

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Former St. Croix Police Chief Harvey Suddenly Cancels Live Consortium Interview He Sought

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ST. CROIX -- The [sudden ouster](#) of former St. Croix Police William Harvey this week took another dramatic turn Wednesday evening when the lawman abruptly cancelled an interview that was [scheduled for live broadcast by the Consortium](#).

Mr. Harvey was removed from his post two days earlier, moments after he stood with Police Commissioner Trevor Velinor at a St. Croix press conference detailing a police operation that resulted in nine gun-related arrests.

Mr. Velinor apparently demoted the chief immediately after the briefing. Herman Lynch was named Mr. Harvey's replacement.

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 move came as a surprise to the community — and quite possibly to Gov. Albert Bryan, who appointed Mr. Harvey to the St. Croix post in February.

At the time, Government House described Mr. Harvey as "a highly-respected Virgin Islands police lieutenant," who served 23 years with the V.I.P.D. as a patrol sergeant, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Drug Task Force supervisor, and training supervisor.

Mr. Bryan personally touted Mr. Harvey's policing skills earlier this year.

"He brings the required vigor to the post, as well as a wealth of institutional knowledge. He knows the community and his military operational background and his extensive police training and drug interdiction experience makes him the right person to lead operations in St. Croix. Chief Harvey will play an integral role in our administration's law enforcement strategy."

The V.I.P.D. provided no specific reason for the chief's removal. However, it may have stemmed from an impromptu press conference that Mr. Harvey convened Tuesday afternoon at the V.I.P.D.'s Frederiksted headquarters. Mr. Harvey's remarks to the press came after the "official" media briefing by Mr. Velinor and VI Attorney General Denise George.

Mr. Velinor, Ms. George and chief deputy attorney general Joseph Ponteen detailed "Operation Cool Out," in which nine people were arrested and five guns, a ballistic vest, and ammunition were seized.

Mr. Harvey — who is head of operations on St. Croix and was intricately involved in Operation Cool Out — was not given a chance to speak initially. He addressed the press after the top brass left the building.