



# VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY TRIENNIAL HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN

## FY 2024-2026

*Year 3 Update*  
FY2026



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# VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY

## FY2024 – FY2026 TRIENNIAL HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN

### FY2026 UPDATE

#### INTRODUCTION

The Virgin Islands Office of Highway Safety (VIOHS) was established by the Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) in accordance with the Highway Safety Act of 1966. It is funded through appropriations by the Department of Transportation's sectors of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Federal Motor Carrier Safety Agency (FMCSA) and a small portion of local General Funds. The Governor designates a representative to oversee the operations of the highway safety office. The Governor's Representative (GR) in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) is the Commissioner of Police. VIOHS is a division within the Police Department. The office reports to the Commissioner, and the day-to-day operations are overseen by the Director. The office is staffed by personnel dedicated to NHTSA and FMCSA programs.

The goal of the VIOHS as legislated by the Virgin Islands Senate is to develop and implement a highway safety plan to achieve its mission of reducing the risks of traffic crashes, fatalities, and serious injuries on the roadways throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands. VIOHS is mandated to promote and fund methods to implement traffic safety in the territory.

VIOHS for FY2025 HSP had \$3,389,777.35 worth of projects but only received funding in the amount of \$1,271,424 for FY2025 to use together with the \$239,873 which was carried forward from FY2024 available funds. Therefore, VIOHS was limited to management projects, some traffic data improvement, outreach, and minimized enforcement projects.

#### FY2025 ACTIVITIES

**Outreach:** Thus far for FY2025, the VIOHS has been able to conduct **26** in-person outreach activities, posted **96** traffic safety social media messages, developed and circulated **32** public service announcements, and distributed **331** child protection safety seats.

**Enforcement Initiatives:** VIOHS carried forward the FY2024 Impaired Driving enforcement initiatives through the end of FY2025. The Occupant Protection initiatives were operated using both GVI local funds and awarded funds to ensure USVI participation in the national initiatives throughout the fiscal year. Both program initiatives were conducted in each district (St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix). Project Managers and Traffic Commanders from each district collaborated to ensure the successful implementation of these initiatives.

Despite efforts to launch the projects, several challenges impacted execution, including schedule changes and limited manpower. Commanders reported difficulty recruiting officers for enforcement activities, particularly when officers were not permitted to remain on the time clock and receive immediate compensation. This constraint significantly limited participation, resulting in minimal enforcement activity to date. The figures below reflect the limited outcomes of the **Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over** initiative conducted across the territory.

<i><b>Impaired Driving Overtime Enforcement Metrics</b></i>											
District	# of Officers	# of Days	# of OT Hrs	# of Seatbelt Citations	# of Cell Phone Citations	# of Interventions	# of Other Citations	SFST Conducted with Results	# of DUI Arrests		
STX	9	26	643.7	26	1	1680	93			6	
STT/STJ	10	2	120	44	0	129	54	2 - Pass			3
Total	19	28	763.7	70	1	1809	147	2			9

Because the sworn officers overtime expenses are burdensome on the cash strapped GVI, Commissioner Brooks directed the Chiefs of both districts to utilize all federal funds budgeted for overtime initiatives. If all approved budgeted enforcement funds are not utilized by the end of FY2025, VIOHS will extend the performance period until funds are exhausted. The Traffic Commanders in both districts are committed to liquidating the funds during the fiscal year.

### **FY2025 Challenges:**

**Staffing:** VIOHS began FY2025 with six employees. However, by the end of the first quarter, the unit had resignations from the PTS Coordinator/Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) and the Compliance Officer was transferred to another GVI department. The absence of the PTS Coordinator/LEL & the Compliance Officer placed additional pressure on key staff members. The four vacant positions related to NHTSA funding were posted, and an Administrative Specialist was hired during the third quarter.

**GVI Operational Issues:** The cash management issues which began in FY2023 for the GVI continued into FY2025. All GVI agencies were required to submit a listing of only ten critical payment invoices, and ten discretionary payments on a weekly basis. A third-party entity, hired by the Department of Finance (DOF), would then select from across all agencies which invoices would be paid. The payment process is slow, and DOF has mandated that all invoices paid from federal grants must show proof of the funds drawn and receipted into the GVI ERP system before the payment is released to the vendors. On some occasions, payments are not released timely although proof of receipt of funds was produced.

Organizational changes at Property & Procurement, Office of Management & Budget, and VIPD continue to cause extensive delays in the review and approval processes for all VIOHS documents and activities.

**eCitation Project:** The core components of the system—electronic citation, crash reporting, and commercial motor vehicle inspection—have been developed and successfully installed using the Traffic and Criminal Software (TraCS). Stakeholders from the VIPD, Office of Highway Safety, Attorney General's Office, and the Courts participated in training sessions on how to enter

citations, document crashes, and record inspections within the system. Logins and role-based permissions have been established for key personnel, including traffic officers and supervisors. User Acceptance Testing (UAT) was conducted during the second and third quarters of fiscal year 2025. Feedback from this testing was incorporated to ensure the system meets operational requirements and is ready for broader implementation. Traffic officers entered and submitted test citations in the TraCS system to verify the successful integration of data between TraCS and the Courts' electronic case management system (CTrack).

Several challenges have contributed to delays in the full deployment of the TraCS system. These include issues with scanning driver's licenses, which has affected the system's ability to auto-populate citation fields accurately. Additionally, hardware compatibility problems—such as the mobile printers being installed in patrol vehicles—have impacted on the ability to operationalize the system in the field.

Compounding these technical challenges, the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) is currently in the process of renewing its service and maintenance agreement for TraCS. This renewal is critical to ensure continued system support, troubleshooting, updates, and vendor-led technical assistance. Delays in finalizing the agreement have impacted on the pace at which some issues can be resolved. Despite these setbacks, efforts are ongoing to address the outstanding technical and contractual issues.

**TRIENNIAL HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN – YEAR 2**

**FY2025 APPROVED PROJECTS**

Project Number	Project Name	Subrecipient	Project Amount	Federal Funding	Eligible Use of Funds
25-PA-402	PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION AGREEMENT	VIOHS	\$320,587.10	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PA
25-TRM-402	TRAFFIC RECORDS PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PROJECT	VIOHS	\$322,726.61	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TR
24-BMV-402	BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLE'S SYSTEM AND DATA IMPROVEMENTS (POINTS SYSTEM)	BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES (BMV)	\$237,089.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TR
25-OPHRP-BUB-402	BUCKLING UP WITH BARBERS	KARIBBEAN KUTS, CARLOS MARTINEZ	\$33,232.67	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-OP
25-OPSMGR-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	VIOHS	\$260,277.90	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-OP
25-OPSSBS-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION OBSERVATIONAL SEAT BELT SURVEY	CONTRACTOR	\$261,206.20	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-OP
25-OPHSP-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION HEAT STROKE PREVENTION	VIOHS	\$63,232.59	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-UNATTD
25-COMMGMT-402	COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA MANAGEMENT	VIOHS	\$226,913.20	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PM
25-IDMAN-402	IMPAIRED DRIVING MANAGEMENT PROJECT	VIOHS	\$194,180.90	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-AL
24-IDYAP-402	STUDENTS AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE DECISIONS (SADD) PROGRAM	UVI, SADD CHAPTER, OR GVI AGENCY	\$180,869.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TSP
25-TIDAS-402	TEEN ID AWARNESS SURVEY	DLCA/VIOHS	\$87,191.15	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TSP
25-DSCCRO-402	CENTERLINE OUTREACH ON DISTRACTED DRIVING	CENTRERLINE CAR RENTALS	\$125,000.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-DD
25-IDEVI-402	IMPAIRED DRIVING OVERTIME ENFORCEMENT	VIPD	\$100,000.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-OPEVI-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION OVERTIME ENFORCEMENT	VIPD	\$100,000.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTSSFST-402	STANDARDIZED FIELD SOBRIETY INSTRUCTOR TRAINING	CONTRACTOR	\$88,900.62	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTSTRNG-402	POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES TRAINING	CONTRACTOR	\$88,900.63	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTS-MAN-402	POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	VIOHS	\$165,977.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTPED-402	PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENT	VIOHS	\$125,000.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PS
25-OEMS-405c	EMS DATA SUPPORT	FIRE & EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	\$32,128.36	IIJA NHTSA 405c Data	IIJA NHTSA 405c-MEDA-B3SA
25-Ecrite-405c	TraCS (Ecitation) Maintence	VI POLICE DEPARTMENT (VIPD)	\$125,000.00	IIJA NHTSA 405c Data	IIJA NHTSA 405c-MEDA-B3SA
25-OPCPS-FIT-405b	CPS FITTING STATIONS	VIOHS	\$85,582.53	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2CPS
25-OPCPSTr-405b	CPS TRAINING	VIOHS	\$48,549.44	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2TR
25-OPHRP-TD-405b	TEENAGED DRIVERS	EZ DRIVING SCHOOL	\$90,077.35	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2TR
25-CPSSRMC-405b	SMART START, SAFE START AT SRMC	SCHNIEDER REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER, ST. THOMAS	\$13,577.55	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2CPS
25-CPSJFL-405b	SMART START, SAFE START AT JFL	JUAN F. LUIS HOSPITAL, ST. CROIX	\$13,577.55	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2CPS
			\$3,389,777.35		

**TRIENNIAL HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN – YEAR 2**  
**FY2025 EXECUTED PROJECTS (AS OF JULY 31, 2025)**

Project Number	Project Name	Subrecipient	Executed Project Amount	Federal Funding	Eligible Use of Funds
25-PA-402	PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION AGREEMENT	VIOHS	\$265,818.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PA
25-TRM-402	TRAFFIC RECORDS PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PROJECT	VIOHS	\$272,898.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TR
24-BMV-402	BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLE' SYSTEM AND DATA IMPROVEMENTS (POINTS SYSTEM)	BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES (BMV)	\$238,338.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TR
25-OPHRP-BUB-402	BUCKLING UP WITH BARBERS	KARIBBEAN KUTS, CARLOS MARTINEZ	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-OP
25-OPSMGR-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	VIOHS	\$226,470.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-OP
25-OPSSBS-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION OBSERVATIONAL SEAT BELT SURVEY	CONTRACTOR	\$232,300.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-OP
25-OPHSP-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION HEAT STROKE PREVENTION	VIOHS	\$61,193.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-UNATTD
25-COMMGMT-402	COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA MANAGEMENT	VIOHS	\$146,278.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PM
25-IDMAN-402	IMPAIRED DRIVING MANAGEMENT PROJECT	VIOHS	\$151,885.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-AL
24-IDYAP-402	STUDENTS AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE DECISIONS (SADD) PROGRAM	UVI, SADD CHAPTER, OR GVI AGENCY	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TSP
25-TIDAS-402	TEEN ID AWARNESS SURVEY	DLCA/VIOHS	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-TSP
25-DSCCRO-402	CENTERLINE OUTREACH ON DISTRACTED DRIVING	CENTRERLINE CAR RENTALS	\$239,420.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-DD
25-IDEVI-402	IMPAIRED DRIVING OVERTIME ENFORCEMENT	VIPD	\$164,977.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-OPEVI-402	OCCUPANT PROTECTION OVERTIME ENFORCEMENT	VIPD	\$99,647.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTSSFST-402	STANDARDIZED FIELD SOBRIETY INSTRUCTOR TRAINING	CONTRACTOR	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTSTRNG-402	POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES TRAINING	CONTRACTOR	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTS-MAN-402	POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	VIOHS	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PT
25-PTPED-402	PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENT	VIOHS	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 402	IIJA NHTSA 402-PS
25-OEMS-405c	EMS DATA SUPPORT	FIRE & EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	\$44,749.00	IIJA NHTSA 405c Data	IIJA NHTSA 405c-MEDA-B3SA
25-Ecite-405c	TraCS (Ecitation) Maintenance	VI POLICE DEPARTMENT (VIPD)	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 405c Data	IIJA NHTSA 405c-MEDA-B3SA
25-OPCPS-FIT-405b	CPS FITTING STATIONS	VIOHS	\$76,112.00	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2CPS
25-OPCPSTr-405b	CPS TRAINING	VIOHS	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2TR
25-OPHRP-TD-405b	TEENAGED DRIVERS	EZ DRIVING SCHOOL	\$80,109.00	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2TR
25-CPSSRMC-405b	SMART START, SAFE START AT SRMC	SCHNIEDER REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER, ST. THOMAS	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2CPS
25-CPSJFL-405b	SMART START, SAFE START AT JFL	JUAN F. LUIS HOSPITAL, ST. CROIX	\$0.00	IIJA NHTSA 405 OP Low	IIJA NHTSA 405b-M2CPS
			\$2,300,194.00		

## Triennial Highway Safety Plan – Year 3

Because of staffing, GVI issues, and the NHTSA funds awarding trend, VIOHS will adjust the funding requests for FY2026 planned projects, based on what was awarded in the fiscal year 2025. This may require less out of territory travel, supplies and other related costs which can be adjusted without compromising the programs or burdening the General Fund.

*VIOHS will be applying for \$2,710,000.00 (see Exhibit I) in funding for FY2026 HSP categorized as follows.*

**§402 - \$2,205,000.00**

**§405(b) - \$215,000.00**

**§405(c) - \$290,000.00**

## **VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY**

### **TRIENNIAL HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN**

#### **YEAR 3 (FY2026) PLAN ADJUSTMENTS**

##### **Planning & Administration – IIJA NHTSA 402PA**

The Planning Administration Agreement will continue to be used to support administrative salaries and travel for training, and professional development. In FY2026, when applicable, funding will be used to support Public Participation and Engagement efforts. The USVI will also be utilizing the De Minimis Indirect Cost Rate of **10%** because the details of the new negotiated rate have not yet been made available.

##### **Traffic Records – IIJA NHTSA 402TR & 402TRCC**

The TRCC will play a critical role in facilitating collaboration and information sharing, as well as establishing data standards and protocols to ensure uniformity and reliability. To support these efforts, the TRCC will establish an Executive Committee, which will include a TRCC Chairperson, TRCC Secretary, and selected TRCC members. This Executive Committee will provide overall leadership, define objectives, plan and facilitate TRCC meetings, monitor the progress of the strategic plan implementation, and adjust as needed. The Executive Committee will monitor the progress of all approved Traffic Records projects with special emphasis on the electronic citation project. The Executive Committee will also participate in professional development opportunities, allowing them to network with professionals in the field, stay informed about current laws and regulations, and learn effective strategies to lead the TRCC successfully.

*The countermeasure strategy of developing the Executive Committee will ensure that a focused group of individuals will be able to quickly review and evaluate the traffic data related projects, direct funding resources to the most viable projects, and make the relevant improvements to the USVI's strategic plan.*

##### **Occupant Protection - IIJA NHTSA 402OP**

The OP management project encountered several challenges when augmenting the inventory of child passenger safety seats for distribution in the territory. The shipment of seats ordered in FY2024 was delayed at the shipping port in Florida. In October of FY2025, VIOHS began the lengthy process of working with the import company to have the items received in the USVI. The process took several months due to miscommunications, unavailability of the importer, mislabeling of the crates, and coordination of the timing with the scheduled vessels. Therefore, that inventory continues to be used in FY2025, and the funds allocated to purchase additional seats were used for additional staff travel and other items.

The defunded OP Program projects included Buckling Up with Barbers and CPS Training. Due to the subrecipient inactivity, the OP Program Manager will continue to seek other subrecipients ideal

to address non-compliance among males. Moreover, the CPS Training Project will be reinstated during FY2026 with a focus on strengthening the CPS Technician base on St. Croix.

*As identified in the FY2024 OHS Annual Report, the reluctance of private, semi-autonomous government agencies, and individuals to engage in life saving projects due to delayed reimbursement processes require the following countermeasures strategies.*

- *Developing partnerships with male church groups identified by the age ranges in the data results.*
- *Focusing more on the private schools in the territory with smaller and more attentive groups.*
- *Developing relationships and possible partnerships with doctors specializing in maternity and prenatal care to expose and educate new parents on the importance and necessity of utilizing the correct car seat for newborns, infants, and toddlers.*
- *Erecting roadside signage to remind the motoring community of local seat belt compliance laws in real time – while on the road.*

#### **Communications (Media) - IIJA NHTSA 402PM**

VIOHS will continue to seek a contractor to conduct media services for the agency. If this cannot be easily accomplished, a full-time staff option will be assessed.

*The OHS aggressive media outreach reported in the FY2024 Annual Report indicates that with reduced enforcement efforts, education and information are key components to convincing the populace to always practice traffic safety. These countermeasure strategies will continue in FY2026.*

#### **Impaired Driving – IIJA NHTSA 402AL**

VIOHS will work with law enforcement, public and private enterprises to implement a comprehensive suite of impaired driving initiatives aimed at reducing alcohol and drug impaired driving crashes, injuries, and fatalities. These efforts will be data-driven, community focused, and aligned with federal and territorial safety priorities.

*The FY2024 Annual Report indicated that the countermeasures which continued in FY2025 are relevant and should be continued. OHS will develop stronger and more beneficial engagement opportunities for current and possible sub-recipients to address the impaired driving improprieties in the territory.*

#### **Impaired Driving – IIJA NHTSA 402AL (SADD)**

The University of the Virgin Islands Center for Excellence in Leadership (UVICELL), in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Office of Highway Safety (VIOHS) and SADD National, was set to establish a SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter to expand awareness of its mission in the USVI. By integrating SADD into UVI's Drug and Alcohol Prevention/Education program, the initiative aimed to address specific challenges on campus and

within the broader community. As a peer-led organization, SADD focuses on education, prevention, and activism, targeting issues such as underage drinking, drug use, impaired driving, teen violence, and suicide prevention. In FY2025, SADD National and UVICELL planned to conduct territorial training sessions, using positive messaging and role models to discourage alcohol use, reinforce healthy norms, and promote youth activities that avoid risky behaviors like distracted and drowsy driving. These sessions aimed to equip community stakeholders with evidence-informed strategies that were culturally relevant and tailored to the unique needs of the students they served.

However, the project was not funded in FY2025 due to staffing challenges, and lack of measurable feedback from UVI. Despite this, the subrecipient is willing to revisit the project in FY2026.

*One of the key goals identified in the FY2024 Annual Report was the continued use of dynamic and interactive outreach sessions with teens and university students to instill a sense of responsibility, and reinforcement of the message that prevention is better than cure as related to traffic safety. This countermeasure will be continued in FY2026.*

#### **Impaired Driving – IIJA-NHTSA 402AL (DSCCR)**

The *Drive Safe with Centerline Car Rentals* outreach initiative is set to expand territory wide. By reaching a broader audience across the U.S. Virgin Islands, the initiative aims to raise awareness and promote effective strategies to reduce impaired and distracted driving behaviors. However, due to delays in the availability of funding in FY2025, full implementation of the project has been extended to FY2026. This extension will allow for proper execution and ensure the initiative achieves its intended impact across all districts.

*The FY2024 Annual Report identified the educational outreach of this project as being very successful using social and conventional media outlets. The main target was tourists to the island district of St. Croix. The countermeasures used will continue. The subrecipient is willing to continue the project in FY2026.*

#### **Impaired Driving – IIJA NHTSA 402AL (TIDAS)**

The subrecipient, **Perfect Will, LLC**, was set to launch the **Teen Impaired Driving Awareness Survey (TIDAS)**, a research and community-focused project designed to gather data on the driving behaviors of 14-21-year-olds. This project aims to evaluate young drivers' perceptions of impaired and distracted driving, providing critical insights into their attitudes and behaviors. The results will help determine if legislative changes are necessary to ensure that young drivers receive comprehensive education on these issues and the related laws before obtaining a legal driver's license. Advocates planned to share their findings through surveys, public announcements, engaging peers, legislators, and the Office of Highway Safety.

Additionally, the project sought to address the high incidence of crashes involving adolescent drivers, particularly those aged 16-21. The initiative aimed to reduce future risks of impaired

driving by advocating for stronger driving education laws for this demographic and launching a comprehensive outreach program. This would include media campaigns, town hall meetings, and community engagement efforts to support the goals of VIOHS. Advocates also intended to support the development of new legislation and amendments to existing laws to (1) strengthen measures against impaired driving and (2) require traffic safety education before issuing an initial driver's license to young drivers.

Unfortunately, the project was not funded in FY2025 due to the impact of reduced federal funding which affected the number of staff which could be dedicated to the project. Despite this setback, the project's objectives remain crucial for enhancing impaired driving prevention and education for young drivers. The subrecipient is fully committed and eager to collaborate in FY2026, with a renewed focus on promoting safer, healthier decision-making among youth in the Virgin Islands.

*One of the key goals identified in the FY2024 Annual Report was the continued use of dynamic and interactive outreach sessions with teens and university students to instill a sense of responsibility, and reinforcement of the message that prevention is better than cure as related to traffic safety. This countermeasure will be continued in FY2026.*

#### **Police Traffic Services - IIJA NHTSA 402PT**

The PTS Program was dormant in FY2025 due to the resignation of the staffer who held the position. The only section of the program which remained funded was the enforcement portion, but that performed at a minimized level. The training projects will fund the following training sessions for VIPD Officers as the demand has intensified due to the local government constraints.

- Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) training.
- Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) and Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Detection
- At-Scene Traffic Crash/Traffic Homicide Investigation and Advanced Crash Scene Investigations
- Intoximeter Training

*The OHS will continue its efforts to seek partnerships with motorcycle groups (clubs), government agencies related to roadways and street naming to address crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities by utilizing a law enforcement officer (retired or active) to lead this program. Preference will be for an officer with traffic related training and experience. Training will be planned, coordinated, and executed on a timely basis to ensure that traffic units are available and fully prepared to execute enforcement initiatives during national mobilizations and throughout the year for local initiatives.*

*There will be no changes to the countermeasures identified with this program.*

### **Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety – IIJA NHTSA 402PS**

VIOHS will continue collaboration with the VI Department of Public Works to improve pedestrian safety infrastructure throughout the community utilizing the model developed through the walking assessment conducted with NHTSA Region 2 personnel. The initiative will engage community members to identify unsafe pedestrian zones throughout the territory, focusing on low-cost solutions such as community education, roadway striping, pedestrian light timing adjustments, and posting of signage.

*The FY2024 Annual Report identified the FY2025 walking assessment which was completed during the first quarter of the fiscal year to identify the high-risk corridor on the island of St. Thomas. The countermeasure of using the information gathered from this assessment to collaborate with the relevant agencies, groups, and private entities to improve traffic safety.*

### **Low Seat Belt Usage – IIJA 405b OP Low**

**Training** - Due to lack of availability of certified trainers to travel to the territory, and their concerns regarding timely payments related to travel, the FY2025 CPS Training Project was defunded. Therefore, no new Technicians were added to the team. Of the 12 CPSTs certified in the FY2023 cohort, only 2 Technicians recertified in FY 2025 – one from each district.

Several technicians across agencies on St. Croix have remained committed to the initiative. Hence, FY2026 training efforts will focus on building the team on St. Croix; interisland travel will be required to support CPS in the St. Thomas/St. John district. During FY 2026, one cohort of 20 trainees will be secured, with a focus on creating a buddy system at VIFEMS in at least 2 strategically placed fire stations. Other trainees will be recruited from the VI Department of Health's Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and VI Department of Human Services' Head Start Program bus drivers.

*As identified in the FY2024 OHS Annual Report, the challenge of keeping persons engaged in the life saving technician aspect of the CPS program require the following countermeasure strategy.*

- *Solicit the wider community for people interested and committed to training and retaining the CPS Technician status and working the initiatives.*

**Fitting Stations** – The VIFEMS functioned as subrecipient for the CPS Fitting Stations Projects and was instrumental in providing space and manpower needed to support the movement and storage of seats purchased for community distribution. The FY2024 cohort of CPS Technicians was primarily comprised of VIFEMS firefighters. However, participation of VIFEMS technicians across cohorts continues to be low, despite the committed stance taken by the agency's Director.

New CPSTs in the territory are encouraged to work in pairs on the worksite and to work alongside more experienced Technicians during community events to ensure safe delivery of services to the community. Two factors prevented VIOHS from establishing new fitting stations at VIFEMS, as

planned. First, the newly trained firefighters were selected from different stations and different shifts, preventing them from working in pairs to support their learning curve. Second, members of both and current VIFEMS cohorts were inactive in community events. The new Technicians, therefore, failed to gain the experience required to confidently work in isolation. These circumstances further delayed the establishment of additional CPS Fitting Stations.

Currently, the territory has **two active fitting stations – one on St. Croix at the VI Office of Highway Safety and the other on St. Thomas at the St. Thomas East End Medical Center.**

Despite community education efforts, the appetite for CPS services in the community remains low; current fitting stations receive few requests for car seat safety checks. Nevertheless, the program will strive to establish up to three more fitting stations throughout the territory – one on each island – based on placement of certified CPSTs. Additionally, the program will continue to provide at least 5 mobile inspection services throughout the community to encourage participation and increase awareness. Two of these community events will occur each on St. Thomas and St. Croix, and at least one on St. John.

The territory is considered rural; current fitting stations are strategically accessible to at-risk populations. The same strategy will be implemented when we establish new CPS Fitting Station locations.

*The countermeasures of education, outreach and distributing car safety seats to the underserved populace will continue as identified in the FY2024 annual report. OHS will continue its search and solicitation for additional active fitting stations in each district.*

**Child Passenger Safety** – Originally planned as Smart Start. Safe Start subrecipient-led projects, VIOHS transitioned to MOUs to work with the local hospitals. The MOU on St. Croix was fully executed with the Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center's neo-natal units to provide information and resources – car seats at no to low costs – for caregivers based on the socio-economic factors as determined by the facilities. The program continues to pursue an MOU with the Roy Lester Schneider Hospital on St. Thomas.

A custom-made instructional video was created for new mothers/families to view prior to discharge, The video details VI OP/CPS laws and the requirement to move from the infant seat through booster. It also walks the caregivers through the safe installation of the infant seat and positioning of the baby. Finally, the video shares the CPS support services offered through VIOHS through age 13 and beyond.

*Identified in the FY2024 Annual Report, this countermeasure will be utilized in the FT2026 project in the St. Croix district with the anticipation of expanding to the St. Thomas/St. John district.*

**Local and National Seat Belt Enforcement Activities 23 CFR 1300.21** - Enforcement efforts are critical to a successful Occupant Protection Program. VIOHS participates in the annual CIOT activities to provide both education and economic impact to non-compliant motorists. To execute these annual activities, the VIOHS collaborates with Traffic Enforcement Officers from the only law enforcement agency in the territory – the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD).

Delays in the posting of funds resulted in limited national mobilization activities during FY2025, Nonetheless, Traffic Commanders in both districts are committed to spending the funds with enforcement activities scheduled through September.

The OP Program will fund local CIOT activities during FY2026 through a territory project, combining funds for both districts. This strategy should expedite project approval, posting of funds, and processing of enforcement documents. All CIOT activities will be conducted in the territory's high crash corridors and will include a strong educational component to increase awareness and understanding of the risks of non-compliance. As usual, initiatives in each district will involve 2 supervisors and 8 officers and will take place during national mobilization periods – May 18-31, 2026, and during CPS Week, September 20-26, 2026. An additional 9 days per district are also budgeted for the Traffic Commanders to conduct enforcement during community events or in locations raising safety concerns.

**Non-CIOT Enforcement Activities 23 CFR 1300.21** - Seat belt enforcement efforts in the territory are not limited to CIOT mobilizations. In the St. Thomas/St. John District, Traffic Enforcement Officers of the VI Police Department, the sole law enforcement agency in the territory, will conduct non-CIOT enforcement efforts at the Fort Mylner intersection on the Rhymer Highway – a high crash corridor. This high traffic area is a major hub and provides access to the island's major shopping mall, car dealerships, banks, pharmacies, and fast-food options. For enforcement efforts, this area provides four strategic checkpoints.

In FY2024, the St. Thomas/St. John district recorded 66.10% of the territory's unrestrained crashes, 81.7% of unrestrained injuries, and 100.00% of unrestrained fatalities. This non-CIOT activity takes place during the height of the Carnival season. With increased traffic and prevalent risk-taking behaviors characteristic at this time of year, high-visibility enforcement will serve as a deterrent while encouraging seat belt compliance on this high traffic corridor.

Officer teams on St. Croix also conduct seat belt compliance checkpoints outside CIOT mobilizations. In addition to enforcement activities during major community events, officers can be seen on major thoroughfares as well as “back” roads.

*These strategies will continue in FY2025 because traffic enforcement should be continuous and technical force multipliers are not required for seatbelt enforcement.*

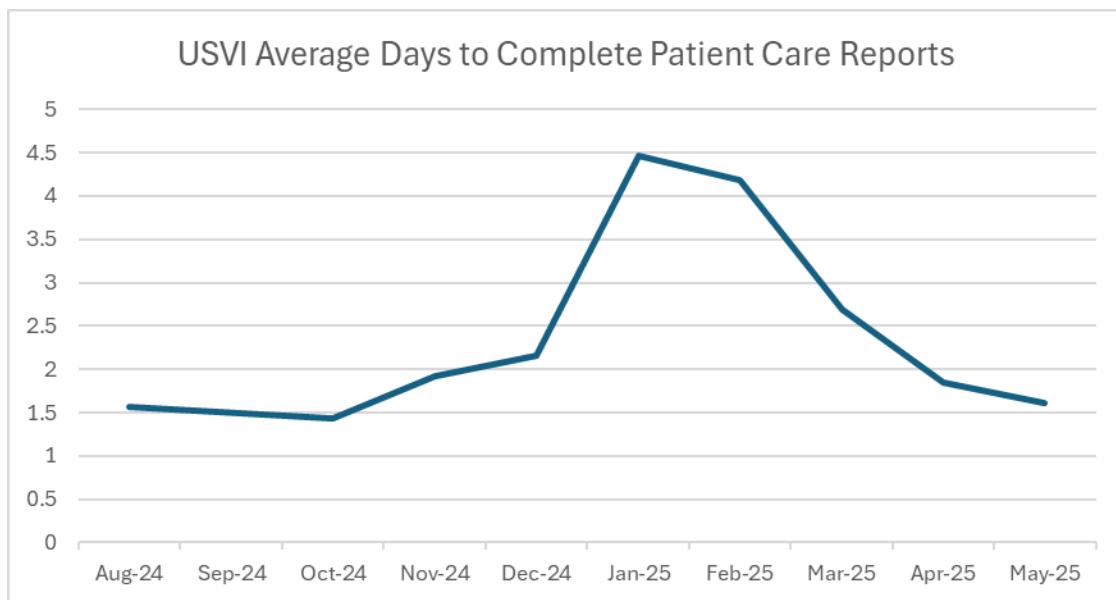
#### **Traffic Records Data – IIJA 405c DATA**

**VIPD - eCitation** – This project will support the continued maintenance and enhancement of the electronic citation, crash reporting, and commercial vehicle inspection form utilizing the Traffic and Criminal Software (TraCS). With the successful integration of the TraCS system and the Court's case management system (CTrack) now complete, future efforts will focus on expanding system interoperability. Planned integrations include the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) system, which will allow officers to access real-time driver and vehicle registration information directly from the field. Additional priorities include linking the red-light enforcement system and the Computer-Aided Dispatch/Records Management System (CAD/RMS). The CAD/RMS system is

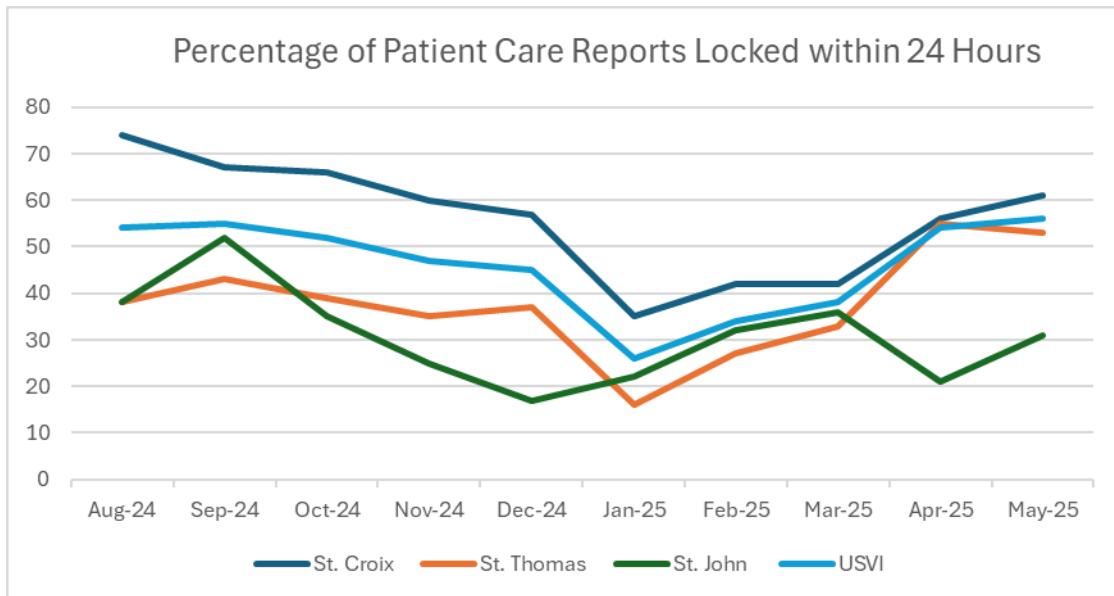
a critical component of the VIPD's operations, enabling real-time dispatching of officers, tracking of incident locations, and centralized management of reports, records, and investigative data.

**EMS – Time to Lock** – Through the Traffic Records' EMS Data Support Project, the VIOHS partnered with the VI Department of Health (DOH) and VI Fire and Emergency Medical Services (VIFEMS) to improve post-crash care. The goal of the project is to enhance the quality, completeness, and timeliness of emergency medical services (EMS) patient care reports, with a particular emphasis on improving time-to-lock rates—the time it takes to finalize a patient care report after responding to a call. Locking the case completes the file and makes data available to hospitals and in NEMSIS for use by both local and federal stakeholders, improving the continuity of patient care.

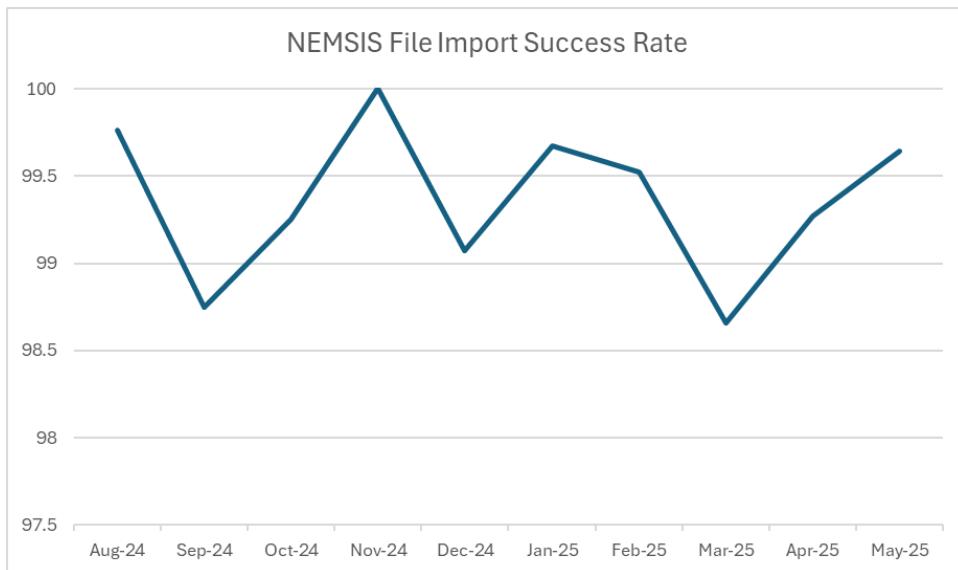
Data from August 2024 through May 2025 - show that the average days to complete patient care reports is 2.22 days. Monthly averages fluctuate between 1.4 and 4.5 days.



The percentage of patient care reports completed within 24 hours varied over the year. Success rates in St. Croix are higher than those in the St. Thomas/St. John district. Training will continue to be offered to improve outcomes in both districts.



Uploading cases into NEMSIS improves patient care by making patient data accessible to local practitioners and federal partners. Uploads fail when critical fields of information are omitted. Uploads are successful when all critical fields are completed. For the 12-month period depicted in the graph below, the USVI had a 99.32% average success rate.



***In the FY2024 Annual Report, the prioritization of timely documentation, and compliance with national data standards to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities continued using the FY2025 project. These countermeasures will continue in FY2026 with additional focus on training in both districts.***

**USVI Traffic Records Strategic Plan – Performance Measures with quantitative improvement in the preceding 12 months** – The USVI showed measurable improvements in the following data systems:

- **Crash System** – showed a 99.7% improvement in short term – accuracy measurement for crash reports with no missing critical location data. However, the midterm measurement of timeliness of average days between crash date and date of crash report submission did not meet either the baseline (10 days) or the target (5days). For the reporting period the average was 14 days.
- **Roadway Systems** – The short term – accuracy measurement for roadways with attributes that are consistently named met the target set for the island of St. John at 100% for street naming and addressing, St. Thomas at 51% for street naming and 20% for street addressing; and St. Croix at 45% for street naming and 20% for street addressing.
- **Injury System** – The midterm measurement for Completeness of EMS patient care reports (EMS) with no missing critical data elements improved to 99.36%.

Performance Measures- Crash System	
Short Term-Accuracy	Midterm-Timeliness
Percentage of crash reports with no missing critical location data.  Baseline: 37.2% (2021) Target: 90%	Average days between the crash date and the crash report submission.  Baseline: 10 Target: 5
Fiscal Year 2025 (as of June 30, 2025): 99.7% (note: street name was used as the criteria for critical location data).	Fiscal Year 2025 (as of June 30, 2025): 14.39 days
Performance Measures- Roadway System	
Short Term-Accuracy	
Percentage of roadways with attributes (i.e., real road names vs. actual road names) that are consistently named.  Baseline: St. John-75%, St. Thomas and St. Croix- 40 - 50% Target: 96%  Fiscal Year 2025 (as of March 2025): St. John street naming and addressing is 100% complete. St. Thomas - 51% of street naming completed and 20% of street addressing completed; St. Croix- 45% of street naming completed and 20% of street addressing completed.	
Performance Measures- Injury System	
Midterm-Completeness	
The percentage of EMS patient care reports with no missing critical data elements.  Baseline: 33% Target: 80%  Fiscal Year 2025 (as of May 31, 2025): 99.36%	

**BMV – BMV/Courts Integration** - The integration of the BMV and the Courts systems continues to enable the people of the territory to settle liens on vehicle titles, verify registrations, and to ensure drivers with traffic violations pay the required amounts before driver licenses can be renewed, or vehicle title transfers to occur if the title is not free and clear. This has improved from a wait time of 1 – 30 days to occurring in real time.

**BMV – Points System** - As stated above, with the integration of the BMV and Court system now functioning as planned, this project seeks to expand on its uses for improving traffic safety within the USVI by targeting driver behavior. The BMV plans to upgrade its current database system by the addition of a Point System module, which will utilize the linkage with the Court to capture traffic infractions conviction data and apply the assigned point(s) to the driver's records. This addition will improve the BMV's ability to effectively implement and manage the requirements for the USVI's Driver Points System. In addition to an effective point system, this module will also improve the accuracy, completeness, and accessibility of a driver's history for the key traffic records data systems that are required to use the driver information.

The points will be assigned based on the Virgin Islands Code, Title 20 Chapter 51 §801 – 803.

## **COUNTERMEASURES WHICH WORKED IN FY2025**

The following countermeasures will not be changed in FY2026.

**Highway Safety Project Management** – The VIOHS continues to manage all programs, and the related projects funded by the grant awards by NHTSA. It is necessary to continue this countermeasure for effective utilization of funds.

**Occupant Protection Observational Survey** – The mandated annual observational survey will be conducted in FY2025 with the selected contractor with whom the VIOHS has a one-year agreement.

**Occupant Protection Program Management** - The Car Seat Loaner Program, through the efforts of local CPSTs, distributed 336 car and booster seats to community members in need. Distribution efforts included a custom online training video and one-on-one caregiver/CPST training for safe installation of the safety seat received through the program.

**Communication, Outreach & Education** – This countermeasure continues to be highly effective throughout the territory for various programs and their related projects. It proved effective in Occupant Protection, Alcohol/Impaired Driving, Heatstroke Prevention, Pedestrian Safety, Police Traffic Services (Speeding & Cyclists Safety).

## **FY2026 Planned Projects**

### **FY 2026 PROGRAM AREAS & RELATED PROJECTS**

See attached USVI Project Listing for FY2026 annual grant application.

## **Public Participation and Engagement**

### **FY2026 UPDATE**

The community voice is critical to the work of VIOHS. Traffic safety affects all residents and visitors to the territory; everyone uses the roads. VIOHS tracks local data and utilizes Countermeasures that Work to determine strategies and initiatives to employ that reduce roadway crashes, injuries and fatalities. However, it is best practice to seek additional, innovative solutions from the community most impacted.

Public Participation and Engagement sessions took place throughout the territory for the following target groups:

#### **New and Budding Drivers**

Teen drivers have the least experience on the roadways with the greatest confidence. Their self-perceived invincibility and defiant nature puts them at risk of increased crashes. In FY2024, teens represented 9% of all crashes with 456 crashes recorded involving teen drivers (ages 16-20). It is important for VIOHS to engage this tender group to determine the best way to get messages to them and to reduce their risks for crashes, injuries and fatalities.

The VIOHS, in conjunction with EZ Driving School of the Teen Drivers Outreach Program met with teens on St. Croix. The subrecipient opted to conduct the teen engagement on the first day of class. This proved to have benefits and drawbacks; the views shared by the teens were raw and unimpacted by learning gained through drivers' education. However, first-day jitters denied some of the teens the comfort needed to fully engage in the conversation. Nevertheless, hearty conversations and opinions across traffic safety topics were shared during the session.

When asked the age that they were first allowed to sit in the front seat, the teens offered ages from 8 to 11. The teens admitted that they did not know the legal age for front seat occupancy. When advised that it was 14, they guessed that the reasoning was due to the child's weight and height. The airbag threat to small bodies was explained. Discussion was had about airbags and the outcome for small bodies in a crash.

Two students raised their hands in response to a question about consistent seat belt use. Most admitted that they were less likely to wear a seat belt in the rear. The group discussed local laws for riding restrained. The students said that their chances of getting in a crash were low. Learning about the actual number of crashes recorded in the territory served as a reality check for teens.

When asked about OP messaging efforts, mixed responses were offered. Those exposed to local messaging mentioned platforms of radio, signs, TV, You Tubes. Students advised that scare tactics and graphic content would be most effective media strategies in convincing teens to buckle up. They also cited testimonials as a persuasive strategy. It was recommended that ads be placed on Instagram and Snapchat. A couple of the students reported that Isle 95 was the station of choice

for radio. When asked about convincing the older generations to buckle up, teens felt that parents would not listen to their traffic guidance. They suggested that messaging geared to the older community be made personal – i.e., think about your kids.

The youngsters admitted that they were in high and middle school when they were first offered drugs. They felt that alcohol would be more widely offered, and most had been offered alcohol by family members as children (age 8 or less). They advised that local vendors rarely ask minors, buying alcohol for IDs. Those interested in Cops in Shops were told to give their contact information to their instructor.

The teens were asked if they were ever put in a situation where they were transported by an intoxicated driver. None had the experience. However, if they were in the situation, they stated that they would ask to drive or call for a ride. The instructor shared an account where she was forced to ride with an intoxicated boat captain and how the incident changed how she handles intoxicated drivers since. Jah’Niqua’s Law, which penalizes intoxicated drivers that cause injury or death to pay child support for surviving dependents until age 19, was discussed to add to the consequences for this risky behavior.

Similar questions to messaging were asked about impaired driving. Although they had heard the ads, they felt that people would inevitably make their own choices. However, they recommended that the ads be placed by bars. They also felt that bartenders should be responsible for overselling alcohol to crash victims.

To improve outcomes for pedestrians, the teens suggested increased education for drivers and pedestrians. They also recommended increased citations for traffic infractions. They noted that pedestrians are generally unsafe due to insufficient crosswalks and sidewalks.

Finally, when asked what they might do to improve roadway safety for all road users, they said that they would encourage parents and friends to make safer road choices, give them tips, remind adults that they have children to take care of, and to be safe. The students also reported that they feel empowered to speak up when they feel unsafe.

### **Males Motorists**

Sessions were conducted at organizations with predominantly male employees, including the Water and Power Authority (WAPA) in both the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John districts, and Diageo, USVI in the St. Croix district. These groups have been identified as exhibiting the highest-risk behaviors related to seatbelt use, speeding, and driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs. During the sessions, participants were asked to provide recommendations for effective messaging strategies for the VIOHS. Consistent with previous findings and data provided, the group strongly emphasized that graphic and impactful displays of traffic safety outcomes would be the most effective approach in changing local risky driving behaviors. The participants also indicated that they would be more receptive to messaging delivered by younger voices, particularly

those under the age of 13. When it comes to peer influence, they expressed a preference for hearing messages from other males, stating that they would not be as responsive to messaging from women. The participants recommended several local safety messaging phrases, including:

- ***"Who Don't Hear, Does Feel"***
- ***"Even Steal Bends in a Crash, Buckle Up"***
- ***"Strong Enough to Buckle Up"***
- ***"Real Men, Real Smart"***
- ***"He Copies Everything You Do, Buckle Up for Him"***
- ***"Click It to Survive"***
- ***"If You Don't Want to End Up on a Meat Belt, Put on Your Seat Belt"***
- ***"A True Man Knows His Limits- Don't Drink and Drive."***
- ***"You're Not Invincible, But Your Seatbelt Is."***
- ***"Drive Like Your Family's Waiting for You."***
- ***"A Quick Glance is Just as Dangerous as Drunk Driving."***
- ***"You're Not Invincible, But Your Decision to Stay Sober Is."***

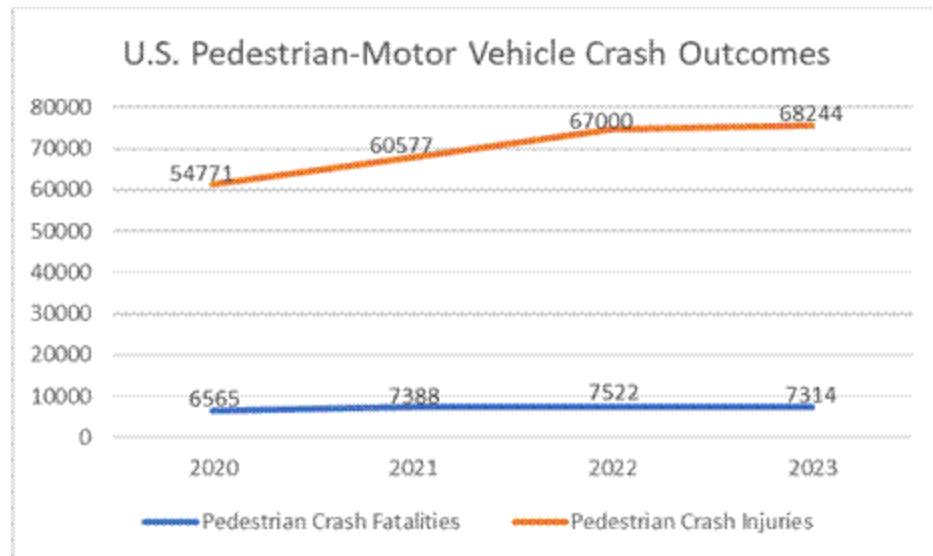
Additionally, new myths surrounding sobering up to drive were discussed. These included misconceptions such as drinking sea water, driving with one eye closed, eating spicy or salty foods, dancing to "sweat it out," and consuming soft drinks. Participants were also largely unaware of local speed limits, particularly concerning issues given the involvement of commercial vehicle operators.

Despite the ongoing safety campaigns, Traffic Safety Managers report that many male drivers continue to exhibit a sense of invincibility, often justifying their risky behaviors behind the wheel. This persistent crisis of misinformation and reckless driving has prompted legislative action. Recently, the Senate introduced Jah'Niqua's Law, a pivotal measure that holds negligent and impaired drivers financially accountable for the victims and their dependents, aligning with existing safety laws and penalties. The Governor subsequently vetoed the bill, citing its limited scope and noting that it failed to address other serious offenses, such as intentional homicide.

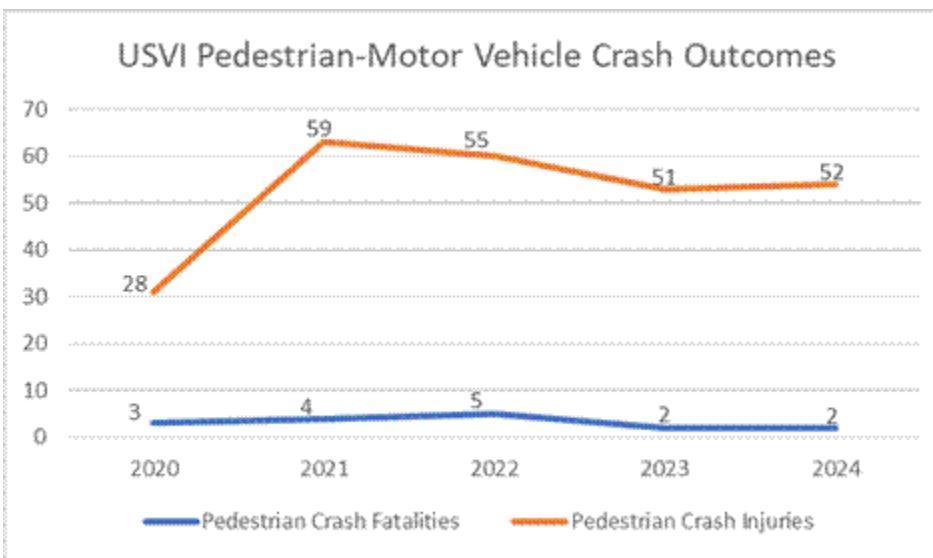
## **Vulnerable Road Users**

### **NHTSA-VIOHS Walking Safety Assessment**

Pedestrian safety is a dual responsibility shared by both motorists and pedestrians. Safely utilizing the roadways on foot is a basic human right. However, recently, pedestrian safety has become a growing concern across the nation. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) data, pedestrian-motor vehicle fatalities have increased 11.41 over a 4-year period (see below). During that time, pedestrian crash injuries also increased 24.60%.



In the territory, over the past four years the territory experienced a 11.86% decrease in pedestrian crash injuries and a 50.00% decrease in pedestrian crash fatalities. Nonetheless, the numbers remain staggering considering the size of the community. Current pedestrian injuries in the territory are 85.71% more than those recorded in 2020.



From FY2022 to FY2024, there were 222 pedestrian-motor vehicle crashes recorded in the territory. These crashes resulted in 9 fatalities and 162 injuries. Of these crashes, 145 (65.32%) occurred in the St. Thomas/St. John district. This district also accounted for 5 (55.56%) of the pedestrian fatalities and 120 (74.07%) of the pedestrian injuries recorded during the period. Seven (7) of these pedestrian-motor vehicle crashes occurred on Veterans Drive.



To mitigate risks for pedestrians in the territory. Office of Highway Safety partnered with NHTSA to conduct a Walking Safety Assessment of Veterans Drive, St. Thomas. Veterans Drive is a main thoroughfare on St. Thomas utilized by all island motorists when traversing from the east side of the island to the west. This roadway runs immediately south of downtown Charlotte Amalie – the territory's capital city, main center for commerce and a shopping haven for tourists. Additionally, cruise ships dock in Havensight Mall, and passengers walk on a 1.2 mile newly built promenade, which transitions onto sidewalks along Veterans Drive. This daily congestion of local and pedestrian tourists converging on this high-traffic roadway made Veterans Drive a prime location for a walking safety assessment.

Invitees to the Walking Safety Assessment hailed from various personal and professional backgrounds to achieve a comprehensive, multi-angled assessment of the walkway. Additionally, it was imperative that stakeholders responsible for resolving any identified issues were part of the process. In addition to government officials and politicians, the list of invitees included members of the media, avid walkers, cyclists and disability rights advocates. All invitees were community members who, despite their key roles, all used the targeted roadway for daily transit.

To observe traffic at varied times of day, two walks were conducted as follows:

- 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm Tuesday, October 29, 2024
- 7:00 am – 10:00 am Wednesday, October 30, 2024

Using a rubric, participants assessed the condition and availability of walkways, street crossings, road user behaviors, and transit areas. Several areas of concern were identified through the process to include the following issues:

- Sidewalk width was adequate on the harbor side of Veterans Drive for the volume of people observed, but on the northern/retail side of the street, sidewalks were not continuous, or where a sidewalk exists, insufficiently wide
- The Northern/retail side of the street offers no accommodation for people traveling in wheelchairs or with mobility or visual impairment
- Drainage grates in sidewalk on northern/retail side of the street pose sticking/falling hazards for people in wheelchairs and/or those who require walking assistance tools such as canes, as the drain holes are parallel to direction of travel and wider than a standard wheelchair wheel

- Sidewalks on both sides of the street were in a state of disrepair, with fissures, holes in the cement, utility poles in the center of the path, and uneven curb crossings, creating trip hazards for people of all abilities to walk or roll
- Vehicles were observed parking illegally on sidewalks, obstructing people's ability to walk or roll safely past. Metal plates intended to cover utility access have been warped and bent from vehicles parking on them, creating trip hazards for people walking.
- Neither sidewalks nor street crossings have infrastructure for the visually impaired, such as audible crossing signals, or ADA-compliant textured crossing surfaces
- There were few signals and directional signage for people who are walking, and at least three of the crossing signals were not functional
- Some signs are obscured by overgrown trees/foliage
- Street lighting is not continuous along the observed segment of Veterans Drive, creating a safety hazard for drivers navigating in low-light or dark conditions, and placing people outside vehicles at severe risk
- No bicycle lanes exist along Veterans Drive, forcing people on bicycles to either share travel lanes in a heavily congested area, or share limited travel space intended for people walking or rolling



Based on the issues identified, the assessment team drafted recommendations, including the most appropriate agency to lead and/or coordinate each activity. While the recommendations were not intended to be an exhaustive list of improvements needed, they hold promise to address the most pressing needs and have a significant impact on safety for people walking, bicycling or rolling. Recommendations included legislative reform, infrastructure repair and maintenance for crosswalks, sidewalks and crossing signals, media education campaigns, and high-visibility enforcement.

### **Incorporating PP&E Feedback into Action:**

As a direct response to the feedback provided through the male-focused sessions, a new PSA was created. The PSA features a young girl encouraging fathers to refrain from drinking and driving, a powerful message that aligns with the participants' recommendation for using young voices to promote safety. This PSA was set to broadcast on local radio stations, capitalizing on the persuasive impact of youth voices while reinforcing the message about responsible driving. Feedback from these sessions will continue to inform future VIOHS outreach strategies, media campaigns, and

other engagement efforts. The incorporation of such community-driven recommendations ensures that messaging resonates with local audiences.

Sessions with the teens revealed that the social media platforms currently utilized may be missing this targeted audience. The FY 2026 Teen Drivers Outreach Project, as a result, will implement the use of TikTok and Snapchat to specifically reach teens. Additionally, the teens' suggestions to help caregivers improve support for new teen drivers will be incorporated during the project's parent focus groups. These ideas included parent/teen driving contracts, listing and discussing consequences, providing safe driving incentives, having regular driving check-ins with teens and most importantly, following through with established consequences.

Based on the feedback received through the walking assessment, VIOHS will increase community education on safe ways for both motorists and pedestrians to utilize crosswalks and to endure safe crossing where crosswalks are not available. Pedestrians also require education on sidewalk use and how to safely navigate roads without sidewalks. VIOHS will also strengthen its relationship with the VI Department of Public Works to address infrastructure issues raised through VIOHS outreach and PP&E efforts.

Most PP&E meetings were held in ADA-compliant facilities, ensuring accessibility for all participants. To further support inclusivity, translation software was provided to assist individuals with limited English proficiency. While the WAPA building in the St. Croix district was not ADA compliant, the WAPA Safety Unit Manager assured VIOHS that no participants expected to attend had physical limitations. However, the WAPA Safety engagement in the St. Thomas/St. John district took place in a fully ADA-compliant facility.

## **VIPD Community Collaboration**

The VI Police Department (VIPD) and the VI Office of Highway Safety recognize the importance of building relationships with the community they serve. It is especially important that the officers of the VIPD are perceived as more than a punitive, often unwelcome force. Rather, officers are the VIPD should be embraced as community partners whose priority is to improve the quality of life for all.

In the realm of traffic safety, VIPD's Traffic Enforcement Officers have partnered with VIOHS to increase the impact of messaging that aims to shift the risk-taking behaviors that contribute to traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities. The field experiences and anecdotal data shared through these opportunities for community collaboration increase the relevance of the agency's educational efforts.

The community collaboration efforts conducted during FY 2025 were:

- Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) Inspectors presentations with Water and Power Authority (WAPA) June 11th, July 10th & 11th
- Traffic Safety with Our Seniors – June 14th Beeston Hill Wesleyan Holiness Church- 42 participants, senior citizens.
- St. Thomas/St. John VIPD Police Week Open House Collaboration

### **Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) Officers**

WAPA's public engagement with MCSAP Inspectors, led by Lt. Moorhead in the St. Croix district and Sgt. Lee-Bobb in the St. Thomas/John district, was a highly impactful session aimed at increasing awareness of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) safety, inspection procedures, and road rule compliance. Key topics covered included the importance of pre-trip inspections, proper vehicle documentation, and adherence to Hours of Service (HOS) regulations. The Inspectors also detailed the inspection process, focusing on what to look for during inspections such as checking tire conditions, brake performance, lights, load security, and potential leaks. A major point of discussion was the rules of the road, particularly the importance of maintaining safe speeds. CMVs are subject to specific speed limits that vary between highways and towns, officers explained that while speed limits for commercial vehicles are often higher on highways, they are generally lower in town and residential areas due to traffic density and pedestrian presence. The Inspectors emphasized the need for operators to adhere strictly to posted speed limits, such as going 10 miles per hour, as CMVs take longer to stop and are more prone to accidents when speeding.

The event had a significant positive impact on the audiences, with feedback indicating a deeper understanding of CMV safety protocols and regulations. Attendees, including fleet operators, truck drivers, mechanics, warehouse workers, water distribution, and linemen expressed a renewed commitment to regular vehicle inspections and more conscientious driving practices. Many participants recognized the need for enhanced training on safety standards and legal requirements, particularly with regard to speed limits and how they vary between highways and local areas. The open dialogue between MCSAP Inspectors and the public helped to build trust and encouraged the adoption of safer transportation practices. Key outcomes from the session included heightened

awareness of both the inspection process and critical road safety rules, such as adhering to appropriate speed limits, which plays a crucial role in reducing CMV-related crashes. Moving forward, additional outreach programs, as well as hands-on workshops, could further solidify these safety practices, boost community compliance with CMV regulations, and provide opportunities for organizations to engage MCSAP Inspectors in vehicle inspections to ensure ongoing safety and compliance.

Participants in both districts asked the MCSAP Inspectors to be more vigilant in inspecting motor vehicles, especially those from government and semi-autonomous agency fleets. Most expressed concerns of employer retaliation resulting from expressed concerns about CMV safety. Officers were asked to build closer relationships with management and to schedule periodic inspections. The officers provided their cell phones so that drivers could contact them for interventions when they feel their concerns are unaddressed.

### **Traffic Safety - A Senior Perspective**

Traffic Commander, Sergeant Arthur Joseph, received the opportunity to address the members of the Wesleyan Holiness Church on St. Croix. The interaction was delivered through an online platform, Zoom, to a primarily senior audience of 50 church members. The hour-long presentation was extended to 90 minutes due to the enthusiastic feedback and participation of the group. Requests for subsequent presentations were echoed following the session.

Sgt. Joseph began by providing the audience with traffic safety strategies most relevant to the group – seat belt compliance, focused driving, pedestrian safety, and safe speeds. For each traffic category, the VI Code reference was provided. Additionally, Sgt. Joseph discussed what motorists should do after a crash, including remaining at the scene. Distractions in the vehicle, including cell phone use, were discussed; the aged audience was instructed to refrain from using these devices and other in-vehicle distractions.

Child passenger safety was also covered for those who serve as caregivers, proving to be of significant interest. They were also advised that children riding in truck beds was unsafe and illegal. They were enlightened about the motorist's responsibility regarding pedestrians in crosswalks. They also expressed gratitude for the guidance provided on the safe way to navigate the roadways as a pedestrian- with and without sidewalks and crosswalks. Participants eagerly participated in the exchange.

Sgt. Joseph referenced relevant Virgin Islands traffic codes, covering topics such as pedestrian rights at crosswalks, ensuring valid vehicle registration and insurance, procedures following a crash, and leaving the scene of a crash. He also addressed several key traffic safety concerns expressed during the discussion, including the use of rear seat belts, window tint regulations, speeding, disabled and handicapped parking, and obstructing the flow of traffic. He also emphasized the importance of yielding at intersections where traffic lights are non-operational, as well as the dangers of driving under the influence (DUI). The primary concerns highlighted were speeding and improper seat belt use, particularly how seat belts are worn.

The seniors also expressed the need for education in parking, impeding and obstructing the normal flow of traffic, ways to wear the seatbelt safely, and determining who has the right of way when no traffic light is available. They also requested continued discussions and reminders on safe roadway strategies.

## Community Connect

During Police Week VIPD held an Open House where different divisions were represented in an open courtyard at B Command, Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas. The event was open to the community and intended to build healthy bridges between the department and the community while exposing the community to the services offered through the department. The Motor Carrier Traffic Commander, Sgt. Joycelyn Lee-Bobb, led the charge to showcase the services offered through the Office of Highway Safety and the Motor Carrier Assistance Program.

The display featured labeled display of car seats in varying stages. As a former Child Passenger Safety Technician, Sgt. Lee-Bobb explained to participating community members the ages and stages of the car seats and the benefits of rear and forward-facing positioning. She explained the laws that apply to CPS in the territory and how the laws apply to age, weight, and height. She discussed the front seat age requirement by law, and the reasons for the law. Additionally, through brochures and other handouts, she connected interested caregivers with the OP Program for further information, resources and support.

Conversations around the dangers of driving under the influence was significantly heightened with the display of the intoximeter, which sparked meaningful discussions. Officers explained the process that unfolds when a driver is stopped for suspected DUI, detailing the steps involved in assessing impairment. To provide a hands-on demonstration, a strip of tape was placed on the ground to simulate the Standard Field Sobriety Test (SFST), specifically the "*walk and turn*" test. Spectators had the unique opportunity to experience the test firsthand by wearing drug and alcohol simulation goggles, which simulate the physical and cognitive effects of impairment. This immersive experience allowed attendees to better understand the challenges faced by impaired drivers and the crucial role sobriety tests play in ensuring road safety.

Brochures and posters introduced and explained the commercial vehicle safety program. Emphasis was placed on the legal requirement for seat belt use and the hazards associated with speeding for CMVs.

Approximately 40-50 community members were engaged through the fair. Brochures and safe driving manuals from the various programs were provided to onlookers. Questions were asked, and Spanish-speaking and Haitian Creole-speaking officers were available to assist with translations for non-English speaking patrons.

The major messaging was seat belt compliance and sober driving. Questions from the community regarding seatbelts asked why compliance was required for rear seat riders. In addition to "it's the

law”, officers explained the hazards of getting into a crash while unrestrained. Questions regarding the requirement for motorists to participate in the SFST test were also posed. Consent, it was explained, is automatically assumed with license holders.

EXHIBITS:

1. LIST OF PROPOSED FY 2026 PROJECTS
2. USVI TRAFFIC RECORDS STRATEGIC PLAN
3. 2025 CRASH LOCATION DATA
4. 2025 CRASH REPORTING DAYS DATA
5. EMS PATIENT CARE REPORTS SUBMISSION DATA
6. USVI STREET ADDRESSING INITATIVE REPORT



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