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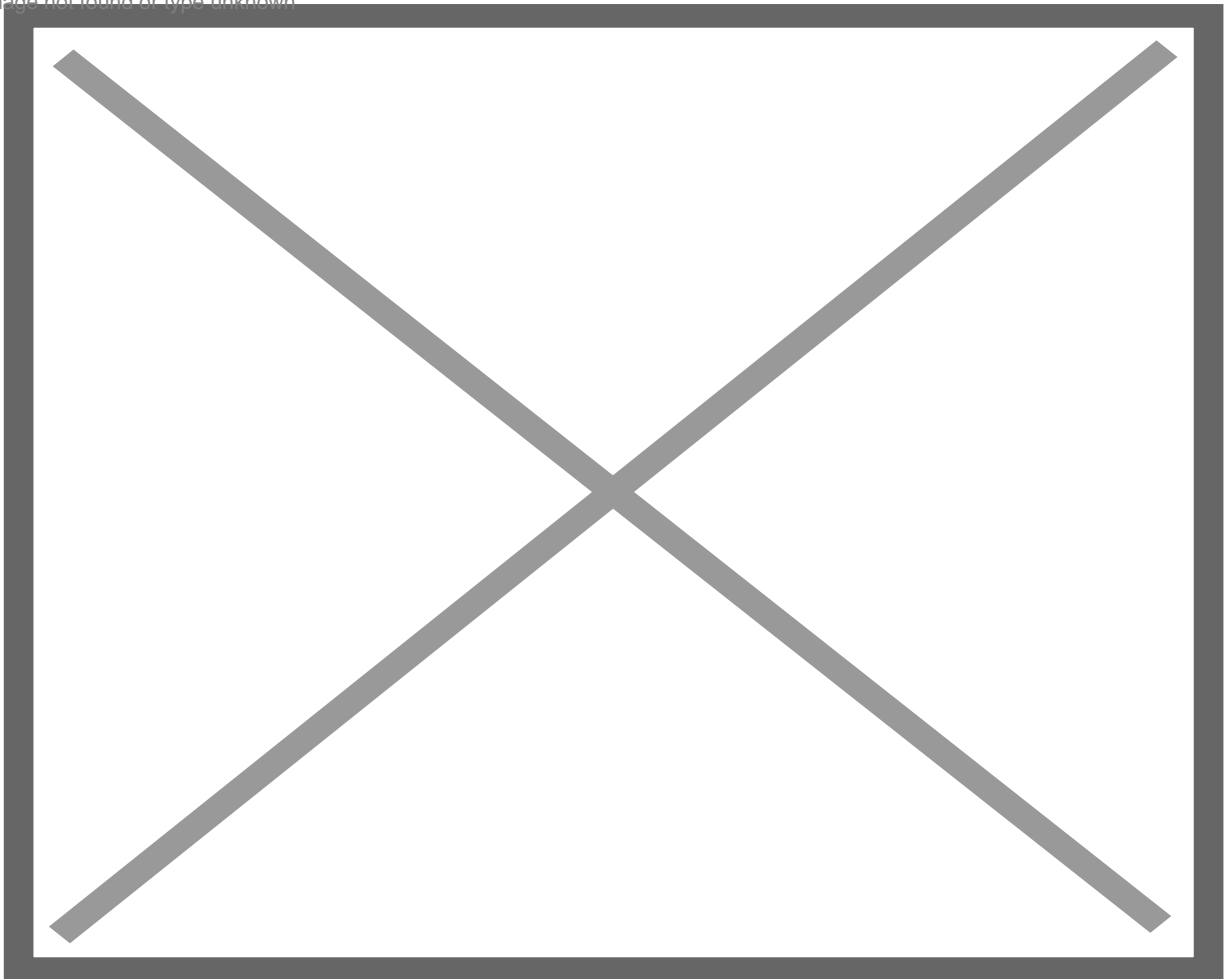
Police Escape Injury as Man Attempts to Drive Through Active Crime Scene

Driver ignores police instructions, attempts to plow through Prince Street crime scene

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Janeka Simon **December 05, 2023**

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Mugshot of James Thomas. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — A man who reportedly tried to drive through a crime scene — almost running over several police officers in the process — is now facing felony assault charges before the V.I. Superior Court.

According to court documents, just before 4:30 a.m. on December 2, police officers were dispatched to a location on Prince Street, Christiansted, to investigate reports of shots fired. When they arrived at the scene, they noticed spent shell casings scattered across the roadway, and

proceeded to secure the area.

One police officer spotted a man, later identified as James Thomas, about to enter his vehicle which was parked facing the crime scene. The officer told Thomas that he would have to reverse and go over the hill on Strand Street to exit the area, but Thomas reportedly insisted that he would drive straight forward instead, ignoring the officer's advice that ahead of them was an active crime scene.

Thomas reportedly began arguing with the police officer, using profanities and, according to police, admitted that his car wasn't "legal". Thomas is said to have refused to hand over his license, registration and insurance documents, and also reportedly ignored instructions to remain outside of the vehicle.

According to court documents, Thomas reportedly clambered into the driver's side, locked the door, and began to drive straight towards another officer and forensic technician who were in the roadway processing the crime scene. The VIPD officials reportedly had to jump out of the way to avoid being mowed down by Thomas, who was forced to a stop moments later because a police cruiser had been parked middle of the road to prevent access to the crime scene.

Thomas again refused to leave the vehicle, telling officers that his vehicle was unable to go in reverse. Having eventually exited his green Toyota Tundra, Thomas was placed in handcuffs and detained after some difficulty by police.

He was ultimately arrested and charged with third-degree assault, aggravated assault and battery, interfering with an officer discharging his duty, and disobeying the order of a policeman.

Records of Thomas's advice of rights hearing on Monday have not yet been made available to the public, however information from the courts indicates that Magistrate Yolán Brow Ross ordered a cash component of \$500 as part of his bail requirement.