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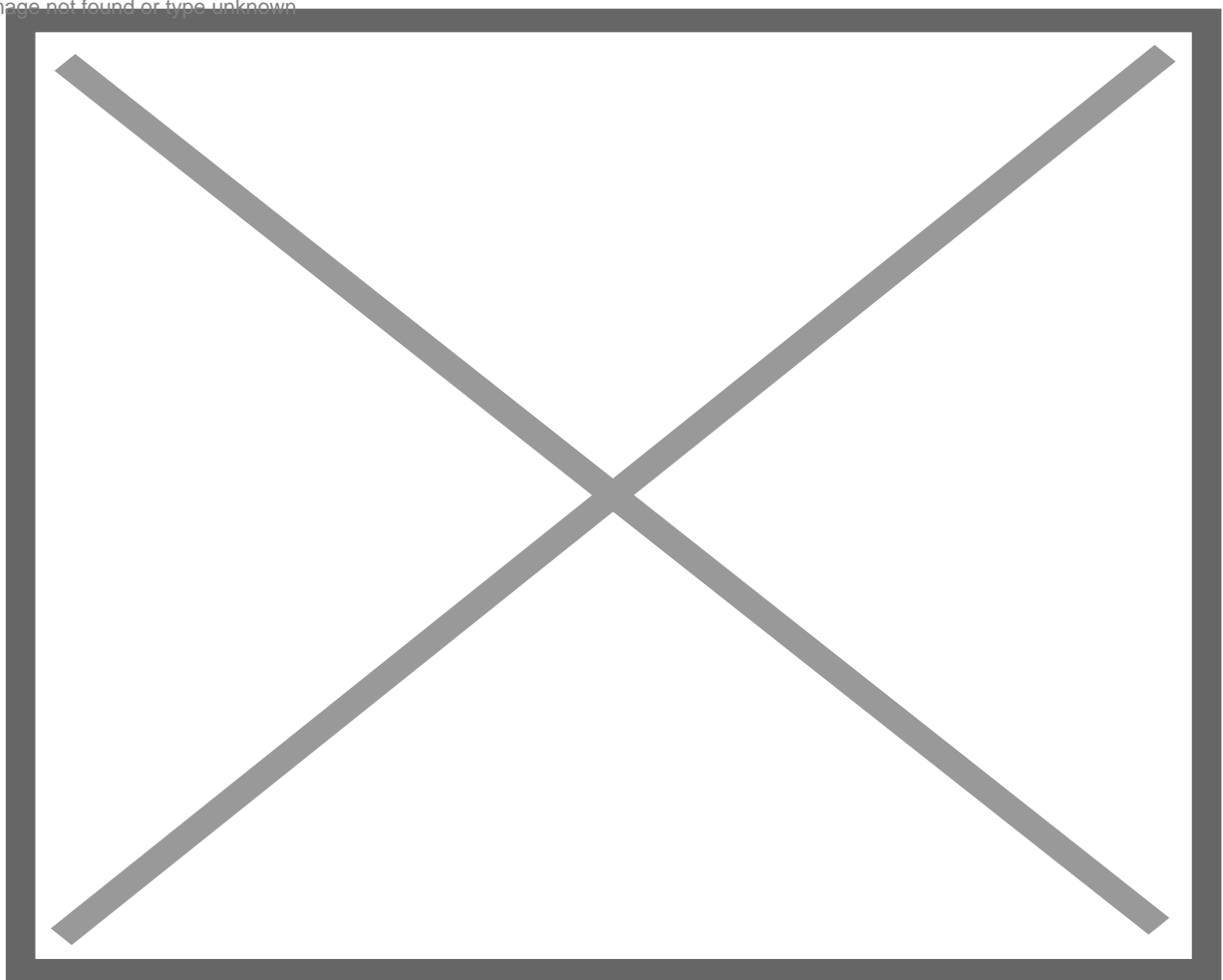
Violent Jewelry Heist and Bar Robbery Tied to RICO Leader Paul Girard Result in Prison Term for Accomplice

Robberies orchestrated from prison by Paul Girard lead to significant sentence

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ST. CROIX — The U.S. Attorney's Office for the V.I. on Thursday announced that 28-year-old Wahilli James was sentenced to 72 months in prison for his role in a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO), led by Paul Girard from his prison cell.

United States Attorney Delia Smith made the announcement, saying that James confessed to participating in two armed robberies on behalf of the RICO enterprise – one in St. Thomas and another in St. Croix.

According to court documents, on September 16, 2013, James and other members of the RICO Enterprise robbed Gems and Gold Corner Jewelry in St Thomas. After entering the jewelry store, one of the robbers held a gun to the owner's head while James and others robbed the store of a large quantity of jewelry.

Again, on November 21, 2013, James and other Enterprise members robbed "They Say Bar" in St. Croix at gunpoint while wearing face masks to hide their identities, the court learned. During the armed robbery, the owner of They Say Bar was shot in the head by one of the robbers as he tried to prevent them from entering the bar.

James's 72-month sentence was adjusted by Judge Savage to give credit for time already served. He was also ordered to pay \$161,350.00 in restitution.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Virgin Islands Police Department, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Meredith Edwards and Criminal Division Trial Attorneys Christopher Taylor, Violent Crime and Racketeering Section, and Marie Zisa, Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section.

The investigation is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) investigation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks.