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Young Man Loses Life in Peterborg Point Waters as Hazardous Conditions Persist

A search-and-rescue operation ends in tragedy as a 21-year-old dies after cliff-jumping, prompting officials to highlight the risks of strong rip currents and unsafe seas forecasted along the northern coastlines

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A Coast Guard 33-foot Special Purpose Craft and a Coast Guard MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter on scene during the rescue of a spear fisherman from the rocks just off Dog Island southeast of St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands Sept. 4, 2022. By. US COAST GUARD

ST. THOMAS — A young man is dead after a cliff-jumping incident led to tragedy, authorities say.

On Monday, the 911 Emergency Call Center received a report of someone in distress in the waters off Peterborg Point. The caller reported there was a man in the water struggling to stay afloat, and he did not have a flotation device, according to V.I. Police Department Director of Communications Glen Dratte. A multi-agency response was immediately initiated, with personnel from the United States Coast Guard, the Virgin Islands Police Department, and St. Thomas Rescue conducting a joint search of the area.

Ultimately, it was a VIPD patrol vessel which located the 21-year old man approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from Peterborg Point. Lifesaving measures, initiated as soon as he was pulled from the water and continued by emergency medical technicians onshore, proved unsuccessful.

The tragic incident prompted St. Thomas Rescue Public Information Officer Chris Watson to remind the public to “use extreme caution around water during periods of bad weather,” and to avoid the Peterborg Point area, “which is historically synonymous with incidents like this.”

The incident follows warnings from the National Weather Service in San Juan, Puerto Rico, warning of unfavorable marine conditions through at least Tuesday afternoon.

NWS said marine and coastal conditions were projected to worsen due to the arrival of a northerly swell. This development has brought hazardous seas and life-threatening rip currents, particularly along the northern coastlines.

- **High Risk of Rip Currents:** A high risk advisory for rip currents is in effect from this afternoon until at least Tuesday afternoon. Affected areas include the north-facing beaches of Puerto Rico—from Rincón to Fajardo—as well as Culebra and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Beachgoers are strongly urged to exercise caution and avoid entering the water in these areas.
- **High Surf Advisory:** Beginning Tuesday morning and continuing until at least Tuesday afternoon, a High Surf Advisory will be in place for north-facing beaches of Puerto Rico—from Aguadilla to Fajardo—including Culebra, and the islands of St. Thomas and St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Large breaking waves reaching heights of 10 to 12 feet are expected, creating dangerous swimming conditions and potential for minor beach erosion.
- **Small Craft Advisory:** A Small Craft Advisory is currently in effect for Atlantic waters and local passages until at least Tuesday afternoon. Mariners are advised to exercise extreme caution due to the hazardous sea conditions.