

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Police Chief William Harvey Removed From Position; Deputy Chief Herman Lynch Now Acting Chief

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ST. CROIX -- On the heels of announcing one of its most successful initiatives this year, the Virgin Islands Police Department has confirmed to the Consortium that St. Croix Police Chief William Harvey was removed by V.I.P.D. Commissioner Trevor Velinor and replaced with Deputy Chief Herman Lynch.

In a statement provided to the Consortium, V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Glen Dratte, said, "Deputy Chief Herman Lynch is acting chief for the St. Croix District. When Commissioner Velinor came onboard he said he was going to assemble a team, and this

is just part of the process."

The V.I.P.D. provided no reason for the chief's removal.

However, it appeared to stem from an impromptu press conference that Mr. Harvey held this afternoon at the V.I.P.D's Frederiksted headquarters, following the official press conference that included Mr. Velinor and Attorney General Denise George.

During the original press conference, Mr. Velinor spoke of Operation Cool Out which was executed in the wee hours of Saturday morning, resulting in 9 arrests and the confiscation of 5 guns, a ballistic vest, and ammunition.

Ms. George, along with Mr. Velinor and Chief Deputy Attorney General Joseph Ponteen, spoke during the press conference. However, Mr. Harvey, who is head of operations and was intricately involved in Operation Cool Out, was not given a chance to speak.

When media outlets were getting ready to leave, it was announced that Mr. Harvey would share some updates. The commissioner and attorney general had already left.

Mr. Harvey's comments lasted just under 11 minutes and mostly included information on the reduction of crime on St. Croix (homicides, he said, were down from 29 to 17 year-over-year). He also revealed that over 70 weapons were taken off the streets so far this year.

Even so, the mini press conference was not sanctioned by the commissioner, and according to people with knowledge of the matter, it was the basis upon which Mr. Velinor acted to remove Mr. Harvey.

While Mr. Harvey has been sidelined by Mr. Velinor, only the governor has the authority to fire his appointee. Mr. Velinor, however, can make a strong recommendation to let go Mr. Harvey altogether.

Watch Mr. Harvey's impromptu press conference below.

[View the original embedded media](#)