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# Cyril E. King Airport Temporary Closed Friday After 'Blowout' During Jet Landing Loosens Taxiway Asphalt; Permanent Repairs Made to Pothole

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Cyril E. King Airport runway. By. VI CONSORTIUM

ST. THOMAS — The Cyril E. King Airport was closed temporarily on Friday to repair what the V.I. Port Authority told the Consortium was a "minor pothole" on "Taxiway Delta".

VIPA public relations head Monifa Braithwaite said repairs to the pothole were made around 2:00 p.m. and that the closure did not affect departures, only arrivals. "The airport was reopened for arrivals shortly after 3:00 p.m. and normal operations resumed," she told the Consortium in a statement Sunday night after the publication inquired about the matter. "Permanent repairs to Taxiway Delta were made on Friday night after the last flight."

Port Authority Executive Director Carlton Dowe said a landing jet led to a "blowout," an incident he described some asphalt on the runway loosening up, leading to the airport closure for "well over an hour."

At about 10:00 p.m. Friday night, permanent repairs were made, however Mr. Dowe said inspection of the runway surface has to continue. He said a recently started \$4 million project includes repairs to the airport apron, parts of which had not seen repair work in 30 years, he said. "The area where the minor pothole occurred Friday was not on the apron side, but we do see that deterioration taking place and that's why the [\$4 million repair project] is so important."

The territory has been having one of its best years in recent memory relative to air travel, with V.I. Dept. of Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte telling the Consortium late September at Seatrade that high volume of air traffic this year is reminiscent of 2016.

[In April](#), the territory was welcoming 29 new arrivals of the major airlines daily, with the split overwhelmingly favoring St. Thomas 24-5. That's on average 2,500 people into the territory daily, the Port Authority said. Though the traffic has cooled, it is expected to surge again as the holidays draw near, and as the Bryan administration looks to make travel to the territory for vaccinated Americans [much easier](#).