

VIFEMS Adds Seven New Ambulances in Major Fleet Expansion, First in Nearly a Decade

Unveiled and blessed Friday, the seven new ambulances mark the first major fleet expansion since 2017, with Governor Albert Bryan Jr. noting past cases where patients died due to delayed response times caused by too many calls and too few ambulances.

Government / **Published On January 17, 2026 07:16 AM /**

Nelcia Charlemagne **January 17, 2026**

Image not found or type unknown



New Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Management Services ambulances are shown during a ceremony marking the addition of seven vehicles to the territory's emergency response fleet.

The V.I. Fire and Emergency Management Services (VIFEMS) has expanded its fleet of ambulances by seven. The specialized vehicles were presented and formally blessed at a ceremony

on Friday.

These are the first new ambulances that will serve the people of the Virgin Islands in nearly a decade. Three are assigned to the St. Croix district and four will serve patients in the St. Thomas/St. John district. One of the four is earmarked specifically for St. John.

The VIFEMS team is, understandably, thrilled by the new addition. According to Lisle Evelyn, assistant director of Emergency Management Services, “this deployment directly strengthens fleet reliability, expands operational coverage and improves system readiness across the territory.” The ambulances are “designed to operate in the demanding terrain and conditions unique to the Virgin Islands,” an important consideration particularly on St. Thomas.

VIFEMS anticipates that the addition of the seven ambulances will “immediately reduce downtime, improve response capability and support service continuity.”

Antonia Stevens, VIFEM’s director, was also thrilled, reminding those in attendance that the territory last received a new ambulance in 2017. The miles accrued on that particular ambulance are “well over or close to 100,000 miles for a 2017 vehicle.”

An insufficient ambulance fleet is one of VIFEMS’ major challenges. Notwithstanding, Mr. Stevens emphasized that the agency has a “responsibility and a duty to this community to take care of them when they're sick, get them to the hospital when there's an emergency.”

The role of VIFEMS, particularly in emergency response, was not lost on Lieutenant Governor Tregenza Roach. He noted the importance of the ambulances, which he says are “just a piece in the large healthcare picture and healthcare needs of the Virgin Islands.”

“I’m pleased to be here this morning to be a part of the blessing of these ambulances because we want our people to have the very best,” Mr. Roach stated. The ambulances, he said, are a “great stride towards providing better care.”

Similar sentiments were shared by Governor Albert Bryan Jr., who pointed to the acquisition of the ambulances as another means of progress in the territory. “Today is a huge day,” he declared.

He recalled incidents where patients requiring medical care succumbed “because of the response time of ambulances.” The governor made sure to clarify that it was no fault of emergency personnel, but simply due to “too many calls and not enough ambulances.” This tragic outcome is now expected to be less frequent with an additional seven ambulances to boost response times.

Apostle Mona Barnes blessed the vehicles shortly before the ceremonial ribbon was cut on Friday.