

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## FEMA Assessment Of JFL Completed; It Will Determine Whether New Hospital Will Be Built

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Ernice Gilbert **March 09, 2018**



ST. CROIX -- Juan F. Luis Hospital CEO Wanda Ruben said during a board meeting on Thursday that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had completed its assessment of the hospital, and has moved on to assessing the Schneider Regional Medical Center. But whether the assessment would result in a completely new structure, or instead funding to facilitate repairs, had not been determined, according to Jim Craig of Mississippi's State Department of Health, who is on island helping JFL.

Mr. Craig said FEMA has assembled a team called the Hospital Task Force to do an assessment bringing together experts from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and well as individuals from FEMA to go to

area hospitals to assess damages the facilities sustained following the 2017 storms. He said the assessment is called "50-50" because it aims to determine whether the facilities have been damaged by at least 50 percent to help make some decisions at the federal level.

"Anything over the 50 percent may indicate a potential replacement, anything under 50 percent normally indicates if there will be some type of repair. So that team has come here, they've completed the assessment, they've moved to the other facilities. They may have to come back to review different pieces as they prepare their report, but the bulk of their work has been completed," Mr. Craig said. "The report will be introduced and then that will be used as information to guide the other decisions about whether or not there will be a replacement [or] whether there will be additional funding available. It just really informs the decision makers to make some good decisions."

Governor Kenneth Mapp, while not saying outright that the territory would see new hospitals, has expressed optimism that the current structures will be demolished to make way for new, smaller medical facilities.

Meanwhile, Ms. Ruben is expecting two portable operating rooms on St. Croix in the next two weeks. The hospital is also in the process of preparing the area at JFL where the modular hospital units will be installed. [In February](#), Dept. of Health Commissioner Michelle Davis said the permanent modular units, which the territory is expected to utilize for multiple years, would be ready by June or July.