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VIPD Awarded \$280,000 From FEMA for Wind Retrofit Project

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), recently awarded \$285,250 to the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) for the Leander Jurgen Command Hurricane Wind Retrofit Project to mitigate the risks associated with hurricane winds and wind-driven rain, the Office of Disaster Recovery (O.D.R.) has announced.

The wind retrofit for the police station's building will also include the installation of impact-resistant windows, wind-rated storm doors, hardened rooftop equipment, electrical/mechanical updates, and the fitting of other necessary materials following the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) newly adopted International Building Code (IBC 2018), O.D.R. said.

Police Commissioner Trevor Velinor stated, “VIPD is grateful for the assistance of FEMA, as the HMGP funding helps with our hurricane preparedness. Officers can now respond to the needs of our community rather than being concerned about the Jurgen Command.”

According to the O.D.R., the newly constructed station will meet the requirements of the 180 mph Design Wind Speed for the USVI and the American Society of Civil Engineers statute 7-16 for wind risks relevant to critical facilities.

“Retrofitting the police command station on St. John will lessen the negative impact wind events can have on the effectiveness and efficiency of the VIPD,” said Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, O.D.R. director. “As the only police station on St. John constructing a resilient facility is tantamount to ensuring timely responses before, during, and after an event.”

According to the release, updating the Leander Jurgen Command and bringing it up to current building code standards will protect it from structural damage or failure and prevent the loss of costly equipment. These improvements will, most importantly, safeguard the lives of first responders in the event of a disaster and secure the continuity of critical functions of the police department.