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Update: Police Commissioner Back on Job After 3-Day Leave Following Officer Involved Shooting

Police Commissioner Martinez leave as investigation into weapon discharge unfolds

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V.I. Police Commissioner Ray Martinez. By. VIPD

Last updated at 7:36 p.m. on Tuesday, March 26, 2024.

ST. THOMAS — The V.I. Police Department announced on Tuesday afternoon that Police Commissioner Ray Martinez was placed on administrative leave with pay for three days, following an incident on March 5 in Hull Bay. The Consortium has learned that Mr. Martinez discharged his weapon during the pursuit of Mohammed Salem, who was wanted for [the stabbing death of his father](#) earlier that day. The suspect had fled from the scene of the crime—his father's

home.

There were no injuries reported during the pursuit of Mr. Salem. The VIPD provided the Consortium with updated information stating that the commissioner has since resumed his duties. Mr. Martinez had undergone a critical incident debriefing, according to the VIPD. This process involves a facilitator helping an individual work through their response to a highly stressful or traumatic event.

In an effort to ensure transparency and impartiality in the investigation, the VIPD said it has enlisted the services of Effective Law Enforcement for All (ELEFA), a reputable nonprofit organization known for its independent review of law enforcement activities.

ELEFA is tasked with conducting a thorough and independent analysis of the shooting incident. This organization brings together a team of experienced former police chiefs, senior law enforcement officials, and experts in policing practices. Their mission is to foster a better understanding, transparency, and trust between police entities and the communities they serve. Notably, ELEFA has contributed its expertise to several high-profile cases across the United States, including the implementation of a consent decree with the Minneapolis Police Department.

The VIPD said its decision to publicly disclose Mr. Martinez's involvement in the incident, contrary to the department's usual policy of not revealing the names of individuals in officer-involved shootings, serves to highlight the VIPD's commitment to an open and transparent investigation process. This move is particularly significant given Martinez's high-ranking position within the police force.

Following the ELEFA's review, the findings will be provided to the Office of the Governor and the VIPD upon the investigation's conclusion.