

The Virgin Islands Consortium

After Gun Battle Near Gas Station, Police Find Marijuana, Firearm, Wrecked Cars, Blood And Shell Casings

VIC News / **Published On May 16, 2016 01:23 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **May 16, 2016**



ST. CROIX -- Police Commissioner Delroy Richards told The Consortium on Monday that his shot spotter, a device used to detect gunfire, went off shortly after 3:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, registering bursts of 12, 17 and 16 rounds being fired back-and-forth, which Mr. Richards said indicated an active shooting.

By the time police made it to the scene -- which spanned the area beginning at a strip club located at the back of the Gas For Less Service Station across from Sunny Isle, all the way to the entrance of the Centenos restaurant which police had cordoned off --

those involved had already scattered. But they left behind a pool of evidence, including shell casings from multiple firearms --glocks and .40 calibers -- along with a wrecked Ford Explorer that had been riddled with bullets, and from which officers recovered a pistol, multiple shell casings and "a large quantity of marijuana," according to Mr. Richards.

Police had secured the area and were conducting their investigation by the time a Consortium reporter arrived, but it was apparent that a serious gun battle had ensued in the wee hours of Sunday morning.

Plastic shell casing markers littered the Queen Mary Highway near the gas station. An officer said they had marked at least 75 shell casings. Shots from multiple weapons came from the gas station area, which Mr. Richards said indicated that multiple individuals were involved, as well as from the Ford Explorer, located off the road to the west of the gas station. Mr. Richards added that the Ford Explorer was most likely chased by another vehicle, as evidence was recovered from a passenger door found on the scene.

"We believe because of the multiple shell casings found in the area that once that passenger door was opened, they were firing shots from that car towards the Ford Explorer that crashed," Mr. Richards said. "Why we know that is because the person was standing with the door open, and somebody drove by -- it could be the car that was damaged on the other side of the road -- and actually took the whole door off. So we have a car out there without a door because it was on the ground with the speakers and everything in it."

Police also found "heavy chunks of blood" near the gas station, which Mr. Richards said was evidence that someone had been wounded by gunfire. But no one reported to the Juan F. Luis Hospital -- except an innocent individual who got caught in gunfire, causing his gold Honda Accord to slam into a rock on the south side of the road, near the gas station. Mr. Richards said the Honda Accord was most likely the vehicle that knocked off the door of one of the assailants' car.

So, what led to the violence? Police could not say for sure, but according to Mr. Richards, the incident began outside the strip club, possibly with an argument, and played out on the streets near Sunny Isle.

He said sometimes those involved in such incidents refuse to seek care at the territory's medical facilities because of the evidence that would mount against them. And Mr. Richards also made known situations where individuals have been treated by friends or family members with medical skills so as to avoid law enforcement.

"In fact we are aware of situations where people have traveled out the territory to seek medical attention just not be identified by law enforcement," Mr. Richards said.

The commissioner also made mention of a trend that has dogged nightlife in the Virgin Islands. He said the V.I.P.D. conducted a survey and found that most of the violent incidents that include guns occur late at night after clubbing.

"Let me tell you what my concern is: what we are seeing now is a trend. I know folks want to go out and have a good time, but it seems that after these nightclubs close, or are on

the verge of closing, they take their little arguments from within and take it out into the streets, and it always occurs after three, four or five o'clock in the morning both here and in St. Thomas. We looked at our early-morning shootings and they occur right after they leave these clubs.

Coincidentally, Mr. Richards said, on Sunday morning, after the gun battle had ended, the registered owner of the Ford Explorer reported to police that the vehicle had been stolen.

© Viconsortium 2026