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BVI Premier Natalio Wheatley, left, addresses Governor Albert Bryan Jr. during the Inter Virgin Islands Council Meetings in September at Government House on St. Thomas.

Governor Bryan Announces Agreement With BVI For Reciprocal Management of Charter Industry

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — After months of discussions and negotiations between the U.S. Virgin Islands and British Virgin Islands governments, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. is announcing that BVI Premier Natalio Wheatley and Deputy Premier Kye Rymer have agreed to a reciprocal regulatory program regarding Charter Boating in USVI and BVI waters.

The newly adopted system will permit BVI vessels to enter the USVI cruising waters, docks and marinas upon proper check-in compliance with Customs and Border Patrol stations and compliance with U.S. Coast Guard regulations upon showing of proper business license and vessel inspection in the BVI and payment of requisite entry fees or permitting in the USVI.

Likewise, the BVI will be permitting USVI-based and licensed vessels to use BVI territorial waters for day charters and term charters upon payment of the requisite fees and presentation of requisite licensing and vessel inspection documentation from the USVI. Other technical provisions also have to be developed.

“This reciprocal relationship restores friendly boating and use of each territory’s waters and picturesque scenery. Reciprocal arrangements for entry of water taxis and charter boats to pick up and drop off passengers in USVI and BVI waters and docks is also in process,” Governor Bryan said. “This has been a long developing arrangement based on mutual desires to enhance friendship between the two territories.”

While the reciprocal agreement has been a mutually desirable issue between the territories, discussions gained impetus and became a priority following the resumption of the Inter Virgin Islands Council Meetings in September.

At the first meeting of the two territorial governments since 2020, the Bryan-Roach Administration hosted Premier Wheatley and Deputy Premier Rymer and members of their administration at Government House on St. Thomas.

During those discussions, the USVI had advised the BVI government that, if they could not come to agreement on a reciprocal entry system, charter, water taxi and charter pick up and drop off vessels had to comply strictly with established provisions for doing business in the USVI and that such access and use was not for free and could be fully regulated by the USVI and federal government agencies.

Governor Bryan and Lt. Governor Tregenza A. Roach thank the Premier Wheatley and Deputy Premier Rymer for coming to agreement on new requirements for chartering in both waters that will benefit the economies of both the BVI and the USVI.

Premier Wheatley's announcement of the reciprocal agreement can be seen at fb.watch/gMCK0j10W0/

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov

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