

The Virgin Islands Consortium

D.O.H. Gets Refurbished Ambulance As Part Of \$10 Million Emergency Vehicles Funding

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ST. CROIX -- The Department of Health announced today that it recently received a refurbished ambulance for the St. Croix district, which the department says will be used to better serve the community. The department did not reveal how long it's had the ambulance, nor the cost of acquiring the emergency vehicle.

D.O.H. Commissioner Dr. Michelle Davis said the ambulance was made available through the emergency vehicles funding, which allocated some \$10 million [through the Public Finance Authority](#) for the vehicles.

While the emergency vehicles funding called for new units, Senator Kurt Vialet told The Consortium late Monday that the refurbished ambulance was most likely ordered to help meet critical demand on St. Croix. He said a new fleet of ambulances had already been ordered, but because they were being built specifically for the territory, it would take months before they are ready to ship.

"The Department of Health would like to extend the utmost gratitude to the Honorable Governor Kenneth E. Mapp, the 31st Legislature, the Public Finance Authority (PFA) and the Department of Property & Procurement for assisting in and seeing the urgent community need to replace our aging ambulance fleet, in both districts, as part of the \$10 million dollars emergency responder's fleet legislation," Ms. Davis said.

She added: "The Department of Health is now able to provide our first responders with the critical tools they need to serve the VI community. With the receipt of one of the first refurbished, immediate units for the island of St. Croix, this will instill the confidence of our Community in our Department to properly respond to critical emergencies in response to deployment via the VITEMA 911 system. The goal of the Department of Health's EMS Division is to respond to all emergencies in a timely and efficient manner and to increase positive patient outcomes. We look forward to receiving the additional ambulances to address the deficits in our fleet shortly."

In his [original request](#) in August, 2015, the governor expressed the urgent need for government agencies to possess the proper equipment to perform their work.

"Having adequate vehicles and equipment for our first responders and law enforcement agencies in the territory is paramount to protecting the safety and welfare of our residents and visitors. For many years our first responders have valiantly done their duty with less than standard vehicles and equipment," Mr. Mapp said.

Among the agencies included are the Virgin Islands Department of Health, V.I. Fire Service, V.I.P.D., Public Works, Bureau of Corrections, the Virgin Islands Government and the Office of the Examiner.

The governor noted that the funds would not be spent all at once, but rather on an as-needed basis upon request from affected agencies.