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\$185,000-a-Year Executive to Lead New Super PMO in Rebuild USVI Effort

The new office aims to streamline reconstruction efforts by coordinating all relevant stakeholders

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The Office of Disaster Recovery will soon establish a Super Project Management Office (Super PMO) to “coordinate the efforts of all contractors, government agencies and other key stakeholders,” as part of the Rebuild USVI initiative announced this year by Governor Albert Bryan Jr.

With the office currently recruiting an executive delivery manager to “spearhead the subdivision,” according to ODR Director Adrienne Williams-Octalien, estimates are that the office will become operational in the second quarter of this year. Remuneration for the successful candidate will be “upwards of \$185,000” annually, reflecting the high level of expertise and responsibility required

for the position.

During a meeting of the Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure and Planning on Friday, Mrs. Williams-Octalien said that her office is relying on best practices and lessons learnt from across the world when it comes to establishing the Super PMO. Key among the functions of the office will be “stakeholder coordination, master project prioritization and schedule management, procurement, resource balancing, program controls and compliance, accelerated payment processing, design, management and program risk management,” the ODR head enumerated. It is anticipated that the Super PMO will garner several benefits including “[balancing] economies of scale, reducing acquisition cycle time and creating opportunities for our small business.”

The Department of Property and Procurement, Mrs. Octalien-Williams explained, “does not have the resources, or the specialized and technical skills to wholly administer acquisitions involving bundling or substantial bundling of this magnitude and complexity.” However, DPP will certainly be playing a supporting role by continuing to “procure all local and federally-funded goods and services to include disaster recovery projects that are not identified under the Super PMO.”

By way of reply to Senator Milton Potter, who wondered how many employees will be required for the day-to-day operation of the Super PMO, Mrs. Williams-Octalien stated that “the transparent answer is [to be determined].” Nonetheless, she told lawmakers that ODR is aware of the number of team members required to push out the first three bundles of projects. These include a bundle of medical facilities on St. Croix and another comprising several schools on St. Thomas. She maintained that with the initially hired staff, “we believe we can roll those out.” Mrs. Williams-Octalien explained that contracted workers would also be brought in to deal with additional workload.

Despite the ODR’s optimism, Senator Donna Frett-Gregory expressed concerns about “how realistic it is for us to bring on these employees to do this work.” She warned of the need to “streamline some of the bureaucracy” to achieve momentum, and asked that key authorities “be realistic in our approach to this.”