

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Wants Half of Gov. Vehicles Sold In 2 Years, Asks Gov. Cellphones To Be 'Shutoff'

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Ernice Gilbert **February 16, 2015**



I'm not going to run behind people to put government cars down; I'm simply going to get rid of them -- *Gov. Kenneth Mapp*

Governor Kenneth Mapp, at a recent press conference held at Government House on St. Croix, made known he has directed the Division of Property and Procurement to devise a plan to sell off half of the 1,702 government vehicles currently in use across the territory in an effort to quell wasteful government spending.

"We have found that the number of government vehicles that are on the road are quite large. In the St. Croix District, we have 874 vehicles. The District of St. Thomas-St. John,

828 vehicles," Mapp explained.

"I am sorry," the governor continued, "I am not going to go through the hoops of previous administrations of trying to determine a policy and a program to get government vehicles off the road at night."

Instead, Mapp said he would, "Direct the Division of Motor Vehicles to remove all of the private plates that are on government vehicles, returning government license plates on those vehicles, except for the Virgin Islands Police Department, as some of those vehicles are used in their crime-fighting initiatives.

"And, I have directed the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement to layout a plan where we will auction off and sell 50 percent of these vehicles within the next two years," the Mapp said.

In addition to halving the amount of government vehicles on the road, the governor said he has already directed the commissioners of all government agencies and departments to shut off cellphones, fax phone lines and private phone lines, revealing that it costs the government \$150 every month per business phone line, "and all you've got to do is start adding them up and you'll see the amount of money for faxes that aren't being used and for private lines that are sitting on desks that aren't being used," he said.

"I must tell you that my first ten days in the Office of Governor, I don't think I picked up the phone once, I've been using my cellphone. So we don't need to continue to pay all these costs," Mapp added.

The governor also said he would move quickly to ensure that all government agencies and departments currently not using the Virgin Islands Next Generation Network (ViNGN) platform set up meetings with the Bureau of Information Technology and ViNGN to plan a way forward for all government agencies and departments to be hooked up to the fiber optic network.

"We've put over \$200 million in the ground for ViNGN, and what we're going to do is get more access on that platform, and using that investment to save us money," Mapp said.

The governor also noted that his office will be switching to ViNGN.