

The Virgin Islands Consortium

There's No Working Ambulance On St. Croix, D.O.H. Confirms

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ST. CROIX -- The Department of Health said late Thursday that there were no operational ambulances on this island, as both were "experiencing challenges." D.O.H. Director of Public Relations Nykole Tyson would not say what went wrong with the emergency vehicles, but she said they would be fixed by today, and that paramedics and emergency medical technicians would be utilizing their quick response vehicles for 911 emergency calls.

As for the refurbished ambulance recently purchased, which D.O.H. Commissioner Michelle Davis said on Monday [would be put to use](#) "immediately," Ms. Tyson said it was being "retrofitted" for local use at Metro Motors.

The revelation follows information obtained by The Consortium on Thursday revealing that the recently purchased ambulance had not been utilized because the inside setup was too elevated, making the vehicle unusable. According to a source who spoke on the condition of anonymity, emergency medical technicians would have to raise a stretcher above their heads to place a patient in the refurbished ambulance.

Asked about that issue, Ms. Tyson reverted back to her previous answer, stressing that the ambulance was being "retrofitted" for local use. On Monday, Ms. Davis said it would have been ready to use immediately, which would "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 ambulances -- one for St. Croix and the other for St. Thomas -- were purchased through the Department of Property and Procurement for \$49,000 each, through the emergency vehicles funding measure which allocated some \$10 million [through the Public Finance Authority](#) for the vehicles.