

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Neal Chesterfield Sentenced To 5 Years, 8 Months In Federal Prison For Involvement In Conspiracy To Distribute Cocaine

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ST. THOMAS -- -- Former Government House Security Officer Neal Chesterfield, 41, was sentenced before District Judge Curtis Gomez to 70 months incarceration for his conviction of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine, United States Attorney Gretchen Shappert announced Thursday morning. Gomez also sentenced Chesterfield to five years of supervised release and \$100 special assessment.

According to the plea agreement filed with the court on December 1, 2016, Chesterfield was a member of a large-scale drug trafficking organization from 2011 through 2016. In

2011, Chesterfield, a security officer at the Office of the Governor, was recruited by a co-conspirator who convinced him to use his law enforcement credentials to bypass security screening at Cyril E. King Airport to smuggling large kilogram quantities of cocaine from St. Thomas to Miami and Fort Lauderdale. Once in Florida, Chesterfield delivered the cocaine to a co-conspirator for distribution in the continental United States at \$33,000 per kilogram.

During the course of the conspiracy, Chesterfield used his security clearance to smuggle over 200 kilograms of cocaine for the drug trafficking organization. The smuggling operation was dismantled on September 3, 2016, after a co-conspirator contacted a CBP agent and reported that Chesterfield was traveling on that day with cocaine and had to be stopped. Within one hour of receiving the tip, CBP agents seized 22 kilograms of cocaine from Chesterfield's carryon suitcase.