ROYAL ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES POLICE FORCE

Public Relations and Complaints Department
P.O. Box 835
Kingstown
Tel: (1-784) 485-6891 or (1-784) 485-6697 or (1-784) 457-1211 Fax: (1-784) 456-2816
Email: relations.complaints@gmail.com

Your Reference:

PRESS RELEASE

SVG COAST GUARD OFFICER COMPLETES HEMISPHERIC MARITIME SECURITY TRAINING

October 9, 2026 – Kingstown: For Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, maritime security is not an abstract concern. As an island state, the country depends heavily on the sea for trade, movement and economic activity, while also confronting the reality that the same maritime space can be exploited by transnational criminal networks.

Against that backdrop, Sub Lieutenant Ceilia Charles of the SVG Coast Guard Service recently completed a Maritime Security Policy Course coordinated by the William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies in Norfolk, Virginia, United States.

The programme, held from September 21 to 25, brought together more than 40 participants from CARICOM Member States, Latin America and South America, with participants ranging in rank from Sergeant to General.

Training focused heavily on maritime domain awareness, transnational organised crime, regional cooperation and the ways in which countries and security agencies can work together to disrupt criminal networks operating across borders.

Participants also examined maritime commerce, illicit maritime activity, maritime law, riverine security, national security policy, United States maritime security and the legal frameworks that support cooperation among states.

For Sub Lieutenant Charles, one of the major takeaways from the programme was the importance of partnership.

The course repeatedly challenged participants to consider how countries and agencies can share information, coordinate operations and respond effectively to maritime threats while remaining guided by the treaties, Memoranda of Understanding and bilateral agreements governing regional security cooperation.

That aspect of the training carries particular relevance for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines as a Member State of the Regional Security System.

Participants were also placed into breakout groups and presented with practical maritime security scenarios which required them to develop coordinated responses to complex operational problems.

The programme extended beyond the classroom. Participants visited Naval Station Norfolk, where they toured a United States Navy destroyer and aircraft carrier, and also visited U.S. Coast Guard Base Portsmouth/Sector Virginia, gaining further exposure to maritime security operations.

Sub Lieutenant Charles described the training as highly informative and valuable, particularly for officers involved in planning, coordination and policy development. She has recommended that other senior personnel with responsibilities in those areas be considered for similar training.

The course concluded on September 25 with a graduation ceremony and the presentation of certificates of participation.

The High Command and rank and file of the Royal Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force congratulate Sub Lieutenant Ceilia Charles on successfully completing the programme and commend her for representing the SVG Coast Guard Service and the wider organisation with professionalism and distinction.

The knowledge, professional exposure and regional connections gained through the programme are expected to support the continued development of the SVG Coast Guard Service and strengthen its contribution to national and regional maritime security.

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