

# Strengthening USVI's Safety and Security Community Lifeline

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**ST. CROIX, U.S. Virgin Islands** – Emergency services, like fire, police and EMS, are the fabric of a safe community. FEMA has obligated \$16.8 million in funding to the territory for repairs and upgrades to public facilities, including those that enable first responders to execute their duties. Ensuring these facilities are operational and maintain continuity of services is vital for emergency response.

"During hurricanes Irma and Maria the territory's first responders worked around the clock to provide care, compassion, and safety to their communities," said William Vogel, Federal Coordinating Officer for the recovery. "FEMA will continue to be there to support the first responders and ensure they have the tools to do their jobs. Their commitment to working on the front lines every day is heroic."

Through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, various emergency services facilities across the territory are being wind retrofitted, allowing the buildings to withstand hurricane winds speeds and in accordance with the territory's recently adopted 2018 building codes. These measures will lessen the risks posed by hurricane winds, including wind load, flying debris and wind-driven rain to reduce future structural damage or failure.

- **Herbert L. Canegata (Richmond) Fire Station** on St. Croix was awarded \$664,316 in funding to renovate all three buildings in accordance to the 2018 International Building Code.
- **Charles A. "Tappy" Seales (Grove Place) Fire Station** on St. Croix was awarded \$4.9 million in funding to retrofit and upgrade of the building, including safe room construction, enabling the facility to continue to function as a coordination point during emergency response operations.
- **Emile Henderson Fire Station** on St. Croix was awarded \$601,000 in funding to retrofit the building and add a safe room. The improved fire station will enable fire service operations during and immediately after a disaster event.



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- **Emile C. Berry Fire Station** on St. Thomas was awarded \$162,000 in funding to retrofit five of the station's building. Hurricane roof straps will be installed, along with hurricane shutters, wind-rated storm and garage bay doors. Additional hardening of rooftop equipment, roof vents, skylights, electrical/mechanical and other equipment will be completed.
- **Fortuna/Bordeaux Fire Station** on St. Thomas was awarded \$4.9 million in funding to retrofit the fire station by removing the modular buildings and upgrading the station's structure and functionality to ensure continuity of operations during an emergency. The retrofit will include safe room construction and the installation of a back-up generator.
- **Leander Jurgen Police Command** on St. John was awarded \$296,000 in funding to retrofit the building, mitigating the risks posed by hurricane winds, including wind load, flying debris and wind-driven rain to reduce future structural damage or failure, as well as risks to first responder life safety and critical facility functionality. As the only police station on St John ensuring continuity of operations during an emergency is critical to public safety.

Additionally, the territory was awarded \$94,000 in funding to upgrade communications technology including satellite [hotspots and transportable repeaters](#) which will allow first responders to quickly extend wide area coverage and set up an on-site dedicated network. This equipment and training will provide reliable voice and data services to maintain continuity of operations during an emergency.

"These projects totaling over \$11.5 million in FEMA funding will allow the Territory's emergency management facilities to be fortified to ensure the continuity of services when disaster strikes and protect those who serve our communities when we are most in need," said Office of Disaster Recovery Director Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien.

*FEMA's mission is helping people before, during and after a disaster.*

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