

## Traffic Stop Leads to Discovery of Ghost Gun and Arrest on St. Croix

Police found Jose Pesante's hands shaking and his face sweating profusely before he admitted to carrying an unlicensed Glock 23 .40 caliber ghost gun, leading to his arrest and charges for illegal firearm possession.

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**Mugshot of Jose Pesante. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT**

ST. CROIX — A routine traffic stop initiated as part of the V.I. Police Department’s “Set De Tone” initiative led to the arrest of a man found in possession of an unregistered firearm.

The incident occurred on December 14 when officers on mobile patrol along Northside Road noticed a gold Toyota Tacoma exiting the G Max Service Station. The driver, identified as Jose

Pesante, was reportedly not wearing a seatbelt. After spotting the violation, officers observed Pesante make a sudden U-turn and return to the service station. Police then activated their emergency lights and conducted a traffic stop within the service station compound.

Upon approaching Pesante, officers informed him of the reason for the stop. As he handed over his documents, police noted that his hands were shaking, and he was sweating profusely on his face and neck. Detecting the scent of burned marijuana, officers asked if he had any additional marijuana in his possession. Pesante confirmed that he did and reportedly invited officers to “take a look” inside his vehicle.

Before conducting a pat-down search for officer safety, police say Pesante admitted to having a gun in his possession. He also informed them that he did not have a license to carry the firearm in the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to police reports, he stated that he was carrying the weapon for his protection.

Forensic technicians later identified the firearm as a "ghost gun," specifically a Glock 23 .40 caliber receiver that lacked a serial number. The weapon was loaded with a full 13-round magazine.

Pesante was immediately taken into custody and charged with unlawful possession of a firearm and possession of ammunition. He was remanded to custody after being unable to meet the initial \$50,000 bail set for his release.

At his first court appearance on Monday, Magistrate Judge Yolán Brow Ross found probable cause to uphold both charges. Judge Ross allowed Mr. Pesante to post 10% of the bail amount, with the remaining balance signed as an unsecured bond. Specific bail conditions were not detailed in the publicly-available court records at the time of reporting.

Pesante’s next court appearance is scheduled for December 31.