

The Virgin Islands Consortium

VIPD Preparing For Carnival Season, Announces Traffic Restrictions & DUI Checkpoints

St. Croix police chief unveils safety plans for 2023-2024 Crucian Christmas Festival

Carnival / **Published On December 18, 2023 08:42 PM /**

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Village at the 2022-2023 Crucian Christmas Festival. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

During Monday's Government House press briefing, St. Croix District Police Chief Sean Santos outlined the V.I. Police Department's plans for the upcoming festive season.

During the 2023-2024 Crucian Christmas Festival, "one of our key focuses is not only fun, but safety for our community members," he said, as he began his remarks. Chief Santos announced that traffic restrictions in Frederiksted would extend "as far as from

King Street, Queen Street, and Prince Street," with King and Prince streets becoming one-way lanes. The St. Croix police chief reassured motorists and pedestrians that officers would be stationed at key locations to assist with the safe movement of traffic through the town.

Along with providing assistance, he warned that the deployed officers would also be tasked with conducting traffic and DUI checkpoints. "If you're out there partying and having a great time, we want you to be safe," Chief Santos said, urging revelers and spectators to always identify a designated driver.

Parking infractions would also be heavily monitored, with double-parking and sidewalk parking in the Frederiksted and Christiansted town centers attracting fines and resulting in vehicles being towed at the owners' expense.

Road closures, Chief Santos noted, would be done according to the functions that are occurring in the area. "We will try our best not to shut down too many of our roadways as we go through the Christmas festival season," the police chief promised.

He noted that there was already a full complement of vendors along the parade routes, but asked all vendors no matter their location to be wary of alcohol sales to minors. "If you feel unsafe as far as selling alcohol to someone who you may feel is a minor, don't hesitate to check their ID or ask them for ID," Chief Santos said, advising that officials from the Department of Health and the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs would be on hand to help with preventing minors from getting access to alcohol.

The mobile command police station that will be operational at the Festival Village site is for the "safety and security" of festival goers, the police chief noted. In addition to the 24-hour surveillance covering the event area itself, officers will be on hand to respond to citizens' requests for help. "If you have any issues, if you see anything, say something," Chief Santos urged.

He reminded residents that the practice of celebratory gunfire on the night of December 31 is illegal and will not be tolerated by authorities. "If we do catch somebody...you will be arrested," the police chief declared, promising that even if all that is found are shell casings, the VIPD would make every effort to trace them and arrest the individual(s) responsible.

Echoing the sentiments of Chief Santos, Governor Albert Bryan also urged partygoers to leave their weapons behind. "Leave all of the mess at home, don't bring guns to the village," he urged.