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Cyril E. King Runway to Close Nightly To Accommodate Taxiway Construction Project

VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe says closure won't impact commercial flights, however late-night inter-island charters will see disruption through March

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Aerial shot of the Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas, USVI. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

The V.I. Port Authority announced on Monday that in preparation for the final phase of the resurfacing project on the western portion of Taxiway Alpha at the Cyril E. King airport, the facility's lone runway will be closed at night.

The nightly closure will run from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. from Monday February 12 to Sunday February 25. From February 26 to March 26, the runway will be closed from 8 p.m to 5 a.m. each night.

While VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe says he does not expect the closures to impact scheduled commercial flights, late-night inter-island charters between St. Thomas and St. Croix will be on hold from now until the end of March.

“The asphalt on Taxiway Alpha West was over 30 years old. CEKA receives almost three times more traffic and larger, heavier aircraft than when the airport was built 30 years ago. This temporary nightly closure of the runway is necessary to complete these critical repairs that will provide an efficient and safe airfield for all airport users,” said Mr. Dowe.

Emergency arrangements, VIPA says, can be made by calling the office of the airport manager. Runway 10/28 at the Henry E. Rohlsen airport on St. Croix will remain open and available to accommodate aircraft activity while the facility on St. Thomas is offline at nights.

The taxiway resurfacing project, which began last April, involves the removal of 58,000 square yards of asphalt, and replacing it with Portland cement concrete, which is expected to provide “a smoother and safer surface area, [and] better durability than asphalt,” according to VIPA. The new surface will also require less maintenance, the port authority says.

Work on the almost \$30 million project is expected to be completed in April.