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Port Authority Anticipating Busiest Holiday Travel Season in History, Recommends Early Arrivals

Early arrival recommended for pre-clearance screenings

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Major carriers at the Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas. By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM

The V.I. Port Authority is alerting the public to what is expected to be the busiest travel season in history, according to VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe.

“The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and several airlines have reported that they expect a record number of travelers for the upcoming holidays. We are also expecting a noted increase in travel at the Cyril E. King and Henry E. Rohlsen Airports, as well as via our ferry ports in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” said Mr. Dowe.

Airports Preparing for Record Crowds

Mr. Dowe emphasized the importance of arriving at least three hours before flight departure to ensure timely pre-clearance screenings. He highlighted the ongoing construction at the Cyril E. King Airport (CEKA), advising travelers that parking is temporarily prohibited there. Alternative arrangements, such as being dropped off or utilizing the free public parking next to the former Island Beachcomber Hotel, are recommended.

At the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport in St. Croix, parking is available, but Dowe cautioned against parking along the curbs at airport terminals, as this could result in tickets or towing.

Seaports Ready for Holiday Rush

Passenger and car ferry ports are set to operate normally throughout the holiday season. Mr. Dowe urges travelers to follow instructions from VIPA's marine employees and contracted security personnel to avoid congestion. He advises arriving at least 20 to 30 minutes before departure times to circumvent long lines.

In addition to travel advisories, Mr. Dowe reminded travelers to adhere to all parking signs at both airports and seaports. With the anticipated increase in travel, parking restrictions will be strictly enforced.

The executive director concluded with a message to the community: "On behalf of the Virgin Islands Port Authority, I wish everyone safe travels and a happy holiday season."