

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Number To Book 'Mercy' Trip On Cruise Ship Released; Mapp Lifts Curfew On Sunday From 12 Noon To 4 p.m.

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ST. CROIX -- At Governor Kenneth Mapp's third press conference following Hurricane Maria to update the territory on his administration's recovery and relief efforts, the following details were divulged.

1. Residents and visitors looking to leave the territory on a mercy cruise (a cruise line will arrive in the territory late next week with the capacity to carry about 2,000 passengers, according to Mr. Mapp), or a mercy flight, should call 340-772-0357, as the Dept. of Tourism is ready to start taking inventory.

2. The governor again temporarily lifted the 24-hour curfew on St. Croix on Sunday, which he said would allow those in the faith-based community to worship their god. He asked that religious persons pray for the recovery of the territory. The temporary curfew lift begins at 12 noon and ends at 4:00 p.m.
3. St. Thomas's airport should reopen between Thursday and Friday next week for limited commercial flights. The governor will give an update on the status of the St. Croix airport -- which remains closed -- next week.
4. The Blue Roof Project [started in earnest today](#), with the first roof being installed in Anna's Retreat (Old Tutu), in St. Thomas.
5. 8,245 people were furnished with meals ready to eat (MREs), as well as water, at the five St. Croix distribution centers today. According to Adjutant General of the V.I. National Guard, Deborah Howell, 1,576 persons were furnished at Alexander Henderson School, 2,533 at the Juanita Gardine School, 2,029 at the Eulalie Rivera School, 600 at the Cotton Valley Fire Station, and 2,097 at the St. Croix Educational Complex.
6. Dept. of Health is offering baby bed nets. Call 340-712-6245 to request one.
7. Dept. of Health, accompanied by V.I. National Guardsmen, will visit USVI patients currently in Puerto Rico, and link them with their loved ones in the territory.
8. V.I.P.D. Commissioner Delroy Richards said the curfew will continue to be enforced, and announced the following arrests for violation of the regulation: Shaun Miller, 37; Juvanni Roach, 30, and Kester Clersont, 26. Mr. Richards said a number of criminal incidents were reported today, and that the department would continue to respond to them. He said incidents in St. Thomas and St. John had subsided significantly, and acknowledged the help of additional law enforcement from the U.S. mainland, the presence of the V.I. National Guard, as well as soldiers from the U.S. who are here as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mission, for their support.
9. Working with FEMA, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority was able to turn on potable water for residents living on the west side of the island.
10. FEMA warned against persons who may show up at the homes of residents affected by the storms claiming to be representatives of the federal agency. William Vogel, federal coordinating officer of FEMA Region II, said FEMA representatives wear an official FEMA badge, they never ask for money, and FEMA does not work with contractors so there's no such thing as a FEMA-approved contractor. If you detect fraud, call the FEMA fraud hotline at 866-720-5721.
11. More meals and water are arriving in the territory, Mr. Vogel said, revealing today that a C17 aircraft with 200,000 meals and 150,000 liters of water, along with a civilian 767 Boeing aircraft loaded with tarps had arrived in the USVI. On its way here was another C17 aircraft carrying hygienic items, as well baby food and other baby items.
12. So far 5,455 people have registered for federal assistance for Hurricane Irma, and 901 for Hurricane Maria. You may signup [here](#), or call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). Individuals who have a speech disability or hearing loss and use TTY, should call 1-800-462-7585 directly; for those who use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS), call 1-800-621-3362.
13. Two vessels, one of them the Celebration cruise ship, will arrive in the territory in the coming days, with the Celebration serving as a home for FEMA first responders.

14. Dept. of Property and Procurement (DPP), currently seeking contractors for debris cleanup, signed contracts on Saturday night at Government House with a number of the local waste haulers, among them Bates Trucking and Just Right Trucking. DPP Commissioner Lloyd Bough Jr. said between 6 and 7 contracts with local contractors were signed tonight. Mr. Mapp reminded that the government can only sign contracts with licensed companies.
15. The BCB Middle School shelter in St. Thomas was permanently closed, and the shelter's 7 remaining occupants were transferred to the Lockhart Elementary School shelter, which now has a total of 266 occupants, according to Dept. of Human Services Commissioner Felecia Blyden. The Knud Hansen facility, as of Saturday, housed 47 occupants. On St. Croix, the Educational Complex shelter as of today had 257 occupants, Herbert Grigg had 37, and 42 at the Canegata Ballpark center. D.H.S. said it's working with shelter occupants to assess their needs to aid with the transition back to normalcy.
16. The Bureau of Information Technology, along with the Virgin Islands Next Generation Network, will erect WiFi hot spots in various locations on St. Croix, as the government entities did in the St. Thomas-St. John District during the early aftermath of Hurricane Irma.

As an aside, the governor began his press conference today by apologizing to marshals of the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands, who he had assailed for using their government authority and "flashing their blue lights" to take family and friends around during the curfew, while failing to perform any constructive work to help with the recovery. Mr. Mapp said he spoke with Supreme Court Chief Justice Rhys S. Hodge, who explained to the governor the role of the court during times of emergency.