

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Explains Sunday Power Outage In St. Thomas

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ST. THOMAS -- After the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority's largest generating unit tripped at 5:40 p.m. Sunday, the Randolph Harley Power Plant here was left with less than adequate generation capacity to meet the power demands of the island district, WAPA explained via press release late Sunday.

As a result, a portion of Feeder 6A and all of Feeders 7A and 9C were taken off line for approximately two hours, according to the semiautonomous entity, which [recently selected Julio Rhymer Sr. as its executive director](#), after what members described as an exhaustive search for someone to lead the company following Hugo Hodge Jr.'s [ouster](#).

Unit 23's failure on Sunday evening initially caused eight feeders to fall off line. At the time two other generating units, Units 14 and 25, were online, WPAP said. Plant personnel brought a third unit, Unit 15, online and achieved full restoration just before 7 pm. By 7:23 pm, however, the island's demand for power exceeded the 52-megawatt combined capacity of the three generating units which led to Feeders 7A and 9C being taken off line as well as a portion of Feeder 6A.

Just before 9 p.m. Sunday, service was restored to all customers after a successful restart of Unit 23, which provided an additional 25 megawatts of generating capacity to the grid. Plant personnel determined that Unit 23's trip was caused by a failure with one of the unit's battery chargers.

WAPA said generating units 14, 15, 23 and 25 were online and plant personnel had expected that as the night passed and demand for power decreased, Unit 14 would be taken offline and placed in standby mode. Unit 18 was not available as plant personnel were conducting maintenance on one of the generating unit's transformers, WAPA said.