



Levy County Board of County Commissioners

PO Box 310, Bronson, Florida, 32621

310 School Street, Bronson, Florida, 32621

Phone: 352.486.5218

Levy County Emergency Management

Briefing Structure Proposal

Executive Summary

After reflecting on several EOC activations over the past few hurricane seasons, it has become apparent that our EOC meeting and staffing structure could benefit from some reorganization. Overall, we believe that ***the main objectives of our County Partner Briefing and Policy Group Meetings should be reestablished***. Our goal is to reduce the amount of time that these meetings take, thereby making them more productive and appropriately timed. This proposal outlines how we aim to meet that objective.

Current Structure: Overview

Our usual battle rhythm has been as follows:

1. Establish County Partner Briefing after receiving weather briefing slides from the National Weather Service.
 - a. Often, the NWS will establish their briefings at 7:30 am, 1:30 pm, and 7:30pm, prompting us to set our initial County Partner Briefing at 2pm.
 - b. The slides are typically emailed to EM about 10 minutes before the NWS conducts their briefing live.
 2. Conduct County Partner Briefing starting with an LCDEM overview of the NWS slides, then moving into a brief-out from each county department, elected official, and municipality.
 3. Conduct Policy Group Meeting afterwards with select partners to discuss closures, shelters, and storm timeframes.
-

County Partner Briefing Issues and Proposed Changes

- **Delayed Decision-Making**

- **Issue:** Consider this example. The NWS sends their briefing slides out around 1:20 PM, we set a meeting for 2:00 PM, then spend an hour on the partner briefing, then convene a Policy Group Meeting, and finally arrive at some concrete decisions by around 3:30 PM. This format creates a delay of over two hours between receiving critical information and disseminating actionable decisions to partners.
- **Proposition:** Move the Policy Group Meeting to immediately follow receipt of the NWS briefing. This allows for decisions to be made before, and integrated into, the County Partner Briefing and it also ensures that these decisions are ready to be executed once the County Partner Briefing has concluded.

- **Over-Representation**

- **Issue:** Multiple staff members from several departments will typically attend the County Partner Briefing, leading to over-representation. Our concern is that the amount of support staff present, especially in the crucial timeframe leading up to an incident, represents a disservice to county time and resources.
- **Proposition:** Request each department send one delegate to the partner briefing. This delegate can then share information within their department, streamlining attendance. This can be achieved by EM more clearly defining the chain of command (see ORG CHART Proposal) and trimming the invite list.

- **Duplication of Storm-Related Information**

- **Issue:** We send the NWS briefing slides to partners before the County Partner Meeting. As a result, they already have the slides we plan to present, leading to unnecessary repetition.
- **Proposition:** Encourage partners to review the slides before the County Partner Meeting. This information is not high level. It is intended to be easily understood. We believe it would be more effective to use these slides to provide context for the decisions made in the Policy Group Meeting.

- **Off-Topic Discussion During Brief-Outs**

- **Issue:** Discussions during the brief-out section often stray off-topic and do not pertain to the entire group.
 - **Proposition:** Address unmet needs by email (stormdamage@levydisaster.com), rather than during the meeting. This ensures that meeting discussions remain relevant to all participants. These unmet needs can be sent to us in a few sentences before the County Partner Briefing by a pre-determined time so that we can report on these.
-

Policy Group Meeting Issues and Proposed Changes

We believe the Policy Group needs to be redefined, reduced, and renamed to better reflect its actual function as a small team of key decision-makers.

- **Redefining**

The purpose of the Policy Group can be better defined. This group does not create or change policy; rather, it is a team of decision-makers with the authority to determine school/office closures and shelter openings. Any decisions should be based on facts, not emotions, with defined outcomes and timeframes.

- **Reducing**

There are a large number of participants in the Policy Group Meetings. While many of these individuals play a crucial role in executing decisions, they are not essential to the decision-making process. By reducing the size of the group, we can shorten these meetings and allow the majority of participants to use their time more effectively elsewhere. We would like to avoid having a 30 to 40+ minute meeting that is not essential for most attendees. Those in attendance, however, will then have the opportunity at the following County Partner Briefing to coordinate the execution of these decisions.

- **Renaming**

As stated, the Policy Group does not address policy. It should be named more appropriately to avoid confusion and to more accurately represent those involved.

Conclusion

We are proposing the following changes to the EOC meeting structure:

- Renaming the Policy Group Meeting to the **PLANNING GROUP MEETING**.
- Reducing the number invited to the Planning Group Meeting to include ONLY the following:
 - School District representative
 - Sheriff
 - EM representative
 - County Manager
 - Levy County Health Department (as requested)
 - Transit (as requested)
- Moving the Planning Group Meeting so that it falls ahead of the County Partner Meeting.
- Cleaning up the invite list to the County Partner Briefing to create a smaller meeting and follow the chain of command (refer to Org Chart).
- Present the NWS briefing slides at the County Partner Briefing only as context for the decisions that have just been made.
- Move away from reporting unmet needs by name, only emerging issues.

We expect the following outcomes based on these changes:

- Shortening the Planning Group Meeting time by assessing latest predictions with only a few key decision makers.
- Communication of actual decisions during the County Partner Meeting.