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St. Croix Man Arrested After Collision Leads to Discovery of Unlicensed Firearm

N'Fari Benjamin faces firearm charges after police found a pistol with no serial number in his truck following a three-car crash. He was detained after attempting to flee the scene and later released on modified bail

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Mugshot of N'Fari Benjamin. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — After a three-car collision last Friday, police arrested a man in whose truck they reportedly found an unlicensed firearm.

According to court documents, just before 1:00 a.m. on December 27, VIPD officers responded to an auto collision on the Queen Mary Highway near Karim Service Station. Two of the drivers

involved alerted them that a third driver had left the scene on foot.

Officers spotted the man nearby and ordered him to return to the scene of the accident. He reportedly identified himself as the owner of the red Ford pick-up involved in the collision, and told officers that he was not sure of how the vehicle got there. Sent to retrieve his paperwork for the vehicle, the man reportedly first checked the driver's side and then moved across to the passenger's side to continue his search.

Police, standing by the driver's side door, reportedly spotted a handgun on the floor of the truck, and immediately detained the driver. He reportedly stepped away from the officers several times while he was being questioned, before eventually taking off running. The man, ultimately identified as N'Fari Benjamin, did not make it far before being apprehended by one of the officers who gave chase.

Forensics technicians identified the firearm as a black pistol with no serial number, loaded with ten 9mm rounds in the magazine.

After determining that Benjamin, who has a prior felony conviction, does not have a license to carry a firearm in the Virgin Islands, he was arrested and charged with unlawful possession of a firearm, and unlawful possession of ammunition.

In court on Monday, Magistrate Yolán Brow Ross found probable cause to uphold both charges against Benjamin, and modified his initial \$50,000 bail to allow for the posting of \$2000 in cash to secure his release ahead of trial. The rest of the bail requirement will be signed as an unsecured bond.

The next court appearance for Mr. Benjamin is scheduled for January 15.