GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Marine Safety Investigation Reporting Authority Releases Findings into the MV Mojaito Collision

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The Marine Safety Investigation and Reporting Authority (MSIRA) has published its Safety Investigation Report into the collision involving the motor vessel *Mojaito*, which occurred on the night of 26 July 2025 in the Sir Francis Drake Channel, south of Brandywine Bay, Tortola.

The incident involved a 31-foot recreational power boat named “Mojaito” which collided with a green steel lateral channel marker south of the Brandywine Bay entrance while transiting from Virgin Gorda to Road Town following the annual *Xmas in July* event. At the time of the collision, the vessel was travelling at approximately 28 knots during nighttime conditions. No fatalities were recorded, and all persons on board were safely assisted following the incident.

“The investigation revealed several safety factors associated with the incident,” according to Chief Marine Accident Investigator, Jerome Padmore. He said: “These factors included an overreliance on electronic navigation, a decrease in situational awareness during nighttime navigation, difficulties in maintaining an effective lookout despite having several people on board, challenges in maintaining a safe speed in a buoyed and heavily trafficked area after dark, and the necessity for timely communication regarding navigational changes to ensure safe navigation.”

Safety Recommendations

As part of the report, the MSIRA official issued safety recommendations to the BVI Ports Authority aimed at strengthening navigational safety across Virgin Islands waters. These include improving coordination with the Virgin Islands Shipping and Maritime Authority (VISMA) to ensure the timely issuance of Notices to Mariners following buoy maintenance, relocation, or other changes affecting navigation, as well as enhancing communication protocols relating to Aids to Navigation to improve mariner awareness and overall navigational safety.

“I would like to remind all vessel operators that electronic navigation aids are intended to complement, not replace, proper visual navigation and the need for an effective lookout,” Mr. Padmore said. “Operators must navigate at a safe speed that is appropriate for the prevailing conditions, especially at night and in areas with increased activity,” he further stated.

The Chief Marine Accident Investigator pointed out that safe speed does not merely refer to travelling slowly in open water, but involves adjusting speed according to the circumstances. This includes slowing down in channels, mooring fields, high-traffic areas, or anywhere that hazards, congestion, reduced visibility, or the presence of people could impact the safe handling of vessels. Using sound judgment, following the COLREGs, and practising responsible seamanship are essential for preventing collisions and injuries.

The full Safety Investigation Report is also available on the Government of the Virgin Islands website at **www.gov.vg**.

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Additional Documents or Media

- msira_releases_mojaito_investigation_report.pdf
- msira_#01_of_2026_safety_accident_report_mv_mojaito.pdf