

The Virgin Islands Consortium

V.I.P.D. Provides Detailed Crime Stats: 21 Homicides So Far For 2019

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The Virgin Islands Police Department during its budget hearing on Thursday provided detailed information relative to crime statistics for 2019.

According to the numbers, the territory has seen 21 homicides for the year territory-wide, compared to 19 last year during the period of January-June. For both years between Jan.-June, St. Croix led the count with 12 homicides in 2018 compared to St. Thomas's 7, and 12 homicides in 2019 compared to St. Thomas's 9. St. John, during the same time period for both years had no homicides.

The V.I.P.D. has been operating in somewhat of a strange place as of late. Governor Albert Bryan [has announced a nominee](#), who he said would start his duties on June 10. The month is at its end, however this nominee, Trevor Velinor, has not arrived in the territory. So Jason Marsh has been acting police commissioner for over six months, even as a nominee has been chosen, which weakens Mr. Marsh's authority to take any substantive action.

Senator Alicia Barnes highlighted this issue on Thursday. "This is challenging this morning [because] while we have a commissioner nominee for the Virgin Islands Police Department, that commissioner is not before us for various administrative issues. It becomes very challenging in a Finance Committee meeting to drill down on much of the salient issues as it relates to public safety without the nominated lead of the agency being present so that we can get a clear understanding of their fiscal vision for the department in which they are slated to lead."

Mr. Marsh said the force would continue to foster a better relationship with the community to combat crime.

"Constitutional policing and social justice demand that the community and the police work in concert to create an environment that fosters the growth and development of their stakeholders. Community-oriented policing remains one of the pillars that this partnership is built on. Police operations continues to practice this style of policing to build trust, enhance visibility, and maintain vigilance in our crime-fighting effort. As we continue to move toward what will be our new routine, the department has worked towards becoming a more transparent and transformational department. We have increased dialogue with the community using social media, local radio talk-shows, and by organizing and attending town hall meetings with an emphasis on opening the lines," Mr. Marsh said.

Below, the full data, provided by the V.I.P.D.

[Read the original document](#)

Feature Image: Shooting scene in St. Thomas