

The Virgin Islands Consortium

VITRAN Begins Long-Awaited Fleet Expansion With Deployment of Six New Paratransit Vans

DPW announced six new VITRAN Plus paratransit vans are now in service across St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John, marking the first delivery in a planned twelve-vehicle expansion to strengthen transportation for seniors and residents with disabilities.

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The V.I. Department of Public Works has begun deploying new paratransit vehicles for VITRAN Plus service, marking the first phase of a long-planned expansion of the territory's public transportation fleet and the first delivery in a broader modernization effort.

On January 13, DPW announced that six new paratransit vans have officially been placed into service across the U.S. Virgin Islands. Of those vehicles, three are assigned to St. Croix, two to St. Thomas, and one to St. John. The delivery represents the first shipment in a total order of twelve new paratransit vehicles scheduled to arrive in the territory.

Commissioner of Public Works Derek Gabriel described the deployment as a milestone achieved after years of planning and coordination. “This is a proud and important moment for VITRAN and for the communities we serve,” Gabriel said. “We have been working toward this goal for nearly three years, and seeing these vehicles finally deployed underscores our commitment to strengthening public transportation across the Territory. For many of our seniors and residents with disabilities, paratransit service is not optional—it is essential.”

Oversight of VITRAN operations falls under Deputy Commissioner of Transportation Karole Ovesen-McGregor, who emphasized the immediate and practical impact the new vehicles are expected to have on riders who depend on the service daily. “These paratransit vehicles represent more than just new equipment—they represent reliability, independence, and improved quality of life for our riders,” Ovesen-McGregor said. “Our team has worked diligently for years to move this procurement forward, and we are excited to finally place these vehicles into service for the people who depend on this service every day.”

In addition to the paratransit fleet expansion, DPW confirmed that further upgrades to the Territory’s public transportation system are forthcoming. Sixteen new fixed-route buses are expected to arrive later this year, with the first shipment anticipated in March. According to DPW, those buses will enhance service along key routes and improve overall system reliability.

Gabriel underscored the broader importance of both components of the system, noting that “Both fixed-route and paratransit services are vital to a strong mass transit system.” He added, “Public transportation plays a critical role in supporting our workforce, serving underserved communities, and improving access across the Virgin Islands.”

DPW and VITRAN officials said preparations are ongoing for the arrival and deployment of the remaining vehicles as part of continued efforts to modernize public transportation infrastructure throughout the territory.