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VIPD Anticipates Increase in Traffic Patrols Will Result in Reduction of Violent Crimes

Chief Sean Santos highlights focus on illegal ATVs, tinted windows, and unregistered vehicles, along with leveraging ShotSpotter technology to enhance safety and reduce homicides in the Virgin Islands

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Backed up traffic stretching from the Seaside supermarket in Mt. Welcome to the Bypass intersection. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

The V.I. Police Department is confident that their territory-wide effort to clamp down on traffic violations will bear fruit in reducing the scourge of violent crime in the Virgin Islands. That's according to Chief of Police for the St. Croix District, Sean Santos.

“These small initiatives usually result in gun arrests on the potential reduction of homicides in a territory,” he explained, speaking during the Government House weekly press briefing. The VIPD is making a more concerted effort to take action against infractions including “vehicles that are traveling our roadways that are heavily tinted, passengers operating vehicles without any seatbelts, [and] unregistered vehicles.” The police department also intends to crack down on the prevalence of illegal ATVs riding on roadways, and vehicles transporting children without the requisite protection, like seatbelts and car seats.

Additionally, VIPD is relying on technology at its disposal to keep the country safer. Chief among them is ShotSpotter, which detects the sound of gunshots and subsequently informs law enforcement of the location. The technology is regularly credited for arrest successes. “An arrest was made last night of two individuals where we recovered two ghost guns, one being a handgun and one being a rifle,” Chief Santos shared.

The two detainees had “destroyed different properties throughout the Gallows Bay area,” reported the police chief, further solidifying VIPD’s theory that “these small initiatives usually result in gun arrests and the potential reduction of homicides in a territory.”

Chief Santos stated that the homicides are “very well calculated,” suggesting that the perpetrators are “conducting surveillance on their opposing persons... All they need is that opportunity and planning.” Despite this, the police chief affirmed, “we continue to utilize our technology-driven strategies to ensure we could defeat these matters.”

VIPD is rallying Virgin Islanders to assist crime-fighting efforts as well. “We do have community members out there who are fully well aware [of] what’s going on,” he said, though noting the fear and hesitancy associated with coming forward.