



News Release

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VIPA Thanks Gov. Mapp and 31st Legislature for Support of Permits to Improve St. Croix's Seaport Infrastructure

Virgin Islands Port Authority Executive Director Carlton Dowe wishes to publicly thank Governor Kenneth E. Mapp and the members of the 31st Legislature of the Virgin Islands for their approval of two permits that will help the Port Authority improve the marine port infrastructure on St. Croix.

On May 18, the senate approved two permits previously signed by Gov. Mapp:

1. CZM Permit No. CZT-2-15 (W) to dredge the Schooner Bay Channel in the Christiansted Harbor - permitting VIPA to dredge approximately 38,800 cubic yards of material from within the existing channel; and
2. CZM Permit No. CZX-31-14 (L&W) for shoreline repairs at the Svend Ovesen Seaplane Terminal - permitting VIPA to refurbish the existing concrete apron, construction of a new sheet pile wall, and to remove 20 cubic yards of contaminated soil at and seaward of Plot No. 10 Water Gut Reclaimed Land in Christiansted.

Dowe said, "Allowing the Port Authority to dredge Schooner Bay will provide safe entry for small cruise ships in Gallows Bay, and enable VIPA to move towards the separation of cargo and passenger operations in Gallows Bay – thus creating a very attractive environment for residents and visitors."

Regarding the seaplane facility repairs, Dowe said, "The apron at St. Croix's only seaplane facility is literally falling into the sea. The project will create a safe and attractive dock

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for travelers and users of the Ovesen Seaplane Terminal, as well as prevent oil-contaminated dirt from running into the sea and destroying a precious natural resource.”

He added that the governor and senate’s unanimous approval of the permits is an indication that our leaders are committed to revitalizing St. Croix’s economy and improving the tourism product. Dowe noted that Senate President Neville James committed his support to both projects when VIPA met with the Legislature in February, and he guided the process through.

Dowe also thanked VIPA’s Assistant Executive Director, David Mapp, and VIPA’s Senior Engineer, Damian Cartwright, for their work on moving the permit along this far and for representing VIPA at the Legislature’s Committee on a Whole session last week. Both permits are now pending approval by the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE). Dowe said that VIPA is prepared to put both projects out to bid when the Authority receives the approval from the USACE and work will begin immediately

The \$1 million Schooner Bay Dredging project will be funded by a \$500,000 contribution from the USVI Government via the Community Facilities Trust Account. VIPA will use \$500,000 in bond proceeds acquired in 2014 to fund the remainder of the project. The repairs to the Ovesen Seaplane Facility are estimated to cost \$1.5 million and will be funded by VIPA through its capital improvements budget.

Once again, Dowe thanked the administration and senate for their continued support.

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