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Joseph Boschulte Departs Tourism After Record-Breaking Tenure in the U.S. Virgin Islands

Boschulte's departure ends a transformative era in tourism marked by expanded airlift and cruise activity; although expected at WICO, his return is now clouded by statutory restrictions on board-to-staff transitions within government entities.

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Ernice Gilbert **July 30, 2025**

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Joseph Boschulte.

Commissioner of Tourism Joseph Boschulte is stepping down after leading the Virgin Islands through an unprecedented period of growth in its tourism sector, from the height of the Covid-19 pandemic to a recovery that shattered previous visitor and revenue records.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. formally announced Boschulte's departure during a Government House press briefing on Monday, praising his "outstanding service and continued commitment to the people of this territory." Boschulte was [expected to transition](#) into a role at the West Indian Company (WICO), which he previously chaired. However, his reemergence there remains uncertain due to legal restrictions outlined in Virgin Islands Code, Title 3, Chapter 5, Section 65d(c), which prohibits individuals from being employed by a board or commission within one year of having served as a member of that same body. WICO has fought against this understanding of the law, contending that it remains a "private corporation." For now, Boschulte's next move remains unclear. Governor Bryan simply confirmed that the commissioner is stepping away to "take care of some other priorities."

Under Boschulte's leadership, the Virgin Islands achieved historic visitor numbers, expanded its reach through major airlift partnerships, and increased cruise traffic to both St. Thomas and St. Croix. The commissioner's tenure was marked by strategic agreements with airlines including JetBlue, Frontier, and Southwest, expanding direct access from key U.S. markets to the territory's major islands. A [daily Southwest route from Orlando to St. Thomas](#) is scheduled to begin February 5, 2026, with peak-day service from Baltimore to follow.

St. Thomas also saw significant hotel redevelopment, including the long-awaited reconstruction of Frenchman's Reef and the Bouwie House, now operating under the Westin brand.

Reflecting on Boschulte's achievements, Governor Bryan said that the commissioner's leadership elevated the territory's visibility not only in traditional tourism markets, but also within niche sectors such as sports tourism. "From COVID right on down, we have just been breaking record after record in terms of tourism," Bryan said.

While the commissioner prepares to step down, the administration has initiated a transition period to maintain momentum. "There's so many balls in the air at this time," the governor noted. "We're going to be transitioning a smooth period where we could have Joe really continue to boost our tourism product as he pursues other priorities."

Boschulte's departure marks the end of a pivotal chapter in the Virgin Islands' tourism development. The Department of Tourism will now look to build on that legacy with the [nomination of Jennifer Matarangas-King](#) as the next commissioner, subject to legislative confirmation. Matarangas-King brings over 28 years of experience in communications, public affairs, and executive leadership. Her nomination has been widely received as a strategic choice to carry the momentum forward.

Governor Bryan summed up Boschulte's contribution with clear gratitude: "We really want to thank Commissioner Boschulte for his outstanding service."