

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Port Authority Gives Status Update On Various Projects

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The Virgin Islands Port Authority said on Wednesday that it continues to make progress with the rebuilding of the territory's air and seaports following damage the facilities sustained during the 2017 storms.

V.I.P.A.'s contractor, Lemartec, Inc., has begun construction of a new roof for the Cyril E. King Airport Terminal, the authority said, adding that the entire 240,000-square foot roof at the Cyril E. King Terminal will be replaced with a metal and two-ply membrane roof. It said the roof replacement will be done in phases to address the most critical areas first and should be completed by late November 2018.

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Materials to repair the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport Terminal's roof are being shipped to St. Croix, according to V.I.P.A. The authority added that repairs are expected to begin in six weeks. The hurricane-damaged roof at the new Airport Rescue Fire Fighter facility at HERA has also been reconstructed. V.I.P.A. said it was awaiting a Certificate of Occupancy and plans to begin using the new facility by the end of June 2018.

V.I.P.A. also list the number of flights currently with routes to the USVI:

- United Airlines has resumed its Saturdays-only service from Dulles and Houston to St. Thomas. They will have daily flights from June 7 through August 20 from Dulles, and a Saturdays-only flight from Newark in late August.
- On May 24, Spirit Airlines began non-stop service between Fort Lauderdale to St. Croix. The service will run three times a week.
- Delta has two daily flights from Atlanta and reinstated its daily New York to St. Thomas service on May 24.
- LIAT returns to St. Thomas on July 2 providing flights from Antigua three times a week.

On the marine side of its operations, V.I.P.A. said the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (C.B.P.) clearance at V.I.P.A.'s seaports in St. John has been a major challenge since the hurricanes last September because most of V.I.P.A.'s marine facilities in Cruz Bay were destroyed. However, temporary arrangements have been made to bring some relief to mariners. Starting on the week of June 4, C.B.P. will clear pleasure-craft vessels at the Victor Sewer Marine Facility (The Creek) in Cruz Bay.

V.I.P.A.'s board also approved the construction of a temporary U.S. Customs checkpoint inside the Urman Fredericks Marine Terminal in Red Hook, St. Thomas to provide screening for foreign arrival passenger ferries. The project was delayed due to issues with a previous contractor, V.I.P.A. said, although it did not say what the issues were.

The authority said it has since re-bid the project and received the bids on May 18. Construction will take four weeks to complete and the temporary checkpoint should be operational by July 2018, according to V.I.P.A. All foreign arrival passenger ferries will continue to clear customs at the Edward Blyden Marine Terminal in St. Thomas until the temporary checkpoint at the Red Hook Terminal is built, V.I.P.A. said.

Other ongoing VIPA port improvement projects include: