

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Thomas Men Arrested After Exchanging Cocaine For Firearms With Undercover Federal Agent

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ST. THOMAS -- Acio Richards, 26, and N'kel Morton, 22, both of St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, made their initial appearance in court on November 17, 2016, before U.S. Magistrate Judge Ruth Miller on separate criminal complaints charging each with possession of a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced.

After a detention hearing in front of Judge Miller on Friday, November 18, 2016, Morton was remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service pending further proceedings, while Richards was released to a third-party custodian on a \$10,000 unsecured bond, and was placed on home detention with electronic monitoring.

According to the complaints, on November 16, 2016, both Richards and Morton separately traded cocaine in exchange for a firearm with an undercover special agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). Possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense carries a mandatory minimum sentence of five years.

This case is being investigated by the ATF. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Meredith Edwards.

United States Attorney Sharpe reminds the public that a complaint is merely a formal charging document and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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