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Liberty Mobile to End Support for 3G in USVI on Feb. 22, Freeing Up Spectrum for 5G

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Liberty Mobile announced today that the company will be the first mobile service provider in the U.S. Virgin Islands to complete the technological evolution involved in shutting down the 3G network that provided service for over 20 years. This evolution, which will take place on February 22, 2022, will make way for more advanced network services, more speeds and a better experience for consumers, Liberty Mobile said.

According to the release, the 3G sunset is occurring across most large mobile carriers in the United States, as part of the organic transformation of technology and to make room for more advanced services, including 5G. Similar transitions have occurred in the past when the 2G networks were shut down to upgrade to 4G about 10 years ago. The fifth generation, or 5G, the most recent technology, started in 2019 in limited areas of the United States and is now available

across the nation, including the USVI, since 2020, according to Liberty Mobile.

“This is part of our plan to continue improving the network, offer an overall better experience for mobile users on the island, and be more efficient in the use of spectrum,” explained Víctor Vera, Liberty Mobile’s senior director of RAN Engineering. “Periodically, providers need to shut off older technologies like 2G and 3G to free up spectrum and infrastructure and thus support and expand newer services such as 5G.”

The executive pointed out that the company has identified a small number of customers that have older devices such as 3G mobile phones. These devices will no longer work starting February 22, 2022.

In addition to mobile phones, Vera added that other older devices such as smartwatches, tablets, medical equipment, car SOS services and home security systems that use 3G technology will also stop working. These customers can get in touch with their service providers to get the necessary upgrades.

Liberty Mobile has been contacting these customers through e-mail and text messages since mid-2021 and is encouraging them to act as soon as possible. They can replace their older devices with free device upgrades and discounted options on new models with the latest technology. Consumers with 3G devices can visit the Liberty Mobile stores in St. Thomas and St. Croix to perform the upgrades.

To verify if a device is obsolete, users can disconnect from a Wi-Fi source, and look at the upper left or right corner of the device. If it says “3G,” the device will not work after February 22, 2022 and must be replaced with a new one.