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VITEMA Hires Two Additional Executive Team Members

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Barbara Petersen and Steve De Blasio By. VITEMA

The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency on Tuesday announced two new members to its executive team: Barbara Petersen, who will serve as the agency's assistant director, and Steve De Blasio, who will serve as the deputy director of Logistics. Both team members will be positioned in VITEMA's St. Thomas offices with territory-wide oversight, the agency said.

"We are truly excited to have Ms. Petersen and Mr. De Blasio on our team here at VITEMA," said VITEMA Director Daryl Jaschen. "They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the team, as well as a fresh approach and perspective. Their combined knowledge of leadership and emergency management principles and practices will be invaluable as we continue to coordinate

the territory's preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters."

As the assistant director, Ms. Petersen will support the strategic initiatives and the overall development and planning of the Agency. Additionally, she is tasked with coordinating activities for the local government and will provide guidance and advice in developing emergency management plans and programs, VITEMA said.

Ms. Petersen is a former St. Thomas/Water Island Administrator during Governor John P. deJongh's administration, serving in that capacity for 8 years. According to VITEMA, as the St. Thomas/Water Island Administrator, she worked closely with the VITEMA team and was the co-chair of the Emergency Management Council, along with the other two island administrators. She was also intricately involved in the relocation of the St. Thomas VITEMA Headquarters to its present location, the agency said. She is said to have more than 20 years of experience in government operations, project management and techniques in policy, procedure and processes to improve productivity.

As the deputy director of Logistics, Mr. De Blasio will provide all incident support needs, including logistics planning, communication, transportation, facilities, equipment, and all off-incident resources, VITEMA said. Additionally, he will manage and develop plans for providing logistical support in emergencies and disasters such as identifying point-of-distributions sites, developing commodities distributions plans and emergency sheltering support.

Mr. De Blasio is said to have served in many senior-level positions throughout his career, including deputy program manager for the Disaster Management and Support Environment (DMSE) program for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He served as acting team leader of the National Incident Management Assistance Team-East (N-IMAT-East), a position he was assigned to from March 2009 through January 2010. Additionally, in the capacity of a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), he serves as the personal representative of the president, the secretary of Homeland Security, and the FEMA administrator during major disasters and emergency declarations.

Mr. De Blasio joined the ranks of the FCO Cadre in April of 2007. He has served on both Regional and National Emergency Response teams and filled numerous positions in the field during times of presidentially declared disasters.