



Weather Advisory Group (WAG)

Standard Operating Procedure

1. Purpose

- a. The Weather Advisory Group exists to provide a collaborative, impacts-based forecast to GEMA and other State decision-makers in the event of weather that poses a significant threat to Georgia.

2. Scope

- a. In 2014, the Governor established the Weather Advisory Group, which includes meteorologists and weather forecasters from Atlanta's four major network affiliates along with the National Weather Service. During the storm event week of February 10-13, the Weather Advisory Group was activated, and they provided expert consultation to GEMA. The group's efforts significantly benefitted public information and the understanding of weather prediction. These professionals should continue to be fully involved as decisions are considered and implemented.
- b. In order to provide this type of decision support for all parts of Georgia, the creation of two additional Weather Advisory Groups was determined. These WAGs will be utilized for weather events that occur in:
 - i. South/Central Georgia
 - ii. Coastal Georgia
- c. Members of the three WAGs will include well-established, trusted, and experienced television meteorologists from nearby major network affiliates, as well as the Meteorologist-In-Charge of the nearest National Weather Service Forecast Office(s).

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3. Responsibilities & Procedures

- a. The GEMA Meteorologist will activate the appropriate WAG for the respective area(s) where dangerous weather could make an impact.
- b. Members of the activated WAG(s) are requested to respond via email regularly while the threat/event exists. Though email should be the primary form of communication, if a conference call is deemed appropriate, WAG members are requested to make every effort to participate on the call.
- c. The goal of the WAG conversations is not necessarily to reach a consensus forecast among all members – though that is ideal, it is unrealistic. The primary goal is to have a collaborative discussion regarding the impacts of the weather upon Georgia, which will provide GEMA and other State decision-makers with a basis for their decisions.
- d. Each member of the WAG is requested to have a secondary contact from his/her office/station to participate, on the chance that the primary WAG member is unable to participate when the WAG is activated.
- e. If a WAG member is off-duty, he/she is not responsible for participating in the WAG conversations. However, it is encouraged that he/she participates. In the event that he/she cannot participate, the secondary contact for the office/station is requested to participate in his/her place until he/she is once again able to participate.
- f. When consensus exists that the threat/event is over for *all* of Georgia, the GEMA Meteorologist will de-activate the WAG. If multiple WAGs are activated, the GEMA Meteorologist will de-activate each WAG when appropriate for the respective portions of the State.

4. Metro Atlanta WAG Members (as of January 29, 2015)

- a. From GEMA
 - i. Meteorologist Will Lanxton (Primary)
 1. Email: will.lanxton@gema.ga.gov
 2. Work: (404) 635-4269
 3. Cell: (404) 561-1200
 - ii. Deputy Director Gary Kelley (Alternate)
 1. Email: gary.kelley@gema.ga.gov
 2. Work: (404) 635-7156
 3. Cell: (404) 693-2416
 - iii. Director of Operations Charles Dawson (Alternate)

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1. Email: charlie.dawson@gema.ga.gov
2. Work: (404) 635-7027
3. Cell: (404) 290-1983
- b. From NWS Peachtree City
 - i. Meteorologist-In-Charge Keith Stellman
- c. From WSB-TV
 - i. Chief Meteorologist Glenn Burns (Primary)
 - ii. Meteorologist Brad Nitz (Alternate)
- d. From Fox 5
 - i. Chief Meteorologist David Chandley (Primary)
 - ii. Meteorologist Joanne Feldman (Alternate)
- e. From 11 Alive
 - i. Meteorologist Chesley McNeil (Primary)
 - ii. Chief Meteorologist Chris Holcomb (Alternate)
- f. From CBS 46
 - i. Chief Meteorologist Jim Kosek (Primary)
 - ii. Meteorologist Jim Loznicka (Alternate)
5. South/Central Georgia WAG Members (primary only)
 - a. From GEMA
 - i. Meteorologist Will Lanxton
 - b. From NWS Tallahassee
 - i. Meteorologist-In-Charge Jane Hollingsworth
 - c. From WTVM Columbus
 - i. Meteorologist Derk Kinkade
 - d. From WMAZ Macon
 - i. Chief Meteorologist Ben Jones
 - e. From WCTV Tallahassee
 - i. Chief Meteorologist Mike McCall
6. Coastal Georgia WAG Members (primary only)
 - a. From GEMA
 - i. Meteorologist Will Lanxton
 - b. From NWS Charleston
 - i. Meteorologist-In-Charge Mike Emlaw
 - c. From NWS Jacksonville
 - i. Meteorologist-In-Charge Scott Cordero
 - d. From WTOC Savannah
 - i. Chief Meteorologist John Wetherbee
 - e. From WTEV/WAWS Jacksonville
 - i. Chief Meteorologist Mike Buresh

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