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WAPA Approves \$1.52 Million Transformer Purchase to Safeguard St. Croix's Power Supply

The new transformer for the Richmond substation aims to restore redundancy and improve reliability, with delivery expected by January 2026.

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Janeke Simon **December 12, 2024**

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The Richmond Powerplant in Christiansted, St. Croix. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

On Thursday morning, the V.I. Water and Power Authority Governing Board convened an emergency meeting to consider and approve the procurement of a new transformer for St. Croix.

Making the case for the purchase of this \$1.52 million T3 transformer was Cordell Jacobs, WAPA's interim director of transmission and distribution. "Not replacing this transformer, if anything were to happen, it would have a dire effect on the island of St. Croix with prolonged loss

of power to the island,” he told board members.

Purchasing the new transformer would “restore redundancy to the Richmond substation...and so that would lead to better reliability,” Mr. Jacobs said in response to a question from WAPA board member Maurice Muia.

Mr. Jacobs said that “this is part of a larger project at Richmond where there's prudent replacement for,” noting that other transformers at the Richmond power station would also be eventually replaced.

Chief Financial Officer Lorraine Kelly assured board members that WAPA did have the financial means to execute the purchase order, and confirmed that the acquisition of the new equipment from WEG Transformers USA would be going through the appropriate procurement process as well.

According to Mr. Jacobs, the transformer is expected to be delivered by January 2026.

The motion to authorize the purchase was approved unanimously by the board.

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