

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. John Man Arrested For Smuggling Illegal Dominican Republic, Argentina And Venezuela Immigrants Into U.S.

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ST, JOHN -- Brice Todman, 36, of St. John, was arrested on Monday on a criminal complaint charging him with bringing immigrants into the United States, United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced today.

Jose Alfredo Rondon Castro, 40 and Juan Lorenzo Matias Peralta, 38, both of the Dominican Republic, Dionis Alexander Luis Gomez, 31, of Venezuela and Roman Perez Hernandez, 34, a national of both Argentina and the Dominican Republic, were also arrested on Monday, October 22, 2018 on criminal complaints charging each of them

with illegal entry into the United States, according to the release.

Todman, Castro, Peralta, Gomez and Hernandez all made their initial appearances before Magistrate Judge Ruth Miller and were detained pending further proceedings.

According to the complaint, Todman was stopped by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Air and Marine Operations (AMO) in the North Haulover Bay, area of St. John when agents observed him operating a vessel with no lights. After the boat was stopped, AMO agents observed four male individuals besides Todman onboard and determined that they were not U.S. citizens.

The four individuals were identified as Castro and Peralta from the Dominican Republic, Gomez from Venezuela, and Hernandez from Argentina and the Dominican Republic and they did not have permission to enter the United States.

If convicted of bringing immigrants into the United States, Todman faces a sentence up to ten years and a \$250,000 fine. If convicted of illegal entry, Castro, Peralta, Gomez and Hernandez each face a maximum sentence of six months and a \$5,000 fine.

The case is being investigated by Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Unit and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sigrid M. Tejo-Sprotte.

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