

The Virgin Islands Consortium

International Telecoms Ship To Begin Laying Of viNGN's Submarine Fiber Optic Cable

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ST. THOMAS -- The Virgin Islands Next Generation Network (viNGN) has announced what it's calling a "monumental moment of technology and its transformational power" in the Virgin Islands, as submarine cable specialists will begin the laying of submarine fiber optic cable that will expand the interconnection of the territory.

The event takes place on August 3, and viNGN is inviting the community to be a part of the moment.

According to the press release issued on Friday, last week, the International Telecoms ship (IT Intrepid), pictured above, responsible for delivering and submerging the cable

began its route from South America to the island. The 300 ft. vessel is very similar to a freight ship accompanied with a crew of 15-30 people, which includes the captain, technical specialists, divers and more. Since the fiber optic cables are projected to reach a depth of 12,000-15,000 ft., a variety of sea craft are also on board such as submarine robots, designed to avoid undersea terrain obstacles and coral reefs.

A submarine communications cable is a cable laid on the sea bed between land-based stations to carry telecommunication signals across stretches of ocean.

Cables are set on the ship ready to be deployed from the stern or bow between the approximate 70-80 kilometers that separate the islands within the territory. To ensure network capacity and redundancy, two cables with the capacity for 10Gbps and higher broadband speeds will be laid on the sea floor and will connect the islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix. Currently, the network leases 2.5 Gbps interisland capacity from AT&T.

To highlight the event, viNGN has initiated what it's calling "Clip the Ship", which involves Virgin Islanders in this historic moment. To participate, simply capture a picture or video footage of the ship in route from any sea shore in the territory and share on viNGN's social media platforms -- Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter -- by hash tagging, #viNextGen.

Soon after the cable laying is complete, a celebratory function will be announced that will consist of an informative press event and public celebration of the territory's upgrading to the next generation of technology.