

## PRESS RELEASE

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# Public Urged to Prepare for Possible Storms and Hurricanes

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The 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season has been off to a slow start, which presents an opportunity for residents to prepare for the possibility of rapidly developing storms or hurricanes later this summer, said Director of Disaster Management Mr. Jasen Penn.

“If we look back, Beryl was an example of a system that went from a tropical depression to a hurricane in just 48 hours,” Mr. Penn said on the Virgin Islands Voice programme. Recent dangerous systems including Hurricanes Irma and Maria also underwent rapid intensification.

The director explained that frequent incursions of Sahara dust have been inhibiting the level of moisture in the atmosphere, effectively preventing tropical cyclones from developing.

He added that early season storm activity has kept to the southern Caribbean, but that as the hurricane season progresses, shifting winds and currents will make it more likely that storms can take a northern turn.

Mr. Penn also spoke about the United States ending the Defence Meteorological Satellite Program, which shared weather satellite data with forecasters at the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

Those satellites provided structural information about weather systems, the director explained, adding, “They assisted with gathering detailed data on storm intensity, location of the centre, and development.”

While other monitoring tools including the Hurricane Hunter Aircraft and the GOES satellites remain in use, some experts fear the change may mean an increased margin of error in forecasts, Mr. Penn said.

“All this should drive us to be even more rigorous in our efforts to prepare,” Mr. Penn said.

Residents are encouraged to take steps like updating emergency plans, assembling emergency supply kits, and having multiple methods to receive emergency alerts. For advice on creating emergency plans or other steps to

prepare at home or at work, persons can contact the DDM at [ddm@gov.vg](mailto:ddm@gov.vg) or by calling the Department at 468-4200.

**Director of Disaster Management Mr. Jasen Penn joined Government Ministers and colleagues in the Public Service as part of Virgin Islands Voice on July 9th. (Credit: GIS)**