

Man Charged After Airport Officers Find Undeclared Ammunition in Checked Luggage

Akil Smith was arrested at CEKA after CBP officers found .380 ammunition and firearm attachments in his luggage and said he exited without declaring them. Smith, previously convicted in a firearm-smuggling case, now faces federal ammunition charges.

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The Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas, USVI. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM.

ST. THOMAS — A man accused of failing to declare ammunition after arriving at the Cyril E. King Airport is now facing federal charges, following an inspection that led authorities to question him and uncover additional firearm-related items. The case stems from a routine baggage check conducted by Customs and Border Protection officials.

According to federal documents, Akil Smith flew into St. Thomas on November 14 on a Spirit Airlines flight from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. After the aircraft landed, CBP officers inspected the checked luggage stored in the cargo hold. During that inspection, they discovered two boxes of .380 caliber ammunition—each containing 50 rounds—inside a bag belonging to Smith.

The luggage was then placed on the airport carousel as officers monitored the area. After Mr. Smith retrieved the bag, officials say he walked toward the airport's exit without stopping to declare the ammunition to the Virgin Islands Police Department, a requirement under local law. Officers approached him while he was standing at the taxi pickup area, confirmed the luggage was his, and escorted him to the secondary screening area.

A search conducted there revealed the ammunition along with multiple firearm attachments. Smith allegedly told officers that he had traveled from St. Thomas to Orlando earlier in the month, where he purchased the attachments, and that he bought the ammunition at a gun shop in Florida. He reportedly admitted that he intended to resell the items for profit.

Smith — who nearly a decade ago [pleaded guilty to smuggling 18 firearms into the territory](#) — was arrested and charged with unlawful possession of ammunition and possession of ammunition by a prohibited person. He made his initial appearance on Monday before U.S. Magistrate Judge Alan Teague. A federal public defender has been appointed to represent him.