

The Virgin Islands Consortium

VIPD Leadership Seminar Takes Place Amid Spike In Violent Crime

VIC News / **Published On February 09, 2015 11:23 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **February 09, 2015**



The Virgin Islands Police Department recently held a week-long leadership seminar at the Emerald Beach Resort on St. Thomas that was tailored for persons holding managerial and supervisory positions on the force. This comes even as violent crime in the territory has been rampant in the first two months of the year.

The seminar was conducted by the FBI National Academy, which is a professional course of study for U.S. and international law enforcement leaders that serves to improve the administration of justice in police departments and agencies at home and abroad, and to raise law enforcement standards, knowledge, and cooperation worldwide, according to information released by the VIPD.

Courses, including ethics in policing, group dynamics, and civil rights and leadership, were presented with the goal of teaching participants how to develop a personal and organizational leadership strategy to best influence others, taking into account different behavioral types, skills and motivations, while applying these concepts to a law enforcement setting, according to Academy officials.

The leadership seminar commenced on St. Croix on Monday.

The island's Deputy Police Chief Arthur S. Hector, Sr., left the seminar briefly to appear at the scene of [a deadly shooting](#) in Estate Grove Place in the vicinity of the Eulalie Rivera Elementary School.

In the wake of the shooting, two former police officers who now serve as senators, have spoken out against the violence.

"I was quite alarmed when I received word of what was happening. My concern at the time was the safety and security of the students, faculty and staff at the school. I immediately went to the school itself and met with the school administrators. I was relieved to see that the school monitor had full control of the front gate area and there was a police presence on campus as the school had already implemented proper security protocol to safeguard the occupants," Sen. Kenneth Gittens said.

Sen. Novelle Francis, a former police commissioner and career law enforcement professional, said the situation is "heartbreaking" and that now is not the time to "point fingers."

"This is not the time to point fingers," Francis said. "It is heartbreaking every time a family loses a loved one to violent crime. My prayers are with the families of all who have lost someone to violent crime. Now is the time to come together as a community to address our issues with crime."

Monday's shooting death was the second on St. Croix this year. St. Thomas has recorded five homicides to date, and St. John recorded a negligent homicide stemming from a car crash that claimed the life of a teen.