GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Orientation Sets Course for Newly Appointed Maritime Advisory Board

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Efforts are underway to ensure that the new Maritime Advisory Board is fully equipped to guide policy, safety, and international compliance within the Territory’s regulatory and economic landscape.

Members of the Maritime Advisory Board participated in a comprehensive orientation session on Wednesday, 24th June 2026, at the Premier’s Office Conference Room.

The session was chaired by Permanent Secretary in the Premier’s Office, Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt Igwe, who underscored the importance of the industry. “Government is committed to strengthening oversight and strategic direction in one of The Virgin Islands’ most vital industries by providing Board members with an in-depth overview of their roles and responsibilities, as well as the legislative and policy frameworks that govern the maritime sector.”

During the session, Board members were formally introduced and took the Oath of Confidentiality. They were briefed on the Government’s Statutory Boards Policy, including protocols governing the appointment and removal of statutory board members, further reinforcing good governance practices. Presentations covered the Board’s Terms of Reference, key provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, and the implications of the ongoing Maritime Law Review Project.

Additionally, Board members received updates on the state of the Virgin Islands’ maritime industry, including preparations for the IMO Instruments Implementation (III) Code Audit.

Chief Accident Investigator, Marine Safety Investigation and Reporting Authority MSIRA, Mr. Jerome Padmore underscored the Authority’s critical role in promoting maritime safety within The Virgin Islands. He outlined MSIRA’s independent mandate, the marine accident investigation process, and its contribution to fulfilling the Territory’s international obligations under the International Maritime Organization IMO standards.

Chairman of the Maritime Advisory Board, Mr. Robert Hirst, addressed attendees and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve, noting his commitment to working collaboratively with fellow members to advance The Virgin

Islands’ maritime interests.

The orientation session forms part of the Government’s ongoing commitment to ensuring that statutory board members are adequately equipped with the knowledge and resources necessary to effectively discharge their duties and contribute to the continued growth and development of the Virgin Islands’ maritime sector.

The other members of the Maritime Advisory Board are John Samuel and Lecia Christopher-Thomas, Virgin Islands Shipping & Maritime Authority (VISMA); John Greenwood, BVI Bar Association; Marjorie Smith, BVI Chamber of Commerce; Michele Hibbert, Association of Registered Agents; Sean Durant (Designate), BVI Ports Authority; Theodore James, Agriculture and Fisheries Department; Kadia Turnbull (Secretary), Ministry of Communications & Works; Greg Romney, Customs; Anthony George, and Kevin Richards.

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Photo: Permanent Secretary, Premier’s Office, Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt Igwe congratulates Chairman of the Maritime Advisory Board, Mr. Robert Hirst.

About:

The Government of The Virgin Islands is committed to promoting good governance and the sustainable development of the Territory with a view to ensuring a well-informed, prosperous, cohesive and stable society. The Premier’s Office serves as the focal point for coordinating cross-sectoral policies and programmes and promoting the sustainable development of The Virgin Islands.

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