GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Government Launches Safety Investigation Following Boat Fire at Nanny Cay Marina

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The Marine Safety Investigation and Reporting Authority (MSIRA), Premier's Office, is investigating a fire involving a privately owned houseboat that occurred at Nanny Cay Marina on Thursday, 8 January 2026.

The vessel, named "Kelly Jane", is a 67-foot aluminum ferry-type craft that has been converted into a houseboat with extensive wooden customisations on the deck. The vessel, which belongs to a resident of St. Maarten, had been out of service for several months before the incident.

"Two days before the fire, the vessel was occupied while docked and connected to shore power, with no apparent issues reported. Fortunately, no injuries were reported as a result of the fire, and no one was on board at the time of the incident," stated Chief Marine Accident Investigator, Mr. Jerome Padmore.

Reports are that personnel at Nanny Cay Marina observed smoke emanating from the aft section of the vessel and immediately notified Husky Salvage and Towing, who quickly responded and removed the vessel from the dock area. Mr. Padmore pointed out that their swift and courageous response significantly reduced the risk of the fire spreading to nearby vessels and marine infrastructure, preventing a potentially larger incident. Emergency responders arrived shortly after the incident and rapidly extinguished the fire.

"Preliminary investigations indicate that the vessel had been inactive for several months and was at Nanny Cay in preparation for sea trials at the time of the fire," the Chief Marine Accident Investigator stated. "There were no immediately visible issues with the shore power connection; however, the condition of the onboard batteries and other electrical equipment has not yet been verified. The presence of extensive wooden fittings and household furniture contributed to the extent of the fire damage."

MSIRA has commenced a safety investigation to establish the circumstances and contributing factors surrounding the fire. This investigation is being conducted strictly in accordance with the Accident Investigation Regulations, with the sole purpose of improving marine safety and preventing recurrence.

The Marine Safety Investigation and Reporting Authority (MSIRA) reminds all vessel owners, operators, and marina users to follow essential boat fire safety precautions. These include:

- regularly inspect shore power cords, plugs, and wiring for damage or overheating;
- install and maintain smoke and heat alarms to detect fires early;
- ensure fire extinguishers are accessible, up to date, and that everyone on board knows how to use them;
- keep engine rooms and machinery spaces clean and free of flammable materials;
- when connected to shore power for long periods, frequently check connections and switch off non-essential circuits; and
- report any signs of smoke, fire, overheating, or electrical issues to marina staff or emergency services immediately.

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About:
The Marine Safety Investigation and Reporting Authority (MSIRA) operates under the Premier’s Office and is the official body responsible for the independent investigation of marine accidents and incidents within the territorial waters of The Virgin Islands. Guided by the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations, 2020 and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Casualty Investigation Code, MSIRA's primary objective is to enhance maritime safety through fact-based investigations, the identification of safety issues, and the

issuance of recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. MSIRA investigations do not seek to apportion blame or establish liability.

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Additional Documents or Media

- msira_investigates_nanny_cay_boat_fire.pdf