

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Local Officers To Be Sent To New York In VIPD/NYPD Swap For Better Policing Experience

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Ernice Gilbert **May 27, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp said if things go as planned, some officers of the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) will be sent to New York to glean training from the New York Police Department (NYPD), learning new policing skills proven to be effective, as the governor continues his quest to find ways of better protecting the territory's residents from its criminal elements.

The announcement came on Tuesday at a swearing in ceremony for Mapp cabinet members Pedro Cruz and Delroy Richards, who took the oath of office for commissioner of Sports, Parks and Recreation and commissioner of the VIPD, respectively.

While the plans are still being formalized, Mapp said he intends to meet with the NYPD's commissioner on a trip to tour New York's police department later this year. Once there, the governor said a plan will be presented to the NYPD commissioner with the expectation that "we will be able to send some of our officers into New York City for several months at a time to work and to learn, and have officers from the NYPD come into the Virgin Islands to mentor and to lead," Mapp said.

The governor also said he intends to support the VIPD with access to technology, necessary training and financial support in relation to salary and incentive-based compensation.

In July, 40 officers who are members of what the governor called the 'school security squad', will head to Florida for training. The territory's leader also touched on an executive order [he intends to issue](#) that will effectively place the Virgin Islands Bureau of Information Technology (BIT) under the control of the Virgin islands Next Generation Network (viNGN), with language included in the order that would see the VIPD's commissioner becoming one of five oversight members of a commission Mapp is establishing.

According to the chief executive, the commission "will take on as a priority with BIT and viNGN the entire implementation and roll out of technology for police officers from the very business of their uniforms, to their vehicles, to a complete system in the department, so that we can connect law enforcement with data."

"When you call for help in the 911 center across this territory, that information needs to be in the chief's office the very next day so the chief can begin to understand what is happening in the community and how we deploy our resources to prevent crime," Mapp said.

It's an idea Commissioner Delroy Richards is in agreement with, promising to utilize technology to the utmost, because "today's criminals are technologically clever, even though the crimes are similar from those of years past," he said after taking the oath of office.

Richards added that the department must employ the use of technology to its advantage, "if we are to aggressively challenge the criminal elements."