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VIPA Announces Public Hearings on Proposed Airport Tariff Rates for STT and STX

VIPA says proposed aviation tariff changes would use annual cost-recovery formulas for landing and terminal rates at STT and STX, with year-end reconciliations issuing invoices or credits to airlines based on actual costs and activity at both airports.

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

The V.I. Port Authority will hold public hearings in late July on proposed changes to the aviation tariff methodology used to calculate rates and charges for aeronautical users at Cyril E. King International Airport on St. Thomas and Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix.

The proposed changes come against the backdrop of a broader dispute between VIPA and airlines serving the territory over the cost structure of the authority's airport redevelopment plans, including concerns raised by the USVI Airlines Airports Affairs Committee about the impact of projected costs on the territory's air service competitiveness.

VIPA said it is required by law to hold the hearings to inform the public of tariff changes and give interested parties an opportunity to discuss them with authority officials under Act 2375, § 505(8).

The hearings will be held in person and will also be accessible through Zoom and VIPA's YouTube channel. They are scheduled for:

St. Croix: Monday, July 27, 2026, at the University of the Virgin Islands Great Hall, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Zoom link [here](#)).

St. Thomas: Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at the University of the Virgin Islands 13D Research & Strategy Innovation Center, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Zoom link [here](#)).

St. John: Thursday, July 30, 2026, at the Julius E. Sprauve School Auditorium, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Zoom link [here](#)).

The tariff rates proposed for update include the airfield tariff for airline rates and the terminal tariff for passenger airline rates at STT and STX. VIPA said its Board of Governors has authorized the interim executive director to revise the airfield tariff methodology to comply with Federal Aviation Administration policy requirements.

Under the proposed airfield methodology, VIPA would use cost-recovery formulas similar to those used at other U.S. airports. Annual costs associated with the airfields would be estimated before the start of each fiscal year, along with a forecast of aircraft landings for that year.

The total annual airfield costs would then be divided by forecasted activity to establish a landing fee for passenger, cargo and private aircraft operators, based on aircraft size. At the end of each year, VIPA would reconcile actual costs and landings against budgets and forecasts, then issue invoices or credits to each aeronautical user based on the final reconciled landing fee and their respective activity.

VIPA's Board of Governors has also authorized the interim executive director to update the methodology for terminal tariff rates charged to passenger airlines at STT and STX.

Those terminal rates apply to specific terminal facilities and related infrastructure that support passenger arrivals and departures. VIPA said the annual terminal costs would include financing and construction of terminal improvements, operations, maintenance, safety, security and administration. Those costs would be estimated before the fiscal year begins, along with forecasts of passenger arrivals and departures.

The total terminal costs would be allocated between passenger airline areas and retail concession areas. Costs attributed to passenger airline areas would be divided by forecasted passenger activity to establish the terminal rates. Those rates would be collected from passenger airlines using the terminals at STT and STX.

After each fiscal year, VIPA would reconcile actual terminal costs and passenger activity against budgets and forecasts, then invoice or credit each airline based on final reconciled terminal rates and passenger activity. Retail concession costs would not be charged to airlines; VIPA said those

costs would be attributed to the authority and funded through rents collected from retail concession operators and other non-airline revenues.

Updated airfield and terminal tariff rates for airlines operating at STT and STX would become effective November 1, 2026. VIPA said detailed rates and related calculations are available through its rates and statistics materials.

The tariff proposal is separate from, but closely tied to, continuing debate over the future cost of airport operations and redevelopment in the territory. The Consortium previously reported that airlines serving the USVI rejected VIPA's proposed airport public-private partnership structure, warning that it would make STT and STX more expensive than competing regional airports. The airlines also urged VIPA to consider a phased \$300 million alternative plan.

VIPA later said its airport P3 remains in active procurement, with negotiations continuing with SkyCity and consultation with airlines ongoing. However, the Airlines Airports Affairs Committee subsequently disputed VIPA's characterization of airline involvement, saying the process lacked meaningful consultation and warning that SkyCity's projected cost per emplanement of \$126.32 could threaten airline viability and long-term USVI market competitiveness.

VIPA said tariff rates will be updated annually and described the updates as part of its effort to improve operations and standards at STT and STX for residents and the traveling public.

For questions about the public hearings, VIPA said residents may contact its Public Relations Office at (340) 774-1629 ext. 6640 or by email at info@viport.com.