

1 Districts. The Virgin Islands Police Department is very cognizant of the
2 significance of having reliable barge services between the islands and
3 how it directly impact the social, economic, and safety aspects of our
4 daily lives and to government agencies, private businesses, residents,
5 and visitors alike.

6 **Limited Barge Service; “Impacts sustained by VIPD”**

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8 **The First Impact** that VIPD experienced was early-on when the
9 St. John Police vehicles that had to be transported to the St. Thomas
10 District for routine mechanical service by the dealership as well as the
11 weekly maintenance at the VIPD-Motorpool had to be deferred due to
12 long lines at the barge dock area where a limited amount of unscheduled
13 and unessential vehicles were allowed on the barge. On various
14 occasions, it took two or more days before the police vehicles actually
15 made it over to the St. Thomas District in order for them to be properly
16 repaired or serviced.

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18 **The Second Impact** that VIPD experienced was when the Leander
19 Jurgen Zone-D Command encountered problems, due to the limited
20 barge transportation service, in which much needed office supplies and
21 cleaning supplies from the St. Thomas District Command Center to our
22 St. John Command Center could not be received in a timely manner. In
23 essence, our bathrooms were not cleaned due to the lack of cleaning

1 supplies which led to an unsanitary environment on certain time
2 intervals. Additionally, office supplies such as basic printing paper used
3 for printing our reports and pertinent documents were not in stock or
4 readily available for the officers' to use and the department could not
5 provide relative basic services to the general public whom came to
6 pickup police reports or police records.

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8 **The Third and Major Impact** occurred a few days prior to the
9 2016 St. John Festival in which another barge came online to help
10 address the long lines of vehicles that had backed up at the barge ports
11 on both St. Thomas and St. John. This sounded like great news and it
12 appeared that the problem was alleviated, however, immediately after
13 the St. John Festival, the barge service returned to limited service of
14 one-(1) barge operating between the islands districts. Again, VIPD was
15 immediately faced with issues of facilitating the return of substantial
16 equipment such as industrial spot lights, Police ATVs, and a large Police
17 Truck filled with barricades for St. Thomas. In the meantime, these
18 equipment and vehicles were being stored on the baseball field at the
19 Julius E. Sprauve School awaiting transportation by barge to St.
20 Thomas. It took approximately one-(1) whole week before these
21 equipment and vehicles were taken to St. Thomas because of limited
22 barge service. Consequently, this led to the delay of many St. John

1 Youth Programs having access to their field while attempts were being
2 made to negotiate the removal of the equipment and vehicles.

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Suggestions / Recommendations

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6 Moving forward, it is imperative that proactive measures are
7 implemented to prevent such dire situations from reoccurring in the near
8 future. Thus, I would like to suggest and or recommend the following;

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10 A.) That the V.I. Government try to allocate and procure funds to
11 purchase, operate, service, and maintain a small barge for mainly
12 governmental entities that run between the St. Thomas-St. John Districts
13 in order to facilitate the needs of these agencies that operate on both
14 islands.

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16 B.) That our V.I. Government, in lieu of purchasing a barge, try's
17 to secure a strategically positioned location and or location(s) in the St.
18 John District for the purpose of storage for various kinds of substantial
19 government equipment and or vehicles until regular scheduled
20 transportation services between the St. Thomas-St. John Districts can be
21 fully restored.

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1 At this time, I would like to once again say thank you Chairman
2 Senator Justin Harrigan Sr. and the members of the Virgin Islands 31st
3 Legislature for allowing me to give testimony relative to the disruption
4 in regular scheduled barge service that has impacted our department and
5 for your continued support of the Virgin Islands Police Department.
6 And most of all, thanks to all the residents of the Virgin Islands for their
7 continued support and assistance through the years allowing us to better
8 serve your needs and entrusting us at VIPD with the power to protect
9 and serve you the distinguished people in our respective Virgin Islands
10 Communities. Thank you for this opportunity and we are available to
11 answer any pertinent questions your committee may have for us at the
12 appropriate time.