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Bar Altercation Leads to Discovery of Unauthorized Firearm on St. Croix

Police response to a Christiansted bar dispute uncovers firearm with Florida license, resulting in arrest

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Mugshot of Richard Pagan Sr. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX – A confrontation at a Christiansted bar on March 27 escalated into an arrest after police discovered the involved firearm's license was invalid in the Virgin Islands.

The suspect, identified as Richard Pagan Sr., presented a firearm license issued in Florida, which is not recognized in the territory.

According to court documents, police were dispatched to the bar following reports of a disturbance involving several individuals. Upon arrival, officers encountered two Hispanic men and Richard Pagan Sr., who was singled out by bystanders as being part of the altercation. The Hispanic men, after being searched by the police, were found to be unarmed and explained they were at the bar to sell car parts.

The situation escalated when Pagan, according to witnesses, became confrontational, brandishing his firearm at the men and demanding they leave the premises. Pagan defended his actions by alleging the men were harassing the female bartender and had made threats of possessing weapons in their vehicle.

Further details provided by Pagan depicted a chaotic scene where, after returning from the restroom, he witnessed one of the men attempting to assault a second bartender. Stepping in to intervene, Pagan claimed the aggression turned towards him, leading to a physical altercation where one of the men grabbed him by the shirt and threatened him with gun violence. This confrontation led Pagan to reveal his own firearm, escalating the situation further.

Upon reviewing Pagan's weapon, a black Springfield .45 caliber handgun loaded with six rounds and an additional license issued in Florida, police deemed it unauthorized for carry in the Virgin Islands. Pagan, who claimed to have purchased the gun from his son, a Superior Court Marshall, was arrested and charged with unauthorized possession of a firearm and ammunition.

In court, Magistrate Yolan Brow-Ross upheld the charges against Pagan, setting bail at \$50,000. A cash payment of \$1,000 made at the time of arrest was accepted for release ahead of trial, with the remainder as an unsecured bond. Pagan's next court appearance is scheduled for April 17, where the full details of the incident will be further examined.