

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Vessels With Outstanding Debts Will Be Prohibited From Berthing At All VIPA Seaports, Authority Warns

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The Virgin Islands Port Authority said on Thursday it will deny use of its seaports to several commercial users of the Port Authority's marine facilities with past due and delinquent accounts that have failed to make arrangements to settle their debts within the deadline provided do so.

Effective Monday, June 4, the V.I.P.A. said it will begin strict enforcement of its Marine Rules and Regulations, which require prompt payment of charges for use of its facilities and gives the authority the right to refuse the use of port facilities and services to any delinquent user of its ports.

V.I.P.A. said it will issue cease and desist orders to six commercial operators, prohibiting them from using V.I.P.A. marine port facilities, beginning Monday, June 4 until their debt to the Port Authority is paid in full. V.I.P.A. did not name the delinquent operators.

The authority said the commercial operators remain delinquent despite its repeated attempts to collect payment -- including telephone calls, debt notices, posted flyers, and certified mailings of collection letters and warnings that V.I.P.A. will prohibit use of its marine facilities if their accounts are not brought current or payment arrangements are made, according to the release.

Delinquent operators were advised to pay the amounts past due or to contact V.I.P.A.'s accounting office to set up a payment plan. The authority acknowledged that some operators did contact it, however as of May 31, there were still six commercial operators who had yet to contact the authority to settle their past due accounts. These companies will be barred from berthing at any V.I.P.A.-owned port until the debt has been paid in full, the authority stressed.

Companies that have outstanding financial obligations or wish to dispute billings with the Port Authority should contact V.I.P.A.'s accounting office at (340) 774-1629 or e-mail CDover@viport.com.