

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Plaskett Says Army Corps of Engineers Responsive To Delays In The Territory

VIC News / **Published On March 04, 2015 09:13 AM /**

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to increase its staffing and resources in order to expedite the review process of permit applications pending with the Corps for projects currently in development in the territory.

The announcement came Tuesday from Rep. Stacey Plaskett's office following a meeting the congresswoman had with Colonel Allen M. Dodd, commander, Jacksonville District, who has oversight of the territory.

During her discussions with Col. Dodd, the congresswoman expressed concerns that the Corps' permitting process and subsequent delays were creating difficulty for a number of

economic development projects underway in the territory.

"Since arriving in Washington, I have raised the point that some of the ongoing and continuously delayed permitting processes have caused hardship to the territory and put some very significant investments and critical regional resources at risk," Plaskett said.

"Today, I am encouraged by the Corps' response and commitment to resolving these project delays. We have secured their commitment that increased staffing and resources will be put into place beginning next week to work on reducing the backlog of permits handled by the Jacksonville office."

During a January press conference, Gov. Mapp revealed that the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority is still awaiting a permit from the Corps' before the Authority's propane conversion project, currently underway in both island districts, could go on line in the first quarter of 2015.

"We are very pleased with these latest developments and I have expressed our appreciation to Col. Dodd. I also thanked him for his commitment to our territory and his support for a number of very important projects in the Virgin Islands and I look forward to Col. Dodd's continued updates in the future," Delegate Plaskett said.

The congresswoman conducted the meeting via conference call with Col. Dodd and representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers Antilles Regulatory Section in San Juan, PR, which handles permit applications from the U.S. Virgin Islands and has reporting responsibility to the Corps' Jacksonville Headquarters Command.