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BVI Men Caught With 667 Kilograms of Cocaine on Sunday in Waters Near St. Croix. They Face Life in Prison if Found Guilty.

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United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced Monday that three British Virgin Islands citizens and one citizen of the Dominican Republic were arrested January 9 on criminal charges related to their alleged possession with intent to distribute 667 kilograms of cocaine on-board a vessel apprehended yesterday near St. Croix.

According to court documents, on January 9 at approximately 3:30 p.m., Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Air and Marine Operations (CBP-AMO) along with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) detected a thirty-two foot vessel headed north towards the vicinity of the British Virgin Islands. When law enforcement approached the vessel, it was dead in the water. Captaining the vessel was BVI resident Shannon John. Passengers included Sean John and

Emmanuel Tolentino-Lebron, both also from the BVI, and Augusto RodriguezMolina, a citizen of the Dominican Republic.

Federal authorities located approximately 667 kilograms of cocaine packaged in approximately 20 block-shaped bales onboard.

All four men were arrested and charged with possession with intent to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine on a covered vessel, and conspiracy to commit the same offense, in violation of 46 U.S.C. § 70503(a)(1) & 46 U.S.C. § 70506(b).

If convicted, they face a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

CBP-AMO and Homeland Security Investigations are investigating the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Everard E. Potter is prosecuting the case.

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