

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Tourists Praise V.I.P.D. Officers For Tracking And Returning Stolen Items

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ST. CROIX -- Tourists visiting this island have praised V.I.P.D. officers for returning items that had been stolen, a press release Glen Dratte, the force's public information officer issued Thursday has made known.

According to the release, on Friday September 2, at approximately 1:30 p.m., four tourists (couples) from Mill Water, Connecticut, went to Point Udall to go snorkeling, and left their personal belongings on a beach towel, including three cellphones.

When the couples returned from their snorkeling adventure, they noticed that their belongings were out of order and the three cellphones missing.

The group then visited the Marshall Command Police Precinct to file a report and get some assistance. An officer and one of the tourists logged onto the Internet and started tracking the phones, as many cellphones come equipped with GPS technology.

The phones were tracked to somewhere in the Frederiksted town area. One tourist stayed at the precinct while two other police officers traveled to Frederiksted in search of the devices, receiving real-time updates from the officer and tourist who remained at the police station to track the devices' movements.

Upon arriving to the area where the GPS indicated that the signals were emanating from, the officer at Marshall Command sent via the Internet a special signal to the cell phones that made a distinguished sound. After a brief search the officers were able to hear the noise coming from a large garbage recycling bin located on the northern side of Walter I.M. Hodge Housing Community in Frederiksted. One of the officers jumped into the garbage bin to search, while the other officer stood outside to stand guard along with helping. After a thorough search they were able to retrieve a small gray and blue backpack out of the bin which had three cell phones in it.

The three cell phones were positively identified by the tourist couples as their items. According to the release, the couples were extremely grateful for the quick-thinking and tech-savvy officers, turning what could have been an all negative experience into a happy ending.

The couples said they would return to the territory, and also indicated that they plan on purchasing land here, according to the release.