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Territory Awarded Over \$700,000 in Maintenance Funds From Office Of Insular Affairs

WAPA awarded \$220,000 for mulchers to manage vegetation; Bureau of Information Technology gets \$483,000 for battery backup systems in data centers and telecoms sites, part of a \$4.5 million maintenance grant for U.S. territories

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**A battery backup system, commonly known as an uninterruptible power supply (UPS).
By. GETTY IMAGES**

This year, the Office of Insular Affairs has awarded \$703,000 to two agencies in the Virgin Islands to fund their maintenance-related needs.

The Water and Power Authority will receive \$220,000 for the purchase of mulchers “for vegetation management and cleaning,” according to Monday’s OIA announcement. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Information Technology was awarded \$483,000 to purchase and install battery backup systems within government data centers and telecoms sites.

“These programs will provide a range of opportunities for maintenance and related renovation projects that will protect against adverse weather, strengthen power utilities, and provide important maintenance-related equipment,” said Carmen Cantor, the Department of the Interior’s assistant secretary for Insular and International Affairs.

The money for the Virgin Islands is part of over \$4.5 million in FY2024 Maintenance Assistance Program grant funding earmarked for American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) and the freely associated states: the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau.

The two VI agencies were successful in their applications for funding despite OIA receiving “millions more in funding requests than we could support,” according to Ms. Cantor.