



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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WAPA Line Crew Departs for Jamaica to Assist with Post-Hurricane Restoration



Image: WAPA linemen headed to Jamaica as part of the restoration team from St. Croix, (front row) Bevron Goodwin, Charles Isles, Luiscito Frederick, Rey Belardo, Jr., Misael Mendoza, Jr. and Evanson Matthew, Jr. Back row: Paul Gumbs, WAPA Line Superintendent, and Collin Brown, WAPA Transmission and Distribution Director, came out to support their team departing at the Henry E. Rohlsen airport this afternoon.

U.S. Virgin Islands (January 12, 2026) — The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “the Authority”) announced today that a crew of its linemen is departing for Jamaica this week to volunteer in ongoing power restoration and electrical system repair efforts following the devastating impact of Category 5 Hurricane Melissa. The team will spend approximately one month in Jamaica, providing hands-on support to local utility crews as recovery efforts continue.

The delegation, comprised of lineworkers and safety personnel from WAPA’s St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John districts, departed today from the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport and Cyril E. King Airport respectively to join in Miami for the onward flight to Jamaica. Volunteering their time and expertise, the team will support hurricane recovery efforts by repairing damaged

electrical infrastructure, including replacing poles and transformers, restoring powerlines, and performing manual climbing and repair work in areas with limited bucket truck access. Drawing on years of experience restoring power after major storms in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the delegation brings both technical skill and a deep understanding of the perseverance required to help communities rebuild critical infrastructure.

“While we faced our own challenges last year, we are reminded that it could have been far worse. We watched as our Caribbean brothers and sisters in Jamaica were devastated when Hurricane Melissa made landfall,” said Karl Knight, CEO and Executive Director of WAPA. “We have not forgotten that we were spared this hurricane season, and we will do our part to demonstrate the same goodwill we received after Hurricanes Irma and Maria.”

“We understand the long road to recovery because we’ve walked it ourselves,” said Paul Gumbs, Line Superintendent on St. Croix. “Volunteering in Jamaica is about helping our Caribbean family move forward.”

WAPA will maintain operational readiness at home in the U.S. Virgin Islands, while lending its expertise to support regional recovery — reflecting the Authority’s steadfast dedication to service and the Caribbean community.

WAPA and the community proudly wish the team a safe journey to Jamaica and a smooth, safe return home, with gratitude for their dedication to service.

The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Communication’s department is committed to reaching, informing, and connecting with the youngest members of the community to the eldest, through meaningful, transparent and effective communication.

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About WAPA: The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority is an autonomous agency of the Virgin Islands Government which produces and distributes electricity and drinking water to residential and commercial customers in the territory. WAPA was created by the Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands in 1964 through Act No. 1248. Today, WAPA generates electrical power at production plants on St. Thomas and St. Croix and distributes electrical service through smart grids to customers on St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Hassel Island, and Water Island. Potable water is distributed to almost 13,000 customers through water lines and standpipes. WAPA also has the responsibility of installing and maintaining streetlights.

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