

PRESS RELEASE

Tel: (284)468-2730

Official Government Website:

<https://gov.vg>

Visible White Plume In Road Town Assessed

Release Date: 27 February, 2025



On Wednesday, 26th February, the Environmental Health Division, at the request of the Ministry of Communications and Works, conducted a comprehensive assessment of the visible white plume observed from the Norwegian Epic. The assessment included measurements for carbon dioxide, volatile organic compounds, particulate matter, and carbon monoxide. This was to ensure that the air quality was not being compromised by the ship's emissions.

The Health Division announced that all readings were within normal ranges, ensuring the safety and well-being of both passengers and the local community.

"The visible plume is primarily composed of water vapor, a byproduct of the ship's Exhaust Gas Cleaning System (EGCS), commonly referred to as scrubbers. This technology is designed to significantly reduce sulfur oxide emissions, ensuring compliance with International Maritime Organization (IMO) standards and MARPOL Annex VI." The Division report added that the ship's Environmental Officer provided full cooperation, providing the necessary documentation, including the EGCS emissions report and Certificate of Conformity. This confirms the vessel's adherence to international environmental regulations.

In an effort to further enhance air quality at the port, it was recommended that the ship switch from using scrubbers to low-sulfur fuel while at berth. The ship's Environmental Officer has indicated a willingness to consider this recommendation, planning to switch to marine gas oil within one hour of berthing and revert back one hour prior to departure on future visits to Tortola.

This proactive approach demonstrates the commitment of both the Norwegian Epic and local authorities to maintaining a clean and healthy environment for all.

The Ministry of Communications and Works is committed to the ongoing development and maintenance of public infrastructure, ensuring that utilities are reliable and affordable, thereby enhancing the quality of life for all residents and visitors in the Virgin Islands.

Photo Credits: Jacqueline Archibald