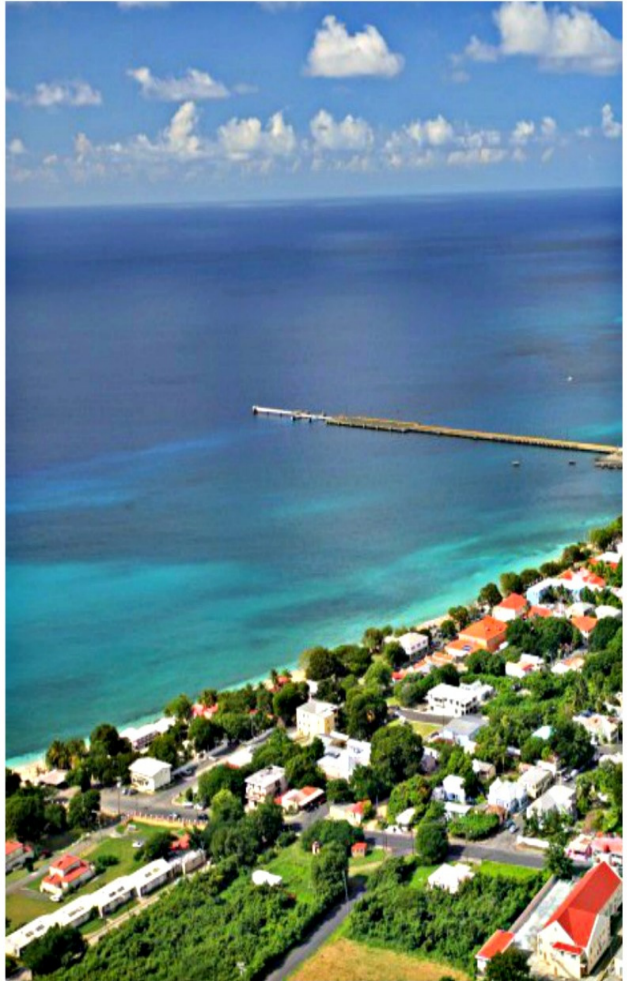


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Five Men Shot On St. Croix On Friday

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ST. CROIX -- Gun violence rocked this island on Friday, according to police, although no one died. A man was shot yesterday afternoon at about 1:51 p.m., and four more were wounded by gunfire hours later, at 10:00 p.m.

VIPD Public Information Officer Kevin Jackson, through two press releases issued on Friday, revealed the incidents.

The first occurred in Williams Delight yesterday afternoon, when the 911 emergency call center received notification of gunfire being discharged in the area. Responding officers arrived at the location specified (not revealed in the press release), and discovered several spent shell casings but no injured victims.

But as police continued their investigation, the Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center contacted the 911 emergency call center, stating that a young man had arrived at the facility by private vehicle, seeking treatment for a gunshot wound.

Officers traveled to the medical facility and met with the 24-year-old victim, who stated that while riding his motor scooter in the Estate William's Delight area, the scooter developed difficulties and as he attempted to repair it, a car drove by and gunfire was discharged from the moving vehicle.

The victim sustained a gunshot wound to the hand, and was unable to identify who shot at him or the type of vehicle that the shooter(s) were driving.

On the night of the same day, the 911 emergency call center received a report of gunfire having been discharged in the Walter I.M. Hodge Pavilion Housing Community.

Responding officers arrived at the location and discovered four wounded male victims; ages 19, 20, 21 and 23. Three of the victims were transported to JFL by ambulance and the fourth was taken to the medical facility by a private vehicle.

The shooting victims all sustained non-life threatening injuries. They told officers that they were sitting outside, within the housing community, when a small SUV drove by and began to discharge gunfire. They all scattered seeking cover from the hail of bullets.

The victims said were unable to identify the perpetrator (s) of the shooting, or the type of vehicle that was used to carry out the crime.

Police are asking anyone with information concerning these incidents to call 911 or the anonymous tip service, Crime Stoppers USVI at 1-800-222-(TIPS) 8477 or go to www.crimestoppersusvi.org.