

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Ferryboat Service Between St. Croix And St. Thomas Could Start At End Of March

VIC News / **Published On March 15, 2017 09:22 AM /**

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ST CROIX -- After months of setbacks, the Ferryboat service between St. Croix and St. Thomas is set to begin in anticipation of a rescheduled 'man overboard demonstration' to take place on March 24. News of the ferryboat service originally broke in May of 2016, triggering excitement in residents who were happy to have a more affordable means of travel between St. Croix and St. Thomas. However, despite its two successful sea trials, the mid-June launch date had to be pushed back in order to ensure that the boat was in compliance with Coast Guard requests.

In an August 2016 interview with The Consortium, the vice president of Gold Coast Yachts—the builder of the ferryboat dubbed the QE4—Jeffery Bisson said, that because

of the unique design of the ferryboat, they were required to conduct an instrumental sea trial to ensure the safety of the passengers. “What we have is an unusual craft, because of that they’re asking for proof of concept,” said Mr. Bisson.

Mr. Bisson further stated that the ferryboat is required to be in compliance with other safety standards, before it could set sail. “It’s the standard approval process: How do people get in and out when there is a fire, where are the fire pumps, where is this, where is that, how big are the doors — all the normal approval process and we’re working through all of that, but obviously proving to them that the boat has met the operational requirements structurally, that’s the big thing we’re working through right now,” he said back in August.

Now, the only thing keeping the QE4 from sailing with passengers is the “man over-board” demonstration set for the 24th. Local businessman and owner of the QE4 Warren Molser [posted the announcement to his Facebook page](#) late Monday afternoon stating, “If all goes well, going into service Monday, March 27, and running daily.” Mr. Molser also posted the schedule of the service on his page. He said the QE4 will sail from Gallows Bay, St. Croix, to Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, and will sail four times per day or two round trips per day.

The QE4 will leave St. Croix at 7:00 a.m. and arrive in St. Thomas at 9:00 a.m., then leave St. Thomas at 9:30 a.m. and arrive in St Croix at 11:30 a.m. Its second trip from St. Croix will leave at 1:00 p.m. and arrive in St Thomas at 3:00 p.m., with the final trip of the day leaving St. Thomas at 3:30 p.m and arriving in St. Croix at 5:30 p.m.

There was no word on whether the price for the service has changed, but it was originally projected to cost \$50 one-way. The QE4 will seat approximately 54 passengers inside, with some outside standing room in the rear of boat.

Mr. Molser has credited his love for the Virgin Islands as his driving force for wanting to provide the service in an attempt to facilitate cheaper travel between the islands. He has expended over \$2 million in the project.