GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Emergency Preparedness and Manning Issues in MV Calypso Grounding

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The Marine Safety Investigation and Reporting Authority (MSIRA) has published its investigation report into the grounding of the motor vessel *Calypso* on the rocky shoreline of Great Camanoe on 30th June 2026.

At approximately 9:32 a.m., while travelling from Trellis Bay to Scrub Island, Calypso reportedly lost propulsion between Marina Cay and Great Camanoe. The vessel drifted for about 18 minutes before grounding at around 9:50 a.m. No anchor was dropped, and no other measures were taken to stop the vessel's drift. A nearby operator later transferred the five guests to safety. No injuries were reported, but the vessel sustained substantial hull and propeller damage.

The investigation could not determine the technical cause of the reported loss of propulsion. It also found no evidence linking the loss of propulsion to the port-engine starting difficulties reported earlier in the charter.

The investigation identified several safety issues:

- During the drift, efforts focused primarily on restoring propulsion rather than stopping the vessel's drift as it moved closer to the rocky shoreline. The powered windlass did not operate, and neither the primary nor the secondary anchor was deployed manually.
- Calypso was operating without the additional deck rating required by its Small Commercial Vessel Certificate. This left the captain managing the emergency as the sole crew member, increasing the workload of monitoring the vessel, responding to the loss of propulsion, communicating, and managing guest safety.
- The recurring port-engine starting difficulty was resolved through remote troubleshooting. No onboard technical assessment was carried out before the vessel's next departure, after it experienced similar issues for 2 days before grounding. However, the investigation found no direct causal connection between that initial difficulty, a starting sequence issue, and the later reported loss of propulsion.

Chief Marine Accident Investigator Jerome Padmore said, "When an emergency develops at sea, there may be very little time to respond. Captains and crew need

to understand and practise their vessel’s emergency procedures, including manual anchor deployment, man-overboard response, emergency communications, and passenger management."

Mr. Padmore added, "In the case of MV Calypso’s grounding, several inexperienced passengers were aboard, and the captain was the only crew member, so no one was available to assist during the emergency. This can make an already challenging situation even harder to manage."

Recommendations

MSIRA recommended that the Virgin Islands Shipping and Maritime Authority consider whether specific marine incidents identify a need for further competency support for Boatmaster Grade 2 licensed holders.

MSIRA also recommended that Virgin Charter Yachts strengthen its procedures to ensure commercial charters meet the manning requirements in the vessel’s certificate, and that captains and crew complete vessel-specific familiarisation and practical emergency drills.

The purpose of a marine safety investigation is to identify the circumstances and safety issues of an accident and help prevent similar occurrences. It does not seek to determine liability or assign blame.

The full report and MSIRA publications are available through the Government of the Virgin Islands website at **gov.vg**.

For Additional Information Contact:

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Additional Documents or Media

- marine_safety_investigation_report_mv_calypso.pdf