

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Interior Approves \$250,000 Energy Grant For WAPA To Support Utility's Power Hardening And Cost Reduction Efforts

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U.S. Department of Interior (D.O.I.) Assistant Secretary of Insular and International Affairs, Doug Domenech, on Tuesday announced the approval of a \$250,000 grant to fund an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) for the U.S. Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (WAPA).

An IRP is a comprehensive decision support tool and road map for meeting a company's objective of providing reliable and least-cost electric service to customers.

“The territory has experienced a reduced customer base following Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, adding to the challenges it was already facing prior to the storms,” Mr. Domenech said. “The existing need to harden infrastructure and identify energy efficiencies, coupled with changing circumstances on the ground, requires informed decision-making that we are glad to support.”

The new IRP, utilizing up-to-date data, post Hurricanes Irma and Maria, will serve as a necessary comprehensive decision support tool and road map for helping WAPA provide reliable and least-cost electric service to all customers while addressing the substantial risks and uncertainties inherent in the electric utility business, D.O.I. said. The plans will identify opportunities utilizing various energy resources and cost efficiencies.

According to the release, the grant was made available through the Office of Insular Affairs’ Energizing Insular Communities program to fund energy strategies that reduce the cost of electricity. An announcement to solicit for FY 2019 funding will be forthcoming, D.O.I. said.