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Government Purchases 23 New Teslas For \$1.35 Million, the Largest Procurement of Electric Vehicles in GVI History

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V.I. Energy Office Director Kyle Fleming, upper left, stands near one of the 23 Tesla EVs purchased through his office. By. THE V.I. ENERGY OFFICE.

The government of the Virgin Islands through the V.I. Energy Office has purchased twenty-three new Tesla electric vehicles, with the Energy Office stating that the \$1.35 million procurement, or just under \$60,000 for each vehicle, will provide the government with significant savings.

The vehicles were purchased with \$2 million in grant funding sought by the Energy Office and the V.I. Water and Power Authority from the U.S. Dept. of Interior's Energizing Insular Communities fund. The Energy Office said the 23 base-level Tesla Model Ys and Model 3s will join the

government fleet and begin navigating the roads across the territory. The vehicles will be positioned across multiple agencies, with 15 vehicles assigned to the central government and 8 joining the WAPA fleet.

"As a result of this procurement, the Virgin Islands Energy Office will possess the first exclusively electrified fleet within the GVI," stated the release. "The VIEO intends to utilize the electrified fleet to demonstrate the viability of fully EV fleets within the territory through a wide variety of educational campaigns."

Kyle Fleming, director of the V.I. Energy Office and chairman of the V.I. Water and Power Authority board, told the Consortium Monday that aside from the \$1.35 million to buy the Tesla EVs, the remaining funding is being used to build charging stations, with 10 already in the territory and a rapid rollout ongoing with 100 expected by the end of 2022.

He said supply-chain limitations contributed to the Tesla purchases, with mainland U.S. cities [making similar decisions](#).

Mr. Fleming also said that the V.I. Energy Office will be offering rebates beginning in October for electric vehicles and charging stations, as well as exploring EV-specific financing options to rapidly increase access to these vehicles to the broader community.

"This historic procurement and transition is as much economic as it is innovative. While it is expected that some may question the investment in electric vehicles, which historically carry a higher sticker price, the Virgin Islands Energy Office has prioritized due diligence in objectively quantifying the cost-benefit of this investment," the Energy Office said. "Through an engagement with Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Secunda Family Foundation, and the Electrification Coalition the VIEO has been developing a Territory-wide transportation electrification road map which includes economic analysis of converting vehicles across the GVI fleet. The results of the analysis confirmed that despite the current cost of electricity in the territory the acquisition and operation of electric vehicles can offer significant savings in vehicle ownership when compared to traditional gas vehicles. These savings are realized through the combination of the lower fueling cost electrical charging and the significantly reduced maintenance needs and cost.

"Under Bryan-Roach administration the Virgin Islands Energy Office, Department of Property and Procurement, and the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority have been strategically preparing the Virgin Islands for a sustainable transportation transformation, and the recent surges in fuel cost have further emphasized the need to expedite this transition. As a remote island nation, reducing the dependence of imported and volatile fossil fuels is critical to bolstering economic and societal sustainability."