



**ROYAL ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES POLICE FORCE**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**COAST GUARD SUB-BASE ON BEQUIA RECOMMISSIONED**

**January 3, 2023, Kingstown** – The Ministry of National Security in collaboration with the Office of the Deputy Director of Grenadines Affairs has re-established the Northern Grenadines sub-base of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Coast Guard Service on Bequia. The operations, which were initially established in 2013, recommenced on 12th December 2022, after a four (4) years suspension.

On Thursday 29th December 2022 at 10:00 a.m., a flag-raising ceremony to officially signal the resumption of operation of the base was held on the grounds of the Bequia Revenue Office Complex, Port Elizabeth.

Senior government officials including the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Colin John, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, Mr. Hudson Nedd, Lieutenant Commander Ralphie Ragguette of the SVG Coast Guard, and Mr. Carlos Williams, Deputy Director of Grenadines Affairs were in attendance among others.

In his remarks, Commissioner of Police, Mr. Colin John highlighted the importance of safeguarding the security of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) and the role which the Coast Guard plays in doing so.

The Commissioner emphasized that security is very vital to the economy of SVG. “SVG is surrounded by water. We are blessed with many lovely beaches which can also be a burden. This can happen when people with less than noble intentions utilize our beaches to conduct nefarious activities such as gun, human, and drug trafficking”, said the Commissioner.

The Commissioner pointed out some of the responsibilities that the Coast Guard undertakes to secure our borders from criminals. In doing so, Mr. John said that the Coast Guard assists greatly in the preventative aspect of policing through its strategic and target marine patrols which helps to curtail and prevent incidents of yacht breaking.

The Commissioner also lauded the Coast Guard for the number of medical evacuations it carries out throughout the year from the Grenadines to the Mainland and other countries in the region. “I can immediately recall two instances where the Coast Guard transported two fishermen from the Grenadines to Grenada to undergo treatment for decompression sickness ‘bends’ and their lives were saved because of that”, said Commissioner John. “In cases of emergency, minutes matters. Minutes can mean life or death”, he further said.

The SVG Coast Guard operates two (2) sub-bases in the Grenadines. The other one is on the island of Canouan.

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