

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

03/21/2016-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND  
JUDICIARY  
01/19/16-HELD IN COMMITTEE  
10/20/15-HELD IN COMMITTEE

**BILL NO. 31-0224**

**Thirty-first Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**September 9, 2015**

An Act amending V.I. Act No. 7453, Section 2(B) to amend the scope of the “2012 Police Fleet Project” to expand the intended use of proceeds of the 2012 Police Fleet Project to include the acquisition of vehicles and equipment for the Virgin Islands Police Department, the Virgin Islands Fire Services, the Virgin Islands Department of Health, the Office of the Medical Examiner within the Virgin Islands Department of Justice, the Virgin Islands Bureau of Corrections, and the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and authorize the establishment of a revolving credit facility, with a maximum principal amount outstanding at any time not to exceed \$10,000,000 (the “Emergency First Responder, Vehicles and Equipment Credit Facility”), and for other purposes

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**PROPOSED BY:** Senator Neville A. James by Request of the Governor  
Marvin A. Blyden

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1       **WHEREAS**, V.I. Act No. 7453 authorized the financing of the acquisition of  
2       certain police vehicles and related equipment, as required to comply with the collective  
3       bargaining agreement with the Virgin Islands Police Department, through the issuance by  
4       the Virgin Islands Public Finance, on behalf of the Government, of bonds or notes as set  
5       forth therein, in a maximum principal amount not to exceed \$7,000,000; and

6       **WHEREAS**, in May 2013, bonds were issued to finance the acquisition of such  
7       police vehicles and equipment; and

8       **WHEREAS**, there is a need for the acquisition of additional police vehicles for the  
9       Virgin Islands Police Department, emergency vehicles and equipment for the Virgin

1 Islands' first responders, vehicles and equipment for the Office of the Medical Examiner,  
2 vehicles and surveillance cameras and appurtenant systems for the Virgin Islands Bureau  
3 of Corrections, and ceremonial vehicles for the Governor And Lieutenant Governor (the  
4 "Emergency First Responders, Vehicles, Equipment Credit Facility"); and

5       **WHEREAS**, the effectiveness of our first responder is dependent on adequate  
6 resources; and

7       **WHEREAS**, the Virgin Islands Police Department is in need of unmarked  
8 interceptors, prison transportation vans, utility vehicles to combat crime, and professional  
9 development and consulting services; and

10       **WHEREAS**, the Virgin Islands Fire Department is in need of additional fire trucks,  
11 fire suppression equipment, support vehicles and other equipment to effectively respond to  
12 fire emergencies and assist in first responding to emergencies and potential disasters; and

13       **WHEREAS**, the Territory is in need of additional ambulances with modern  
14 equipment to adequately and effectively respond to medical emergencies; and

15       **WHEREAS**, the current fleet of ambulances in the Territory date back to 1999 and  
16 are insufficient to accomplish the Health Department's first responders' responsibilities;  
17 and

18       **WHEREAS**, it is necessary to properly equip the Virgin Islands Department of  
19 Health with ambulances and emergency response vehicles to provide timely emergency  
20 response services to the Territory; and

21       **WHEREAS**, the Medical Examiner provides substantial and critical forensic  
22 support to the administration of justice in the Territory; and

23       **WHEREAS**, the Medical Examiner severely lacks basic equipment such as  
24 Coroner's transportation vehicles to effectively carry out its duties; and

1           **WHEREAS**, it is necessary to properly equip the Medical Examiner to ensure that  
2 it is able to carry out its duties; and

3           **WHEREAS**, the Bureau of Corrections is in dire need of upgrading its fleet,  
4 including prisoner vehicles, and the acquisition and improvement of video surveillance  
5 systems at the Golden Grove facility and other Bureau of Corrections' facilities, to ensure  
6 adequate security at its facilities; and

7           **WHEREAS**, official vehicles in the ceremonial fleets of the Office of the Governor  
8 and the Office of the Lieutenant are in a state of disrepair, and in some cases non-existent,  
9 and it is necessary to replace such vehicles; and

10          **WHEREAS**, given the recurring need for such emergency first responder vehicles  
11 and equipment and ceremonial official vehicles for the Governor and Lieutenant Governor,  
12 the establishment of a revolving credit facility will enable the Governor to more effectively  
13 manage the acquisition of such essential vehicles and equipment to assist its police officers,  
14 first responders, and correction officers to ensure public safety; and

15          **WHEREAS**, to accomplish the objectives of this bill, it is necessary to amend V.I.  
16 Act No. 7453, Section 2(B), to expand the scope of the 2012 Police Fleet Project, to  
17 authorize the establishment of a revolving credit facility and to authorize the maximum  
18 principal amount outstanding at any such time under such Emergency First Responder,  
19 Vehicle and Equipment Credit Facility to not exceed \$8,000,000; Now, Therefore,

20    ***Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:***

21          **SECTION 1.** Act No. 7453, section 2, is amended by striking all of the language  
22 in subsection (B) and inserting new language that reads as follows:

23          "The 'Emergency First Responder Fleet Project,' means the acquisition of: (i)  
24 police vehicles and related equipment, to include marked and unmarked police interceptors,  
25 K-9 interceptors, and marine unit vehicles, passenger wagons and prisoner wagons for the

1 Virgin Islands Police Department; (ii) vehicles and suppression equipment for the Virgin  
2 Islands Fire Department; (iii) ambulances and emergency medical support vehicles for the  
3 Virgin Islands Department of Health; (iv) transportation vehicles and other equipment  
4 attendant to the duties of the Office of the Medical Examiner within the Virgin Islands  
5 Department of Justice; (v) prisoner transport wagons, support vehicles, and security and  
6 video surveillance equipment, including video surveillance systems and appurtenant  
7 accessories, as well as construction of perimeter fencing to ensure adequate security at the  
8 facilities and appurtenant accessories for the Bureau of Correction; (vi) vehicles for the  
9 Government of the Virgin Islands; and (vii) heavy equipment and vehicles for road repairs,  
10 general and emergency management and hurricane restoration for the Department of Public  
11 Works at a cost of up to \$10,000,000.”

12       **SECTION 2.** (a) The Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority, on behalf of the  
13 Government of the Virgin Islands, may establish a multi-year revolving credit facility, to  
14 be known as the Emergency First Responder Credit Facility, with a maximum principal  
15 amount outstanding at any time not to exceed \$10,000,000 for an initial term not to exceed  
16 five years from the date of issuance of such credit facility, subject to automatic renewal for  
17 a three-year period and a second three-year renewal period, renewable at the option of the  
18 Legislature of the Virgin Islands. Subject to legislative enactment, there may be  
19 established one or more additional three-year renewal periods for the credit facility, or the  
20 facility may terminate, unless legislative action is taken.

21       (b) Not later than 90 days after the conclusion of the original term and each fiscal  
22 year thereafter, and for the life of the Emergency First Responder Credit Facility, the Office  
23 of Management and Budget and the Department of Property and Procurement shall submit  
24 to the Legislature an annual report delineating the demand for and estimated cost of

vehicles and equipment projected to be needed by each department from proceeds of the Emergency First Responder Credit Facility for the next succeeding fiscal year.

(c) The Emergency First Responder Credit Facility must:

(1) ensure a source of financing which enables the Departments of Police, Fire, Health, Public Works, and Property and Procurement, the Bureau of Corrections, and the Office of Management and Budget to manage more effectively the acquisition of the essential Emergency First Responder Fleet Project vehicles and equipment specified in section 2 (B) of Act No. 7453, as amended by section 1 of this Act, and assist police officers, first responders, the Office of the Medical Examiner, and correction officers to ensure public safety; and

(2) reduce the costs of issuance and enable the Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority to maximize savings.”

### **BILL SUMMARY**

This act in Section 1 amends Act No. 7453, Section 2(B), to expand the scope of the 2012 Police Fleet Project. Section 2 provides a source of funding for the recurring needs of first responders and executive officials for efficient and reliable vehicles and equipment and authorizes the Authority to establish the revolving Emergency First Responder, Vehicles and Equipment Credit Facility in a maximum principal amount outstanding at any time not to exceed \$10,000,000.

**BR15-0941/August 21, 2015/**

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