



VIRGIN ISLANDS PORT AUTHORITY

ST. CROIX • ST. THOMAS • ST. JOHN UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
GATEWAYS TO THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS' ECONOMY

NEWS RELEASE

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AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TEMPORARILY CLOSED CEKA RUNWAY

(St. Thomas) The Cyril E. King Airport was temporarily closed at 5:36 a.m. today due to an aircraft accident. A privately-owned airplane destined for St. Croix skidded off the airport's taxiway into a grassy area adjacent to Runway 10-28 while taxiing for departure. The incident was apparently caused by mechanical failure. The plane's pilot was uninjured and there were no passengers on board at the time of the incident. The six-seat Piper Aztec model aircraft with the tail number N269KW is a twin-piston plane registered to Executive AirShares, LLC.

The incident occurred at approximately 2:30 a.m. The pilot notified the owner of the plane who contacted the Virgin Islands Port Authority airport operations to alert them of the accident. VIPA's Airport Rescue Firefighters were notified and responded to the incident immediately. They were assisted by VIPA's Port Police, airport operations staff and St. Thomas Jet Center – a Fix Based Operator at CEKA that provides services for private planes. The aircraft was towed to a secure location on the northern ramp at CEKA.

The airport was reopened at 8:20 a.m., said VIPA's Airport Manager Jerome Sheridan. He added that the incident has been reported to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and will be further investigated by the FAA's Flight Standards District Office. The incident did cause some flight delays. Sheridan said that a cargo plane scheduled to arrive in St. Thomas this morning was temporarily diverted to the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix. Cape Air, JetBlue and a private flight were also delayed due to the temporary airport closure.

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The Virgin Islands Port Authority (VIPA) is an autonomous, self-sustaining government agency established in 1969 as the owner and manager of the United States Virgin Island's airports and seaports. VIPA owns and manages 14 seaports, two airports, and surrounding properties. It is a critical arm of the USVI's economy that facilitates travel and commerce and fosters tourism and economic growth via its port activities. VIPA's mandate is to develop and maintain the ports of the USVI to accommodate the current and future demands of our users, and to provide safe port facilities. Follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).