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Haitian National Arrested at St. Thomas Airport After Admitting to Illegal Entry by Boat in 2024

Jacques Jean Baptiste was stopped by CBP officials at Cyril E. King Airport on August 7 while preparing to fly to Orlando. He admitted paying \$1,800 to enter St. John by boat in May 2024 and was charged with improper entry by an alien.

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The Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas, USVI. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM.

ST. THOMAS — A man who showed up for his flight from the Cyril E. King Airport was arrested earlier this month after he was found to have entered the territory illegally.

Jacques Jean Baptiste was at the airport on August 7 for his flight from St. Thomas to Orlando, Florida. After checking in, he underwent primary inspection by Customs and Border Protection

officials and was then referred to secondary screening.

He reportedly admitted to CBP officers that he did not come into the territory through a regulated port of entry. He left Haiti for the Dominican Republic some years ago, and in 2019 travelled to Dominica. In May 2024, he said, he paid someone \$1,800 to transport him to the Virgin Islands by boat. Jean Baptiste reportedly landed on St. John on May 27, 2024.

A check of his Haitian passport revealed that his last entry stamp was once from Dominica, dated June 21, 2019. There were no records to indicate that Jean Baptiste was processed by immigration officials upon his arrival in the Virgin Islands. He was therefore arrested and charged with improper entry by an alien.

After his first appearance before U.S. Magistrate Alan Teague, Jean Baptiste was released from detention into the third-party custody of a long-time acquaintance. His arraignment is scheduled for September 2, before U.S. Magistrate Emile Henderson III.

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