

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Acting Governor Osbert Potter Declares State Of Emergency; Curfew Not Issued

VIC News / **Published On September 05, 2015 09:23 PM /**

Staff **September 05, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- Acting Governor Osbert Potter has declared a [state of emergency](#) over the territory following multiple gunfights occurring throughout the last 48 hours here, according to a press release Government House issued late Saturday.

But the state of emergency declaration does not include a curfew, Governor Kenneth Mapp's Communications Director, Kimberly Jones, confirmed to The Consortium. She did not, however, rule out the possibility.

"As the vicious cycle of senseless murders and gun play permeates our territory, I appeal to the residents of this community, who are the parents, relatives, friends, and associates

of the victims, to cooperate with and assist police and all law enforcement agencies in their efforts to solve these crimes," Potter said.

Potter revealed that there will be checkpoints at various locations around the island for the the next 48-72 hours. He also made known that all officers have been called to active duty, and will be placed on 12-hour shifts during the state of emergency.

"Since many of these violent crimes seem to be retaliatory in nature, we must, as a community, change the mindset of victims and their associates, who too often take it upon themselves to resolve matters on their own, as if to preserve some code of honor," the acting governor added. Governor Kenneth Mapp is [currently in New York](#) for the Labor Day Weekend festivities, and is expected to return to the territory on Sept. 9.

The state of emergency went into effect immediately and will continue "until further notice," according to the release. Potter also deputized peace officers as law enforcement officers, "to perform public safety functions as required by the Governor." The peace officers will report directly to VIPD Commissioner Delroy Richards, Sr.

"Unless we are able to discourage and overcome this misguided attempt to enforce 'street justice' among groups, gangs, and families, we will continue to bury more and more of our residents, particularly those among the young male population," Potter continued.

"The time has come, if we are to survive as a community, for each of us to demonstrate responsibility, and share what we know with our law enforcement community, and enable our duly authorized professionals to do the jobs which they have been trained to do," he concluded.