

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Four Shot, Two Dead As Violence Erupted On St. Croix Friday Night; 'High-Power Rifle' Used In Mutual Homes Shooting, Says Police Commissioner

Crime / **Published On August 26, 2017 11:20 AM /**

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ST. CROIX -- Gun violence rocked St. Croix on Friday night, with four men sustaining gunshot wounds about their bodies, while two died from the violence that erupted in separate housing communities. According to V.I.P.D. Commissioner Delroy Richards, the incidents occurred in the Old Fredensborg Housing Community and the Mutual Homes Housing Community.

At around 10:30 p.m., the 911 emergency call center was notified of gunshots being discharged in Old Fredensborg, which is located near the Kingshill Cemetary and

adjacent to the Alfredo Andrews Elementary School.

Upon arrival to the scene, police met two victims with gunshot wounds about their bodies, one who was injured but alive, and another who was found lifeless. The deceased, 24, was pronounced dead on the scene. Police did not reveal his identity as next of kin had yet to be notified. The man who survived is said to be 41 years old, according to the commissioner.

"A weapon was recovered on the scene and we're still investigation the incident," Mr. Richards told The Consortium Saturday morning.

Then, at about 11:41 p.m., police received another report from the 911 emergency call center of a barrage of gunfire being discharged in the Mutual Homes Housing Community in Grove. Mr. Richards said because officers were already patrolling the area, they immediately responded to the scene.

Upon officers arrival, a lifeless male was found on the ground. He was transported to the morgue at the Juan F. Luis Hospital. Moments later, police received notification that two victims had arrived at J.F.L.'s emergency room by private vehicle from the Mutual Homes incident -- one who was being treated for gunshot wounds to the back, while the other individual said he stumbled and hurt his knee while attempting to flee the gun violence.

Mr. Richards said two guns were recovered on the scene in Mutual Homes. However, there were multiple shell casings, some from handguns and others from what the commissioner described as a "high-power weapon; could be an AK-47, could be something else, but it's a high-power weapon," he said.

Residents took to social media last night, some stating that they were already asleep and were awoken by the rapid gunfire in Mutual Homes. Mr. Richards said the V.I.P.D. heightened patrol in Mutual Homes after the body of Lyana Serieux, [who was buried along with her two sons on Thursday](#), was found in the cistern of an abandoned building immediately behind the housing community. The reason for the heightened patrol according to Mr. Richards, was because police were expecting a surge of retaliatory violence.

But he said none of the [recent shooting incidents](#) in the housing community, including last night's, appeared to be tied to the deaths of the Serieuxs, which the V.I.P.D. is actively investigating.

"I have not seen any correlation to the incident with the three individuals that were found deceased," Mr. Richards said, referring to the Ms. Serieux and her two sons, Jordan, 10, and Jeremiah, 5. "I don't really see any connection. A lot of folks traveling to Mutual Homes either to visit friends or to settle scores, but we have not linked it to that case."

"We have stepped up patrols in the area; I believe we were there almost immediately once the shots fired," Mr. Richards said referring to Mutual Homes. "There were several vehicles that we stopped leaving the Mutual Homes area. There are several folks we're questioning relating to this case, but we have not made an arrest."