium-Ion Battery Symposium. Federal and state regulation is being undertaken. In Florida, Director Rice is at the forefront of this issue. Must recognize that state and fed will look at Rules. This takes a while. SERC/SERC TTF continues to review national best practices and approaches on li-ion and discussed NYC incidents and actions. PHMSA & USDOT thanked SERC/SERC TTF for being proactive and on the leading edge of this issue and to anticipate further engagement at the upcoming 2024 Hazmat Symposium. At the local level, policy to address li-ion concerns is via ordinances. Local management needs to occur while the state and fed work from their respective levels. Locally, there has been an increase in li-ion incidents with electric vehicles (EV) & micromobility devices. Expressed the need for public service announcements to address li-ion public health and safety. In addition, Chair Russo's li-ion presentation at SERC re on a local EV fire in thermal runaway underwater, off gassing and reignition of venting gases on the surface at a boat ramp was well received. Tactically, the incident was relatively easy to manage as the vehicle was in salt water.

The Offshore Hazmat Pilot Program will soon undertake its final pilot before it becomes a regular course. The pilot will be conducted again, at Resolve Marine, but this time participants will be from Jacksonville. This is a partnership with Nova (NSU), FDEM/SERC and Resolve Marine and that is supported by subject matter experts including, from Region 10.

The 2024 Hazmat Symposium will be held Jan 16-19, 2024. Chief's Russo, Rodriguez, Yost, and LeValley will present on li-ion. Fire Conference (formerly Fire Rescue East) will not conflict. It will be held in Orlando the week prior to the Symposium.

At the SERC LEPC a vote was made to petition the SERC to collect li-ion data at state level. In addition, there are options to make li-ion incident reports. First, the State Fire Marshal's Office survey link that went out to first responders. Second, a voluntary report may be called in to the FL State Watch Office (SWO) at (800) 320-0519. Third, contact one of the SERC Li-ion task force members (Russo, Rodriguez, Yost) in Region 10. Added that data has been added to software as a drop down. This will reduce duplication of efforts.

An update was provided by the Hazards Analysis (HA) Working Group. Teams are gearing up for HA contracts. Chair Russo discussed the practicality of integration of HA data into the Flow MSP app that is available to first responders. The app offers a practical way for responders in the field to access Tier II information including non-hazmat technicians and technician's who may not have been on a hazmat response in a while.

The Thomas Yatabe Award and Certificates of Appreciation have been processed and will be presented at the January SERC meeting.



The Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plans were approved by SERC including, South Florida LEPC.

Planning & Training Working Groups

Vice Chair Brown reported that the Training Working Group continues to onboard volunteer participants from LEPC membership and stakeholders. Alisha Lopez, Director, Clean Cities Coalition, was introduced to discuss the Dec 18, 2023, 8-hour Alternative Fuels training that will include EV & li-ion training. Additional exercises and opportunities include the 4th Annual Emergency Management Day in Tallahassee in February, the FBI Miami & U.S. Department of Energy will host a Community Unified Response to Radiological Incidents & Emergencies TTX on Feb 28, 2024. Plans continue for the Port of Miami Tunnel Crisis.

Vice Chair Brown thanked Chief Rodriguez for representing LEPC Region 10 on the SERC Task Force as it addresses hot topics and project boxes. The integration of this role helps to improve coordination and bring back important communications to Region 10.

Vice Chair Brown reported on partnership with NSU as it offers HAZWOPER and train-the-trainer as well as support with mental health, the offshore pilot, etc. NSU is fully equipped to offer in-person or virtual trainings for both courses in English and Spanish throughout South Florida for free. Course requests for both trainings frees up HMEP funds for additional technical, hands-on hazmat training moving forward.

Regional hazmat teams participated in hazmat sampling class with FBI and public safety sampling and collecting evidence. Difference between public safety sampling and collecting evidence. Taking a sample to identify a product or preserve evidence for evidence collection. Another recent training was the State Urban Search & Rescue (SUSAR) Symposium. Partners in Palm Beach continue to work hard on Technical Rescue Teams (TRT). TRT is a big budget item. Thankful to have received significant support from SUSAR over the last few years. We continue to seek to expand funding sources as well as capabilities on the ground for TRT. SUSAR is key to this in the future. Vice Chair Brown invited interested members and stakeholders to join the Training Working Group after the meeting to discuss planning exercises and training needs for 2024. Training and exercises are designed for collaborative opportunities at all scales and with region-wide public and private representation from each county encouraged.

Exercise

Chair Russo shared interest from the regional special operations teams for anhydrous ammonia training at Publix. This product is a significant target hazard and although it is not the most frequent hazard it is one of the largest that is dispersed throughout the region. Inquiries with the Deerfield Beach cold storage facility at Publix will be advanced. The TRANSCAER anhydrous ammonia training is also being explored. This would be in addition to the Publix training. Other LEPCs that recently participated in TRANSCAER training were able to offload live products and drill with live products which makes for a valuable exercise. Heat Shield V will be in Broward County on July 17, 2024.



10. SoFlaLEPC Coordinator Report (Charlene Burke)

Reminded members and stakeholders that, for efficiency and convenience, links and/or documents are provided for relevant items of interest to the LEPC as part of each agenda package. Anyone can pull an item for discussion. In addition to Vice Chair Brown's comments, briefly discussed that HAZWOPER training requests are being directed to NSU. This way the LEPC can reallocate funds toward more hands-on technical training that is of particular interest to the region.

11. Member Comments

Camile Campbell discussed the Broward Integrated Preparedness Plan, survey/survey QR code, and priorities as a whole community approach 3-year plan. Noted Broward may already have training in place that is needed and that will help to minimize duplication of efforts. Grace Holloway discussed the training and exercise needs in more detail. Chair Russo asked when decisions would be made on course offerings. This will occur after the state receives all the IPPs in January. Chief closed with reminder of Training Work Groups to stay after and get engaged.

12. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

13. Administrative Items

The LEPC Chair directed members to the agenda package for all Administrative Items.

14. Upcoming Meetings

The LEPC Chair announced the next in-person/hybrid SoFlaLEPC Meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2023, at 10:00AM.

- a. Upcoming SERC meetings in Jan 16-19, 2024, Daytona Beach during Hazmat Symposium
SERC Training Task Force Jan 16 @ 1030 (Note: 1-hour later due to Symposium opening ceremonies)
LEPC Jan 16 @ 1300
SERC Jan 17 @ 0930

15. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn (Gabriel Zahora), second (Brian Brown) at 11:25 AM.