

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Two Shot Dead In St. Thomas As Gun-Related Homicides Climb To 26 In Territory

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ST. THOMAS -- Two men were shot dead in St. Thomas in the wee hours of Friday morning in Smith Bay, in the vicinity of Lake's Chicken Fry, V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Glen Dratte has announced.

The double homicide bring's the count in shooting deaths in St. Thomas to 16, compared to St. Croix's 10 for 2017. The number climbs to 33 in total when vehicular homicides -- to include [Tuesday night's Melvin Evans Highway deadly incident](#) -- are factored in, according to information provided by V.I.P.D. Commissioner Delroy Richards.

The deadly shooting comes as Governor Kenneth Mapp, [The Consortium has learned](#), is preparing to announce current St. Croix Police Chief Winsbut McFarland as territorial police chief, in a move to unify the department and in an attempt to bring Chief McFarland's St. Croix strategies to Charlotte Amalie.

According to Mr. Dratte, the 911 emergency call center received a call from a resident at about 2:15 a.m. today. Residents also informed 911 that two males were lying on the ground.

Responding officers, upon their arrival near the business establishment Value Foods Convenience Store, observed a male who appeared to have suffered at least one gunshot, lying on the steps just outside the facility.

A few feet away outside of Lake's Chicken Fry, officers discovered a second male who also appeared to have been a victim of gunshots. Both males appeared to be unresponsive, Mr. Dratte said. The victims were pronounced dead by emergency medical technicians on the scene.

Mr. Dratte said the names of the deceased victims are being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

The force is asking anyone with information that may lead to the arrest of the perpetrator or perpetrators, to please contact the V.I.P.D. at (340)774-2211 or Major Crimes Unit at (340) 714-5554/5617.

You can also send your anonymous tip online to Crime Stoppers USVI, where the information you provide may lead to a financial reward. Send your anonymous online tip [here](#).