

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Tourism Names Elizabeth Hansen Watley Acting Director Of Division Of Festivals

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The Department of Tourism has named Assistant Commissioner of Tourism Elizabeth Hansen Watley as the acting director of the new [Division of Festivals](#).

D.O.T. Commissioner Joseph Boschulte announced that until a director is identified, Ms. Watley will be responsible for leading the charge to manage and promote the new division with her first order of business being to launch plans for the upcoming Crucian Christmas Festival, runs from December 4, 2019 to January 4, 2020.

Mr. Boschulte said with the passage of Legislative Act 8153, the department continues to work with members of the Virgin Islands Legislature and the Office of Management and

Budget to secure full funding to staff the Division of Festivals and the Virgin Islands Cultural Heritage Institute within the Department of Tourism.

"As an established music and cultural ambassador of the Virgin Islands, we believe Assistant Commissioner Hansen Watley is well placed to help launch and execute efforts to establish our islands as a world-class destination for cultural celebrations," Mr. Boschulte said.

D.O.T., which has an oversight role for the financial budget for festivals, said it has begun the recruitment process to fill positions within the division, all of which will be advertised. These include positions such as assistant directors of festivals, an assistant director of marketing, administrative specialists, accounts payable specialists, as well as a permanent director of festivals and a director of the Cultural Heritage Institute.

The position of festival director will be posted this week, with the aim of having a permanent head in place by September 30, 2019, the department said.

With her additional responsibilities, Ms. Watley will oversee the running and marketing of all the official events and festivals taking place in the territory, D.O.T. said.

The Division of Festivals within the Department of Tourism is expected to plan and implement several activities, ranging from organizing events to rolling out an aggressive marketing campaign.

St. Croix-based Shamari Haynes was recently appointed as a special marketing assistant to help Ms. Watley and her team with festival plans.

The U.S. Virgin Islands celebrates three major events: Crucian Christmas Festival (St. Croix), Virgin Islands Carnival (St. Thomas) and St. John Festival. Each event features beauty pageants, music concerts, sporting events and food fairs, all displaying the rich history and cultural heritage of the Territory.