

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Territory's First Responders To Soon See New Vehicles, Other Equipment

VIC News / **Published On May 02, 2016 11:36 AM /**

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ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp signed into law an Emergency Vehicles bill that makes available a \$10 million line of credit to purchase vehicles and other equipment for the territory's first responder departments and agencies. The bill included language that barred the Mapp administration from purchasing limousines the governor had requested, but Mr. Mapp [line-item vetoed](#) that portion of the measure, claiming it would not only prevent his office and that of the lieutenant governor from buying the so-called "ceremonial vehicles", but it would hamper a myriad of other offices as well.

The approval of the remainder of the bill, however, will come as welcomed news to the multiple departments and agencies that had for years called on the government to

provide new vehicles. Benefiting from the legislation will be the VI Police Department, the VI Fire Service, the VI Department of Health, the Office of the Medical Examiner within the VI Department of Justice, the VI Bureau of Corrections, the Department of Public Works and the Government of the Virgin Islands, according to Government House.

"This measure will provide for effective management of our first responder fleets and provide much needed resources to departments and agencies so they can get their jobs done and provide critical services to the people of the Virgin Islands," the governor wrote. "With the enactment of this bill, the government need not purchase an entire fleet of police cars, ambulances, fire trucks, prison transport vans, tow trucks, etc. all at once. When we do this, all of the fleets expire at the same time, need replacement and the cash outlays are significant. "

He added: "Through the multiple appropriations authorized in this credit facility, the government can now stagger our purchase of fleet vehicles to keep the equipment modern ... I thank the members of the Senate for working with the members of my cabinet and passing this proposal."

Feature Image: Ambulances parked at the Juan F. Luis Hospital (Ernice Gilbert, VIC).