

The attached photo shows the typical scene in Vieques as the cargo ferry unloads in town. Every truck must cross the bridge next to the dock. Two years ago, DTOP made some minor repairs to the bridge and tested it, posting the 15 ton limit. Many of the trucks that deliver the needed supplies to us have empty weights approaching or exceeding the gross weight limits. A fuel tanker (with 9000 gallons of fuel weighing approximately 60,000 pounds) weighs 3 times the rated limit. 4 Axle material supply trucks, construction trucks, and others also greatly exceed the limits daily. I asked the head of DTOP (Miguel Torres) about this in early 2013 during one of his visits here, and he said that they were working on trying to get the short route for cargo ASAP, which he said would be completed in 2014. Based on recent reports, it appears that this isn't happening any time soon.



From several different newspaper articles, we know that the cost of preparing the two piers (Mosquito and Ceiba) is between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000. We have also been told that the Feds will pick up 80%, leaving ATM responsible for \$100,000 to \$200,000. We know from ATM cash flow projections for 2011 that the actual fuel costs were \$450,000 per month for the entire system, and one could estimate that a third or more of that is for Vieques. Therefore, with the short route being a third of the distance, it would stand to reason that the fuel savings would pay for the improvements in 1 or 2 months, and save the ATM \$1,000,000 per year thereafter.

So, you've got to wonder why the government is so willing to risk the safety and wellbeing of our little island in order NOT to save money they claim they don't have! Feel free to pick parts of this and "tweet" it appropriately.