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58-Year-Old Woman Killed, Another Female Wounded by Gunshots After Their Vehicle Came Under Heavy Fire Late Monday

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Location on the long stretch of the Container Port Road where the white Toyota Tacoma pickup truck crashed after coming under heavy fire. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — A 58-year-old woman succumbed to gunshot injuries while another woman — the passenger of the vehicle they were traveling in — was receiving treatment at the Juan F. Luis Hospital after coming under heavy gunfire while driving late Monday night on the long stretch of the Container Port Road, the Consortium can confirm. The information has since been corroborated by the V.I. Police Department.

The women, who had just come from dropping off some friends at the Container Port, were startled when they realized they were being waved to stop by a vehicle traveling in the opposite direction, according to the V.I.P.D. Having no knowledge of who those individuals were, they continued driving, only to have the vehicle turn and start following them. Moments later, gunshots started ringing out from behind.

According to V.I.P.D. Director of Communications Glen Dratte, who cited a police report, at 10:55 p.m. Monday the 911 Emergency Call Center received a report of an auto accident on Container Port Road involving a white Toyota Tacoma pickup truck. V.I. Port Authority officers were dispatched and observed that the driver and passenger were trapped in the vehicle.

Additional units traveled to assist and observed spent shell casings on the roadway and bullet holes in the body of the truck. According to the police report, a closer inspection revealed that the driver sustained injuries as a result of the accident and gunshot wounds about her body, and succumbed to the injuries.

Mr. Dratte said detectives determined that the vehicle was involved in a shooting. EMS, forensics, the Criminal Investigation Bureau and morgue attendant were notified and were on the scene.

According to the police report, the passenger was extracted and transported to JFL for medical treatment.

The passenger disclosed that they had dropped off some friends at the Container Port and that as they were leaving the port area to head west, they observed a dark colored vehicle driving in the opposite direction on the long stretch of the Container Port road attempting to flag them down. They did not stop and continued to drive. The injured victim stated that the vehicle turned around and got behind them, and seconds later gunshots were fired at them and began hitting the vehicle.

The driver lost control and struck the outer wall of Limetree Bay causing extensive damage to the vehicle and its passengers. Both the injured and deceased victims sustained gunshot wounds. The passenger as of Tuesday morning was in stable condition, according to the V.I.P.D.

The driver was identified by her next of kin as 58-year-old Maria Marte of Little Princess, according to the police report.

Monday night's homicide marked the 7th in the U.S. Virgin Islands for 2022, after a violent 2021 where [46 people were murdered](#). In 2020, there was [a total of 49 homicides](#), and 40 in 2019.