

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Traffic Lights On Melvin Evans Highway Won't Be Repaired Until July, Public Works Says

VIC News / **Published On March 22, 2018 10:40 AM /**

Staff **March 22, 2018**



The Department of Public Works on Wednesday issued a release updating the public on repair work being conducted on traffic lights territory-wide. The update came 20 days following a letter from Senator Alicia Hansen, which requested information on what was at the time the slow in pace in repairs to the essential equipment.

"We are headed into the sixth month after Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and too many of the lights are still inactive or completely down," Mrs. Hansen wrote in her [letter](#) addressed to D.P.W. Commissioner Nelson Petty. "The absence and lack of traffic signals pose a potential for serious or even fatal injuries.

In its Wednesday release, D.P.W. said it was in the process of installing and making repairs to ten traffic intersections on St. Croix and nine on St. Thomas. The release said all traffic materials have been ordered and are on island for seven Queen Mary (Centerline Road) intersections. But three intersections on the Melvin Evans Highway won't begin to see repairs until July, D.P.W. said, because while the traffic signals have arrived on island, the traffic pole orders are not expected until the aforementioned month. (On Saturday, [a Viya truck overturned at the Diageo intersection](#), whose traffic lights have yet to be repaired. The accident, seen in the feature image of this article, and which only involved the 40,000-pound bucket truck, could have been deadly if there was oncoming traffic, an officer on the scene said.)

Federal Highway Program Manager, Jomo McClean, said in the release that the backlog was due to several reasons. "Our previous supplier went out of business last year, so we were forced to find a new supplier on short notice," he said. "It normally takes several months to receive traffic signals and poles from the date of order. That time frame has been doubled and, in some cases, tripled due to the storms. We're not the only place ordering traffic infrastructure, so that's exacerbated the wait even more."

D.P.W. said all traffic equipment for St. Thomas have been ordered and were set to arrive during the first week of April. In the interim, D.P.W. personnel are using on-hand resources territory-wide to temporarily restore traffic signals, allowing for safe driving through intersections, according to the release.

Additionally, the department said it was in the process of executing two additional letter contracts to allow for the installation and repairs to another 20 intersections between St. Croix and St. Thomas. The release says contractors have already submitted their proposals and a negotiation process will commence next week. This process is expected to end on April 4, D.P.W. said.

According to the release, orders will be placed immediately after the contracts have been finalized. Funding for these repairs were provided by the Federal Highway Administration Emergency Repair Program.