PAPER

Date

FOR: Identify the recipient (specific position) of the policy paper

SUBJECT: Clearly and succinctly specify the issue in the policy paper. Use specific description that summarizes content, avoiding vague one-word subjects. Clarifying the subject can help organizing and presenting the most relevant information clearly. Do not introduce acronyms in the subject line.

**BLUF:** Briefly summarize the key takeaway from the paper. (3-4 lines)

**Recommendation(s):** Succinctly state the specific action the recipient should take in short, direct, concise statements.

1. If recommending multiple actions, list them as discreet, enumerated items.

**Background**

Present only relevant background information that the recipient needs to know to understand the discussion below. It should only include essential information or information the recipient does not already know. It may provide the context for the policy options (i.e., why the author prepared the paper). The author should structure the paragraphs succinctly and completely, using short, concise sentences. The Background section can be 1-2 paragraphs depending on memo length.

**Discussion**

Fully but concisely analyze policy options, explaining clearly the differences between policy options and evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Identify any associated risks with each option, and describe how to mitigate any negative consequences. Identify how policy options align with, or would require adjustments to, current policies. Indicate any additional needed resources to implement a decision. Identify different or opposing views among stakeholders, and summarize options for resolving those differences and implications of those options. Authors should use sufficient evidence to support analysis.

Authors should write the discussion in complete, succinct paragraphs, using short, concise sentences in active voice. Sub-headings can help to facilitate readability.

*Authors can use a policy paper to analyze policy options to support senior leaders in their decision-making and in interagency policy deliberations. It makes a clear recommendation that the author has based in support and analysis. Policy papers reflect the broader organization’s coordinated assessment and recommendation. It presents analysis clearly and logically to facilitate readability and understandability for a busy decision-maker with limited time and cognitive bandwidth. It may be a short or long paper.*