GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Entrepreneurial Zone and Business Incubator Officially Opened

Release Date: 15 September, 2026



The Territory’s first Entrepreneurial Zone and business incubator has officially opened in Huntums Ghut, Tortola, providing affordable commercial spaces and business development support for local entrepreneurs.

Eight business owners received keys to their units during a ceremony held on Friday, 11th September, 2026. They form part of the first group of nine entrepreneurs approved to operate from the facility. Junior Minister for Financial Services and Economic Development, Honourable Lorna Smith, OBE, said the initiative will create opportunities for qualifying entrepreneurs from across the Territory. Honourable Smith said, “This isn’t just meant for persons from Huntums Ghut... but persons from wherever they are from throughout the BVI, once they qualify.”

The first building contains air-conditioned, glass-fronted units of different sizes. It will operate as an incubator where start-ups and growing businesses can access affordable commercial space while receiving guidance to strengthen their operations. The successful applicants were required to submit business plans explaining their ideas, how they would earn income and how their businesses could grow. They will be allowed to operate from the incubator for two to four years before moving into the wider commercial market.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Financial Services, Economic Development and Digital Transformation, Mrs. Natalie Fahie-Smith, said the Zone represents a wider investment in the people and economic future of the Virgin Islands. Mrs. Fahie-Smith said, “The objective is not simply to provide a space, but to use this opportunity as a catalyst for growth.” The Permanent Secretary also encouraged the entrepreneurs to use the support available through the programme to build responsible, well-managed and sustainable businesses.

Throughout the incubation period, the Department of Trade, Investment Promotion and Consumer Affairs will provide the entrepreneurs with training, mentorship and other business development support. Deputy Director of Trade, Dr Lincoln E. Bobb, said the Department will work closely with each business as it develops. Dr Bobb said, “We actually work with you throughout that entire process so that you can actually be a business that could stand by itself.” The businesses approved for the first cohort are Fiesta Gifts and Event Supplies, Lifeline Transport Services, Caribbean Corner Market, Smart and Glam Braider, Island Suppliers 284, Eclipse Gloss, Fragrance Oasis VI and Suds N Tings.

The Entrepreneurial Zone was made possible through collaboration between the Ministry of Financial Services, Economic Development and Digital Transformation, the Department of Trade, Investment Promotion and Consumer Affairs and the Ministry of Communications and Works. The facility was constructed by the Ministry of Communications and Works. Minister for Communications and Works and Fifth District Representative, Honourable Kye M. Rymer, worked with the Department of Trade to advance the project and create new opportunities for entrepreneurs. The Huntums Ghut facility is the first of two buildings planned for the site. The Government also intends to establish similar zones in other communities as part of its wider effort to support micro, small and medium-sized businesses throughout the Virgin Islands.

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