



# THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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April 20, 2023



*Image: John Woodson, Randolph Harley Power Plant (RHPP) Superintendent, explains EPA requirements and Wartsila configuration to visitors from the 35<sup>th</sup> Legislature and Public Service Commission.*

## **WAPA Hosts Informational Session and Randolph Harley Power Plant Tour for 35<sup>th</sup> Legislature**

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “Authority”) hosted its first informational session and on-site tour of the Randolph Harley Power Plant on St. Thomas yesterday April 17, 2023, for the honorable members of the US Virgin Islands 35<sup>th</sup> Legislature and the Public Service Commission.

The two-part event provided senators, chief of staff representatives, and the PSC with the opportunity to learn more about WAPA’s operations, the Strategic Plan, and its partnership with water provider, Seven Seas. During the first part of the session, department heads and Seven Seas’ Caribbean Relations Manager, Catherine Wilson, shared with senators their organizational structure, alongside highlights and challenges as it relates to the Authority’s progress. The latter half of the day’s event included a visit to the Randolph Harley Power Plant, where senators were able to see first-hand WAPA’s generation systems and given a preview on the highly anticipated Wartsila generators and battery energy storage systems (BESS).

"We were pleased to host our local senators and the PSC and share our progress, as well as provide context for some of the more complex challenges we balance as an Authority," noted CEO/Executive Director Andrew Smith. "It was rewarding to be able to showcase the hard work of our dedicated team, as well as the investments into more efficient and cost-effective generation across the territory."

Throughout the day, senators were encouraged to ask questions and engaged with WAPA leadership to learn more about recently approved federal grants and the list of projects WAPA is currently working on across the territory to improve water quality, harden the electric grid and advance overall reliability of services offered.

"Our senators represent the customers we serve and have a critical role in ensuring we are able to communicate the progress being achieved at WAPA," noted Shanell Petersen, Director of Corporate Communications at the Authority. "It was a pleasure to share our vision and we look forward to continuing to enhance the communication channels between this legislative body and members of the WAPA family, as we work towards creating a brighter future for our community."

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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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