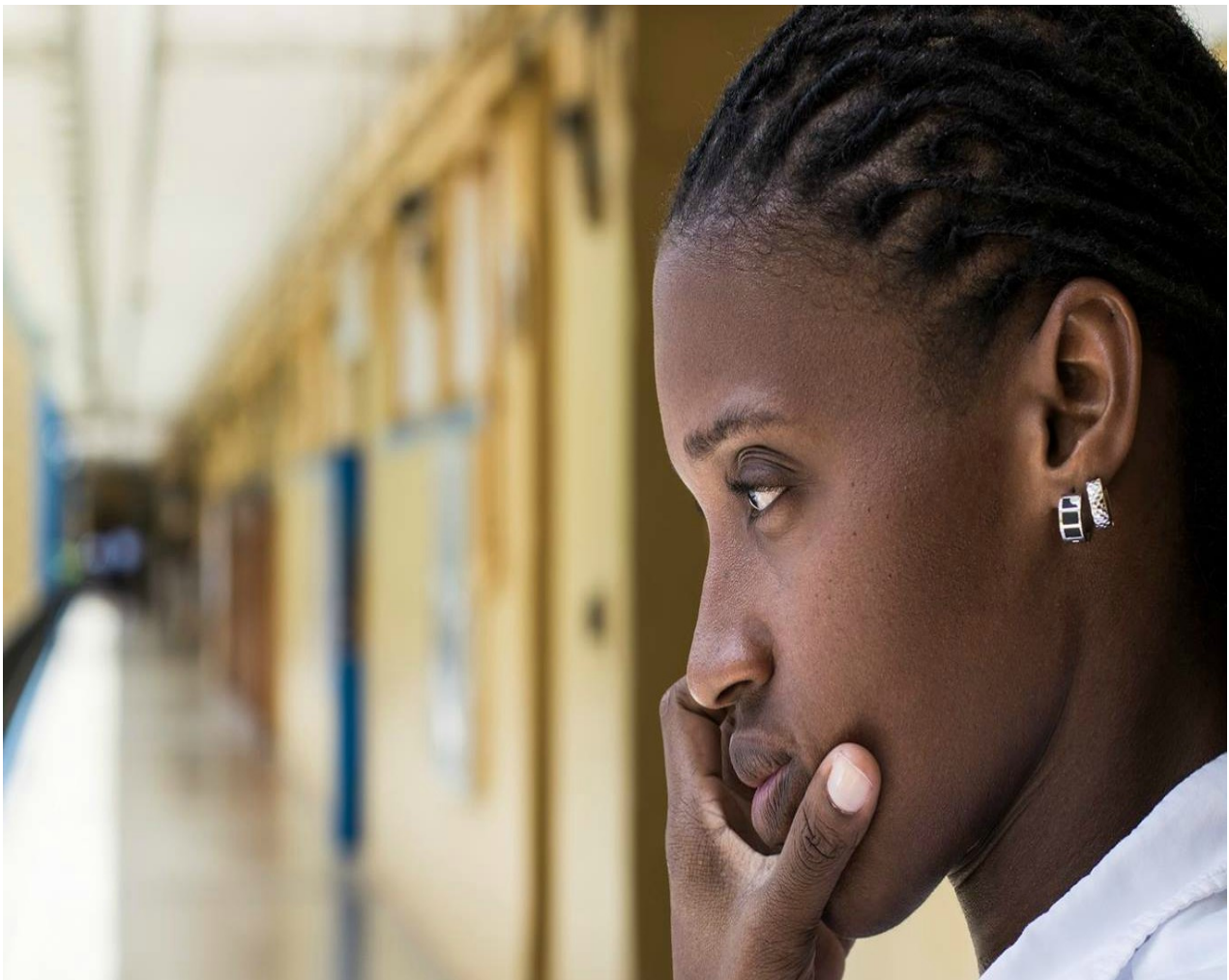


The Virgin Islands Consortium

V.I.P.D. Finds Lack Of Evidence To Charge Officer Who Sen. Sarauw Said Pulled Gun On Her; Officer To Return To Active Duty

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Ernice Gilbert **May 31, 2018**



ST. THOMAS -- V.I.P.D. Commissioner Delroy Richards confirmed to The Consortium on Thursday that the V.I.P.D. has concluded its investigation into Police Officer Tianna Hunt, who Senator Janelle Sarauw alleged had pulled a firearm on her.

The V.I.P.D.'s investigation concluded approximately two weeks [following a Department of Justice probe](#) that found Ms. Hunt had not committed any wrongdoing.

"The investigation has concluded that there wasn't enough evidence to determine whether or not the incident occurred," Mr. Richards said, reading from the investigation's conclusive remarks. "Conclusion: Not sustained," he added.

The commissioner said Ms. Hunt is expected to return to her police duties on Monday.

"We did all our internal stuff and we've looked at everything and there's nothing," Mr. Richards told The Consortium. He reiterated that the V.I.P.D. had not alleged any wrongdoing on the officer's part. "We just wanted to be certain that our conclusion supported the information that we received, which warranted the investigation. And we were able to reach a conclusion in the matter and we will be returning the officer to duty."

In his statement two weeks ago, Attorney General Claude Walker said, "I have reviewed the evidence and held a meeting with the senator and the officer, and concluded that no probable cause exists to file any charge against Officer Hunt. The officer did not act inappropriately. The parties were so advised."

In March, Mr. Richards told The Consortium that the incident occurred at Officer Hunt's residence during the afternoon of Saturday, March 24, and involved three females — Ms. Hunt, Ms. Sarauw and another individual. Mr. Richards said Ms. Sarauw had alleged that during the altercation, Ms. Hunt brandished her firearm.

But according to a police report filed against Ms. Sarauw on January 14, the altercation with the senator was not the first. The January 14 filing alleged that the senator was pounding on Ms. Hunt's window at 1:15 a.m. in regards to another female individual.

In a statement issued on Sunday, March 25, Ms. Sarauw sought to keep the incident away from her job as a senator, stating that her personal life had no relevance to the work she performs on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands.

"This is personal and it has no bearing on how I perform my job. That is my personal life and in no way will I allow my personal life to interfere with the work I have to do on behalf of the people," read the statement. "The Virgin Islands is still in recovery from two [Category 5] hurricanes. People need roofs and windows and a home, not to hear skewed details of my personal life. We all have a personal life that may take different turns and we all have to go to work anyway. I plan to do the same."

It was not clear what the skewed details about Ms. Sarauw's life were, but the police report filed against the senator on January 14, delved into what appeared to be relational issues. Part of the Jan. 14 report alleged that Ms. Sarauw, who had visited Officer Hunt's residence after 1:00 a.m. on January 14 and stood outside pounding on Officer Hunt's windows and hurling insults, was told to leave several times. But, according to the police report filed by Officer Hunt, Ms. Sarauw did not leave; instead, she walked around the home to Ms. Hunt's bedroom window and started cursing and shouting several times: "You really going to choose this bitch over me?"

The Consortium obtained two videos that show Ms. Sarauw outside the residence of Ms. Hunt even as Ms. Hunt can be heard in the video on several occasions asking Ms. Sarauw to leave. On both occasions, Ms. Sarauw was seeking the attention of the other female individual involved.

According to Mr. Walker, generally, a police officer may display a police-issued firearm if the officer reasonably perceives there to be danger. In such cases, “it is legal [for an officer] to draw the police-issued weapon, Mr. Walker said.

He said there are use of force guidelines and V.I.P.D. officers are given regular exercises and lectures, “but in the end, whether to display a firearm cannot be solely confined to the dictates of a specific rule, rather, in large part, it is based on the officer’s judgement,” Mr. Walker said.

“It is an officer’s individual judgement that must be justifiable, and so it comes down to a reasonable exercise of discretion based on facts,” he said.