

The Virgin Islands Consortium

VIPA Crew Rescues Eight After Vessel Overturns in Crown Bay Harbor

A harbor pilot spotted an overturned vessel near Mosquito Point on Dec. 7, prompting a rapid response by VIPA marine staff who rescued 8 people, transported them to Crown Bay, and notified 911 and the US Coast Guard as part of standard rescue procedures.

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The V.I. Port Authority is crediting three of its marine employees with preventing a potential tragedy Sunday night after they rescued eight people from an overturned vessel in Crown Bay Harbor, St. Thomas. The incident unfolded shortly after sunset and prompted a coordinated response that brought the passengers safely ashore.

According to the Port Authority, the rescue began at approximately 7:30 p.m. on December 7, when Harbor Pilot Marcus Compton was navigating a cargo ship near Mosquito Point and saw a vessel capsized in the water. He immediately alerted the VIPA pilot boat, which was operated by Coxswain Angelo Freeman and Crewman Al Roberts Jr. Freeman and Roberts reached the overturned boat and pulled eight individuals from the water before returning to pick up Pilot Compton.

Once aboard the pilot vessel, the rescued passengers were transported to the excursion dock at the Austin “Babe” Monsanto Marine Terminal in Crown Bay. Following standard procedure for maritime rescues, Compton contacted 911 as well as the U.S. Coast Guard. The Port Authority stated that the individuals appeared uninjured and were turned over to the Coast Guard for further assistance.

VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe publicly praised the actions of Compton, Freeman, and Roberts, noting their quick response and immediate action played a “crucial role in saving lives.” He also expressed appreciation for the support provided by the agencies that assisted in the aftermath of the rescue.