

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Two Trainees Missing as Aircraft Vanishes Off Radar on San Juan-St. Thomas Route

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A US Coast Guard helicopter aided in the search and rescue effort in St. Thomas on Saturday, August 5, 2023. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

Authorities will continue their search today for a downed Cessna 172 aircraft with two individuals onboard, which was last reported southwest of St. Thomas. The aircraft was on a training flight from San Juan to St. Thomas when it went off the radar.

Public Information Officer Watson from St. Thomas Rescue updated the public on Sunday: "Search efforts have continued throughout the day with assistance from our private, local, and federal partners. We are utilizing data gathered from a variety of

sources to pinpoint the location where the aircraft was last detected. However, search efforts will be suspended until tomorrow morning. We will provide further updates as they come.”

Mariners and aviators in the area have been alerted to stay vigilant and maintain a sharp lookout.

The U.S. Coast Guard Southeast also released a statement confirming that their air and surface crews, in collaboration with other agencies, are on the hunt for the missing persons. The individuals onboard the aircraft have been identified as Carl F. Reichard Stubbe and Oswald Fuentes. They were last seen on Friday, departing from San Juan for their training flight to St. Thomas.

Anyone with relevant information about the incident or the whereabouts of the missing individuals is urged to contact the U.S. Coast Guard Sector San Juan at 787-289-2041.