



OFFICE OF  
THE COMMISSIONER

GOVERNMENT OF  
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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January 11, 2016

**COMMISSIONER JAMES EXTENDS CONDOLENCES ON THE  
PASSING OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WORKS FAMILY**

ST. CROIX -- Commissioner Gustav James offered his sympathy to the family and friends of the late Leo H. Francis, Antonio "Tony" Messer and Dale Romney who all passed recently.

Leo Francis served as Assistant Commissioner from August 21, 1987 through December 3, 1988, when he became the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Public Works. On August 15, 1989, during the Farrelly/Hodge administration, Mr. Francis was named Commissioner; he led the Department with distinction until January 14, 1995.

Mr. Francis earned a Bachelor's Degree in Physics/Engineering from Pepperdine University in 1967 and worked in the Aerospace and Construction Industry as a Project Manager and Consultant.

Antonio Messer served as Deputy Commissioner of Operations for Frederiksted from October 1995 through January 1999. He then served as Deputy Commissioner of St. Croix Operations, from January 2003 through January 2007.

An avid local sports fan and entrepreneur, Mr. Messer was the owner of Tony's Laundromat in Frederiksted. Prior to his government service he also worked for Ann Abramson Enterprises Inc. and at Paradise Waste Management System after his public service.

Dale Romney served as a Heavy Equipment Operator I from Sept 17, 2007 through January 9, 2016 (the date of his passing).

Mr. Romney was an extremely dedicated employee who often went above and beyond the call of duty to get the job done. During the passage of Tropical Storm Erica he single-handedly cleared the roadways between Mon Bijou and the department's headquarters in Anna's Hope. He was a very meticulous worker.

On behalf of our Public Works family Commissioner James offered his deepest condolences to their loved ones and friends.

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UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS