

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Inspection Finds Clinton Phipps Racetrack Safe and in Great Condition

A March inspection by a Florida-based track specialist found the St. Thomas racetrack in excellent overall condition, with no immediate hazards, no significant safety deficiencies, and only routine maintenance recommendations.

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The Clinton E. Phipps racetrack in St. Thomas. By. SOUTHLAND GAMING.

The Clinton Phipps Sr. Racetrack on St. Thomas has been found to be in “great condition” and safe for continued use following a recent independent inspection that evaluated the track’s running surface, subsurface, grade, and elevation. The

assessment, conducted by a Florida-based company that specializes in thoroughbred tracks and arenas, found no immediate hazards and no significant deficiencies affecting safety or performance. The findings come as Southland Gaming continues to defend the condition of the track after incidents earlier this year led to its temporary closure.

The inspection was carried out between March 20 and 21, according to the report. It examined the running surface and subsurface and included checks of grade and elevation at various points along the track.

The report found that all aspects of the running surface — evenness, compaction, cushion consistency, and drainage — were in good condition. “The materials installed approximately 1 year ago are holding very well,” the inspector stated. “With the proper ongoing maintenance....this material should last for many years.”

The subsurface also received a favorable assessment. Although several test holes drilled around the track showed some migration of the top cushion material, the inspector said that “is very standard in the industry and happens regularly on tracks.” The report said the migration did not raise any safety concerns and found “no signs of any holes, dips in the track and/or a lack of adequate cushion.”

The inspector also found that slight irregularities in grade measurements did not present safety concerns.

Among the recommendations was the addition of a tool known as a “pull box” to the track’s equipment fleet. The report said the tool would be used to “evenly spread the top cushion material throughout the track surface.” It also recommended that cushion material that has already migrated “should be pulled back into the track surface and then spread evenly.”

A final recommendation called for grading the running surface’s top cushion material at least once every six to 12 months. “These proactive maintenance practices will support continued surface integrity, uniformity, and safety for equine and rider use.”

In its conclusion, the [report](#) stated that “The running surface and rail systems at the Clinton Phipps Sr. Racetrack...were found to be in excellent overall condition.” It added, “No significant deficiencies were observed that would impact the safety or performance of the track.” According to the inspector, the track’s running surface and rails are “suitable & safe for continued use without any restriction.”

Shaine Gaspard, chief operating officer of Southland Gaming, said the company viewed the report as confirmation of what it had already believed about the facility.

“We’ve been confident in the track’s safety, and this independent inspection confirms it is properly built, well maintained, and safe for continued use,” Mr. Gaspard said.

He also noted that early last year, Southland and the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation brought in a track expert to inspect the facility. “No concerns were identified,” Mr. Gaspard said. He added that some of Southland’s racetrack maintenance personnel also attended a maintenance conference “to ensure we are following best practices.”

With the new inspection also finding no issues, Mr. Gaspard said he is satisfied that “the track is performing exactly as designed, which aligns with what many have said: the surface is safe.”

“Our expert further noted it was not the cause of past incidents,” Mr. Gaspard added, referring to the [injuries suffered](#) by racing horses that led to the temporary closure of the track in early 2025.