



## SOUTH FLORIDA LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

### MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, February 18, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

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

[www.soflalepc.org](http://www.soflalepc.org)

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

#### 1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance

The LEPC Chair, James Russo, opened the meeting and welcomed the members at 10:01 AM. Chair Russo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### 2. Meeting Instructions

#### 3. Roll Call (Coordinator Hailey Lazzaroni Hunt)

##### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Russell Accardi, L2 Defense, Inc. (virtual)  
Gabriela Afanasiev, Allied Universal Corporation  
Tiphane Brown-Francis (Alt.), Florida Atlantic University (virtual)  
Joseph DeLuna, FDEP  
Alain Donderiz, Miami-Dade County RER Safety & Training (virtual)  
Orianna Gonzalez, Cliff Berry, Inc.  
Zully Hemeyer (Alt.), Monroe County Fire Rescue (virtual)  
Aimee Hernandez, Broward County Emergency Management  
Eduardo Koenig, Broward County Resilient Environment Department  
Craig Marston, Monroe County Fire Rescue (virtual)  
Yvette McLeod, Broward County Public Schools (virtual)  
Amed Navarrete, Sentry Industries  
Jesus Olivo, Brenntag Mid-South, Inc. (virtual)  
Keila Puello, Miami-Dade County WASH (virtual)  
Deran Ramkissoon, Gordon Food Service  
Carolina Rincon-Beltran (Alt.), Memorial Healthcare System (virtual)  
Beth Ruiz (Alt.), Baptist Health South Florida (virtual)  
James Russo, LEPC Chair, Interested Citizen



Crystal Schaefer, FDOT District 6  
Dan Scarborough, Miami-Dade County Emergency Management (virtual)  
Pete Schecter, Interested Citizen  
William Senyshyn, FDOH Region 7 (virtual)  
Chad-Anthony Smart (Alt.), Baptist Health South Florida (virtual)  
Marie Sullin, Aon Risk Services, Inc. (virtual)  
Katelyn Swathwood, (Alt.) UHealth Emergency Management  
Julio Tejada, SFWMD  
Keith Westin, Miami-Dade County Office of Safety (virtual)  
Edward Wolff, L2 Defense, Inc. (virtual)  
Ali Younes, Broward County Resilient Environment Department (virtual)  
Gabriel Zahora, LEPC Emergency Management Liaison, Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue

STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT: Mitchell Campbell (USCG Sector Miami), Garrett Guzoski (FDEP), Gabriel Escobar (FDOT Safety), Carl Fowler (Broward EM), Jason Starking (USCG), Claudia Baker (FDEM), Meghan Grimsley (Hollywood Fire Rescue and Beach Safety), Amy Lanham (Broward Risk Management), James Carballo, Purnima Arora (FDEM) (virtual), Jeff Galloway (Tetra Tech) (virtual), Isabel Cosio Carballo (SFRPC), Christina Miskis (SFRPC), Joshua Baer (Monroe County EM) (virtual), Jaime Hernandez (City of Homestead EM) (virtual), Katia Foust (American Red Cross) (virtual), Elizabeth Moss (Miami-Dade County WASD) (virtual), Wayne Bailey (Blue Ridge Mountain Drones) (virtual), Carlos Silva (Lineage Logistics) (virtual), Marvin Ebanks (Miami-Dade County WASD) (virtual), Lakeisha Brown (Miami-Dade County WASD) (virtual), Nickolyn Crosby (American Red Cross) (virtual), Lizzette Romano (virtual), Randy Deshazo (SFRPC) (virtual), Richard Fimbel (SFWMD) (virtual), Tyler Morell (Miami-Dade County WASD) (virtual), Tashika President (Miami Dade College) (virtual), Kathleen Ward (American Red Cross) (virtual), Erik Santovenia (Miami-Dade County WASD) (virtual).

#### **4. Approval of Minutes from the November 12th, 2025, SoFlaLEPC Meeting**

Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes for the November 12th, 2025, meeting. Motion to Approve Minutes (Amed "AJ" Navarrete), seconded (Dan Scarborough).

#### **5. Filling Vacancies and Enhancing Participation**

- **Membership Changes (Chair Russo)**

Russell Accardi (Member), Edward Wolff (Alternate), L2 Defense, Inc.

Carolina Rincon-Beltran (Alternate) to Natasha Strokin (Member), Memorial Healthcare System



- **Innovative Ideas for the Upcoming Year**

One of the initiatives mentioned at previous LEPC meetings involved hosting an informational class related to lithium-ion and other kinds of batteries alongside hospital personnel. Chair Russo mentioned that he would share this idea at the upcoming Lithium-Ion Training Task Force meeting to identify any similar efforts that have already taken place and can be applied. Another hospital-related initiative that Chair Russo mentioned was a Hazardous Materials incident labeling or identification class. Follow Ups will be made with coordinators of the Governor's Hurricane Conference to gauge if South Florida LEPC would be able to man an information booth at the Conference in May of 2026.

**6. Presentation by Wayne Bailey (Blue Ridge Mountain Drones) on Drones in Hazardous Materials & Emergency Management.**

Wayne Bailey, Blue Ridge Mountain Drones, presented on the topic of unarmed aircraft systems, as related to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. Mr. Bailey shared information about the importance of drones and their capabilities, in addition to the training opportunities available through Blue Ridge Mountain Drones and the need for collaboration among Hazardous Materials and Emergency-related organizations to continue strengthening safety efforts.

**7. Chair's Report (Chair Russo)**

Training Task Force: The Electric Vehicle Working Group project box was kick-started by the SERC, with one of their main goals of distributing information on proper usage and disposal of batteries. The Florida HazMat teams continue their process of comprehensively assessing their training, inventory, and staffing, among other areas, and report back to the Response Commissions to keep track of team capabilities in disaster scenarios. The Offshore Hazmat Program is a cooperation between NOVA and the Coast Guard with the focus of training local and regional HazMat teams to assist in response and mitigation-related activities in the event of large-scale disasters off the Florida coast. The program will be based out of RESOLVE in the Port Everglades, and operational courses are scheduled for April/May 2026. Chief Feagle at SERC and Rob Dietrich at FDEM are working to identify training courses that will benefit first responders. BSO Captain Virginio Gallardo was awarded the Thomas Yatabe Award at the January 2026 SERC meeting.

**8. Planning & Training Working Group Report (Chair Russo)**

Planning: The Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan (HMERP) was accepted into the FEMA National Exercise Program, with the aim of testing the LEPC Emergency Response Plan. However, funding for the exercise has been placed on hold.

Training: The PEAC WMD software training continues to be available for the regional HazMat teams. The 2026 HazMat Symposium was held from January 13-16 and was attended by about 575 personnel.



Exercise: The 2025-2026 LEPC exercise will involve a mass casualty decontamination operation, and planning is undergoing with the regional HazMat teams. PHMSA has approved the following courses for the FY 26-26 grant year: Hazmat 24-hr. Tactical Air Monitoring, 12-hr. 4-Gas Meter Air Monitoring for First Responders, Alternative Fueled Vehicles (AFV) Specialist Course, 1000 Gallon Training Center Prop, Hazmat Rehabilitation Trailer.

#### **9. SoFlaLEPC Coordinator Report (Hailey Lazzaroni Hunt)**

As an attendee of the 2026 Florida Hazardous Materials Symposium, the South Florida LEPC sponsored 28 South Florida regional HazMat team personnel to attend the training seminar in Daytona Beach from January 13th-16th, 2026. Students that attended the Symposium participated in training sessions of various emergency planning and response topics including HazMat incidents and rescues, lithium-ion fires, propane responses, tactical chemistry, alternative fuel, and much more.

As required by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-know Act (EPCRA) Section 312, regulated industries were reminded to file their annual Tier II reports with the appropriate agencies expressed in the Act. The deadline for Tier II reporting is March 1st, therefore stakeholders present and online were advised to submit as soon as possible.

The South Florida LEPC, like its respective regional committees across the State of Florida, must submit an annual update to the regional Emergency Response Plan. As part of the annual update, stakeholders were advised to review and provide commentary for any identifiable section of the Plan requiring modifications. Stakeholders received a copy of the FDEM-submitted 2025 version of the Plan following the February 18th meeting, as the opportunity period for comments was opened at the meeting and scheduled to end by April 15th, 2026.

#### **10. Member Comments**

Katelyn Swathwood (UHealth) shared that her team is in the process of developing a Hospital Emergency Response Team (HERT) and is planning for a nighttime Mass-Casualty Incident exercise in October 2026. UHealth is offering two courses at the University of Miami Gordon Center for Simulation and Innovation in Medical Education, including a *Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS)* course on March 4<sup>th</sup> and an *Advanced Disaster Life Support (ADLS)* course on March 5-6<sup>th</sup>.

Claudia Baker (FDEM) shared information for two training in March: Medical Management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Events - PER-211 (March 3 and 4, 2026) and Incident Command System Curricula Train-the-Trainer - L-449 (March 16 - March 20, 2026).

#### **11. Public Comments**

No public comments were shared.

#### **12. Resources & Information Exchange**

Referred members to the Agenda Package to access documents and hyperlinks to materials discussed.



**13. Upcoming Meetings**

The next in-person/hybrid SoFlaLEPC Meeting is scheduled for May 20th, 2026.

**14. Adjourn**

Meeting Adjourned at 11:39 AM.

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