

The Virgin Islands Consortium

FAA Has Found Territory's Airports To Be In Compliance During Annual Inspection, Port Authority Says

VIC News / **Published On June 21, 2019 11:38 PM /**

Staff **June 21, 2019**



The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) completed its annual Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 139 inspection of the Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas and the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix today, and both airports were ranked overall satisfactory and within compliance of the FAA's Part 139 requirements, Port Authority Acting Executive Director Damian Cartwright said in a release issued Friday.

"HERA ranked extremely high and CEKA showed significant improvement within the last several months," Mr. Cartwright said. He added that V.I.P.A. is committed to working with

the FAA to improve airport operations and remaining compliant with all federal regulations.

The FAA's Title 14 CFR Part 139 requirements outline the standards for certification of the approximately 550 U.S. airports with commercial passenger service. Airports that host scheduled passenger-carrying operations using aircraft designed with more than nine passenger seats, or an unscheduled passenger-carrying operation using an aircraft designed with more than 30 passenger seats must be certificated under Part 139.

In June 2018 [the FAA proposed a \\$1,466,775 civil penalty against V.I.P.A.](#) for alleged violations of airport safety regulations at both of the territory's airports. Though V.I.P.A. excelled in its 2019 inspections, the 2018 matter is still being resolved, according to Monifa Brathwaite, V.I.P.A.'s public information officer.

According to a release issued by the FAA in June 2018, both airports were inspected in late January and early February 2018. At the time, the FAA found numerous violations at both airports. The federal agency alleged that V.I.P.A. did not have qualified personnel to oversee airport operations to conduct required daily inspections, or to conduct airport rescue and firefighting (A.R.F.F.) operations. The agency also alleged that the airports did not maintain and make available to the F.A.A. required records including its airport certification manuals, airport emergency plans, and training records for operations supervisors and A.R.F.F. employees.

Additionally, the F.A.A. alleged that V.I.P.A. did not meet the A.R.F.F. requirements for air carrier flights at Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix after an A.R.F.F. unit could not apply a fire-extinguishing agent within the required time and was not capable of performing its required functions.

F.A.A. inspectors also found that V.I.P.A. did not properly grade the safety area for runways at both airports to eliminate hazardous ruts, humps, depressions or other surface variations. The runways and taxiways were not properly lighted, marked, or signed and V.I.P.A. failed to issue notices to airman (NOTAM) informing air carriers of the runway and taxiway issues at the airports, the FAA alleged.

The Port Authority also failed to confirm that each fueling agent at the St. Croix airport had trained fueling personnel, and failed to take immediate action to alleviate wildlife hazards detected at the landfill near the airport, according to the F.A.A.