

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Kentucky Man Charged After Undeclared Firearm Found During St. Thomas Departure Screening

A Kentucky resident faces three charges after officers found an undeclared firearm during departure screening on July 8. His bail was modified to \$5,000 cash, and he may remain in Kentucky while reporting to probation twice weekly by telephone as ordered.

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

ST. THOMAS — A Kentucky resident has been charged with firearm and ammunition offenses after Customs and Border Protection officers found a gun in luggage during departure screening on July 8 that had not been declared to American Airlines or at the

V.I. Police Department's firearm kiosk.

Lee Allen Sumner appeared before Magistrate Simone VanHolten-Turnbull on Thursday, when the judge found probable cause to uphold charges of failure to declare a firearm, unlawful possession of a firearm and unlawful possession of ammunition.

His initial \$25,000 bail requirement was modified to allow \$5,000 to be paid in cash, with the remainder posted as an unsecured bond.

Sumner was granted permission to reside in Kentucky while the case proceeds and may attend his July 24 arraignment by Zoom. He must report to the probation office by telephone twice each week and comply with all other standard bail conditions.

Customs and Border Protection officers contacted police on the afternoon of July 8 after an X-ray screening of Mr. Sumner, his wife and their luggage revealed what appeared to be a firearm in one of their bags.

A physical inspection conducted in the secondary screening area confirmed that the object was a firearm.

Authorities determined that the weapon had not been declared to American Airlines or at the VIPD firearm kiosk in the baggage claim area.

Sumner told police that he and his wife had arrived from Nashville, Tennessee, on July 3.

The couple said they had checked the American Airlines website to learn the procedure for traveling with firearms. They told police, however, that they did not know the airline had to be informed about the weapon.

They also said they were unaware that firearms must be declared at the VIPD kiosk.

Sumner was subsequently arrested and charged.