

PRESS RELEASE

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VI WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM RECEIVING FURTHER SUPPORT

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A three-member team from Operators Without Borders (OWB) has returned to the Territory to support the Water and Sewerage Department in strengthening the water distribution system.

This follows the Government of the Virgin Island's declaration of water as a national critical priority.

Minister for Communications and Works, Honourable Kye M. Rymer, said the Territory's prioritisation of water has guided continued engagement with OWB.

Honourable Rymer said, "Since declaring water a national priority, we have been actively working with Operators Without Borders, and we are pleased to welcome the team back to continue this important work." He added, "Their expertise is helping us not only install key infrastructure like PRVs but also build local capacity within the Water and Sewerage Department."

The visiting specialists are assisting with the installation of pressure reducing valves (PRVs) across the network, while also providing hands-on training to departmental staff in proper maintenance techniques and system management. Their work forms part of a broader effort to improve efficiency, reduce system losses, and ensure a more reliable water supply.

The OWB team includes Marcello Misuraca, Jason Mank, and Jonny Rannis, who collectively bring decades of experience in water and wastewater management. Their current mission builds on previous visits, reflecting ongoing collaboration between the Government and OWB to address critical infrastructure needs.

Mr. Mank explained that the installation of PRVs is essential due to the Territory's varying elevations, which can cause excessive pressure in the system and lead to frequent pipe breaks and leaks.

"These valves allow us to regulate and stabilise pressure across the network," he said. "By controlling pressure levels, we can significantly reduce damage to pipelines and improve overall system performance."

To date, several PRVs have been installed across key locations including Sabbath Hill, Hope Hill, Little Dix Hill, Josiah's Bay, Nottingham Estate, and Mount Healthy,

with additional installations ongoing.

In addition to installation, the OWB team is emphasising proper maintenance practices. The new PRV units are designed with accessibility in mind, allowing the Water and Sewerage Department personnel to conduct routine checks and remove debris without extensive excavation work.

As part of the training component, staff is being equipped with the knowledge to operate, adjust, and maintain the valves effectively. This capacity-building effort ensures long-term sustainability of the improvements being made.

Following the calibration of the PRVs, a leak detection specialist is expected to visit the Territory to provide further training. This will enable local operators to identify and address leaks more efficiently, complementing the pressure management system.

The ongoing collaboration underscores the Government's commitment to modernising the Territory's water infrastructure and ensuring a more resilient and sustainable supply system for residents.

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