

STATEMENT

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Statement by the Minister of Communication and Works to the House of Assembly on Upper Main Street Traffic Reconfiguration and Road Town Congestion Management Update

Release Date: 9 May, 2025



STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS

HONOURABLE KYE M. RYMER AT THE FOURTH SITTING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTH HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS ON UPPER MAIN STREET TRAFFIC RECONFIGURATION AND ROAD TOWN CONGESTION MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Thursday 8th May 2025

Madam Speaker,

As part of this Government's continued commitment to improving the flow of vehicular traffic within our capital, I rise to update this Honourable House on the latest developments under the Upper Main Street Initiative, a targeted intervention

designed to ease congestion in Road Town and enhance mobility across the city centre.

Since the Road Town Traffic Turnaround was implemented on June 15, 2020, the Ministry, in collaboration with the Public Works Department, has actively monitored traffic patterns, congestion points, and overall efficiency of the new circulation system. I am pleased to report that the turnaround has resulted in noticeable improvements in traffic flow across several areas of Road Town. However, as with any system-wide change, there remain pockets of congestion—particularly during peak hours.

One such area is the junction of Flemming Street and Fishlock Road, where we have observed recurring backups during morning and afternoon rush hour periods. Our traffic engineers have reviewed this data thoroughly and have determined that additional relief measures are necessary to reduce strain on this corridor.

It is worth noting that at the time of the 2020 turnaround, there were just over 17,350 licensed vehicles operating within the Virgin Islands. As of 2024, that number has grown to approximately 19,500 vehicles. This sharp increase in vehicle ownership has placed additional pressure on existing road infrastructure and further reinforces the need for strategic, forward-looking solutions.

The Upper Main Street Traffic Adjustment

To provide an effective alternative route that complements the existing one-way system in Road Town, the Ministry will be implementing a two-way traffic configuration along Upper Main Street. Specifically, this change will apply to the stretch between:

- The Road Town Methodist Church Burial Ground at Joe's Hill, and
- The intersection of Main Street and Flemming Street near the E.A. Creque building.

This adjustment is aimed at easing congestion within the Road Town area, particularly during morning inflows and evening outflows of traffic. By opening this section of Main Street to two-way travel, motorists will have a more direct and

flexible route through the northern edge of the city, helping to redistribute traffic volumes more evenly throughout the network.

In preparation for this change, we have engaged with local businesses situated along this corridor to notify them that parking along this stretch will be prohibited going forward. This decision, though not taken lightly, is necessary to accommodate two-way traffic flow and to ensure the safety of all road users, including pedestrians.

We urge all motorists to exercise caution and patience during this transition, as signage is updated and drivers acclimate to the new pattern. Officers from the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force, along with traffic wardens, will be on hand in the coming weeks to monitor conditions and support smooth implementation.

Enhancing Infrastructure for a Growing Territory

Madam Speaker, this initiative is not a stand-alone action, but part of a broader strategy to modernise and expand the Territory's transport infrastructure in line with population growth and development. Through the Public Works Department, the Ministry is undertaking systematic reviews of all high-traffic areas, with a view toward relieving pressure points, improving road safety, and creating more predictable commute times.

The Upper Main Street Initiative is an essential piece of that puzzle. By making these strategic adjustments, we are not only improving today's traffic conditions, but also laying the groundwork for a more resilient and navigable city in the years ahead.

I take this opportunity to thank the public for their ongoing cooperation and patience, and I commend the staff of the Public Works Department and our enforcement officers for their continued diligence.

We will keep the public informed of further developments, and we remain open to community feedback as we continue to work together to shape a more efficient and accessible Road Town.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.