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Sky-High Electricity Consumption Forcing Power, Water Supply Disruptions in BVI

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Historic levels of power consumption among BVI residents and businesses is forcing the territory's electricity company to ration power to consumers, according to a joint press release from the British Virgin Islands Electricity Corporation (BVIEC) and the BVI government. Communication and Works Minister Kye Rhymer and BVIEC's General Manager Dr. Neil Smith assured the public that restoring power generating capacity is a top priority.

According to Mr. Smith, a recent surge in electricity usage has been a major contributing factor to the ongoing power disruptions. BVIEC has been compelled, he said, to take measures to manage the load on the system, including taking the Seven Seas desalination plant offline intermittently. The facility consumes a whopping 4 Megawatts of energy when operating at full capacity, and thus must sometimes be idled to regulate the power system load. However, this leads to

interruptions in water production, and thus supply for customers, causing additional inconveniences.

"We appreciate that persons would have endured frustration due to the present situation, but we apologize and we are asking the public to be patient with us as we carry out the necessary work to restore the power plant to its optimal load carrying capacity," stated Mr. Smith.

BVIEC is currently overhauling one of its largest generators, Smith said. Specialists from the manufacturer are also rectifying issues with another generator. However, BVIEC warned consumers that the resolution process may take some time, and the utility company appealed to the public for understanding during this period.

Rymer, the Communication and Works minister, said that government was committed to ensuring reliable and dependable utilities for the territory. He acknowledged that the current situation, which includes interruptions in the water supply, inconveniences the public and expressed gratitude for residents' patience. He assured the public that the technical and operational issues affecting the power and water supply are receiving the highest priority attention from both the government and the BVIEC.

The press release did not provide any estimated timeframe for the completion of the repair and maintenance work from either Messrs. Rhymer or Smith.

As a short-term solution, Smith called on the public to play a vital role in conserving electricity by reducing consumption. He highlighted that this conservation effort not only helps lower electricity bills for consumers but also assists in reducing the strain on the power system, thereby mitigating disruptions to both electricity and water supply.