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Bryan Warns Against Celebratory Gunfire on New Year's Eve: 'It's the Worst Tradition We Have in the Virgin Islands'

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Linda Straker **December 31, 2021**

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Governor Albert Bryan has described the practice of celebratory gunfire to welcome the New Year as the most unpleasant tradition in the territory, and he is urging those who are planning to engage in the act this year to resist the temptation.

“Every New Year's Eve we have to deal with this ridiculous gunfire. If you are planning on doing it tonight just don't... it is extremely dangerous,” he said in a news conference on Friday – just hours before the start of the year 2022.

Referring to a legal matter where the Judge sentenced someone to 40 years imprisonment for causing the death of another because of the celebratory gunfire, Mr. Bryan said that the bullet had

come down and killed another person.

“Just don’t do it! We are going to have the police out tonight. We're not going catch everybody but we might catch you or somebody in your family,” the governor said in his passionate and emotional plea to citizens.

“It takes a lot of effort from our police; they are already dealing with all the other things in our community, so just don’t do it. Bullets have to come down and they make holes on people’s roofs,” he said while calling on citizens to not put themselves at risk because there are “some chuckleheads” challenging the system by engaging in the habit.

“To all my people out there, just stay inside until this gunfire subsides. It would be great if we don’t have any at all but that is not going to happen, but we are going to be in those key spots tonight,” he said while reminding the public about [successful police operations in 2020](#) when some people were arrested.

“Last year, we arrested a couple of people and this year we are going to arrest some more people,” he said without confirming whether there is a special operation that will be enforced by the V.I.P.D. to identify the lawbreakers.

“It is just tremendously unsafe to be discharging weapons like that. It's illegal, it is a felony and if you have an illegal gun, it will be worse, so please tonight hold it down with the gunfire and stop this reckless behavior. It is the worst tradition that we have here in the Virgin Islands.”

Recently, Karl Knight, the governor's chief of staff said the V.I.P.D. was [using technology to assist in fighting crimes](#).

“We cannot station a police officer in every street corner, but we can use technology and there are two particular things that we have been using. Firstly, we have been using the ShotSpotter gun detection system. We've been expanding that network which allows us to have a quicker response,” he said while explaining that the ShotSpotter detection system alerts the Police Department when gunshots are fired even if there are no phone-ins from concerned citizens.

The gun detection system indicates how many rounds were fired and in which neighborhoods. He also disclosed that police have been deploying cameras to assist with crime-fighting.