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VIPD 'Operation Rewind' Results in Four Arrests, Seizure of Marijuana and Unlicensed Firearms

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Upper left to right: Rasham Monsanto and Eljaiey Grant. Lower left to right: Randal Donovan and Te'Quori Lans. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — The V.I. Police Department's "Operation Rewind" netted four arrests last week on St. Thomas. Traffic stops on Friday February 24 and Saturday February 25 resulted in the discovery of unlicensed firearms, ammunition, and quantities of marijuana.

On Friday around 7 pm, officers were conducting traffic enforcement on Valdemar A. Hill Sr. Drive, near Beacon Point, when they saw a red Honda CRV make a U-turn just ahead of where the police checkpoint was established. The CRV was stopped, and the driver, identified as 23-year old Rasham Monsanto, was ordered out of the vehicle. Officers say he initially refused several

times, before finally coming out while having a conversation on his mobile phone. Mosanto allegedly refused to end the call when an officer ordered him to do so, and eventually was arrested and charged for delaying and obstructing. He appeared in court on Monday for his advice of rights hearing.

Officers also stopped a black Acura 1LX in the same area, which had no license plate at the front of the vehicle. During a search of the Acura, police discovered a firearm, which the driver Randal Donovan could not produce a license for. Donovan was arrested and charged with possession of an unlicensed firearm.

On Saturday, police were also conducting surveillance near Vitraco Mall, near Dineros restaurant. A white Mercedes Benz was stopped at Mandela Circle, and a subsequent search of the vehicle reportedly yielded a large quantity of marijuana. Eljaiey Grant, age 25, was arrested for possession of narcotics with intent to distribute, a charge that the presiding judge at his advice of rights hearing on Monday upheld, despite defense counsel's argument that the lack of baggies, scales or other paraphernalia means that the charge was unsubstantiated. Ultimately the judge ruled that there was probable cause to support the charge, and thus affirmed the decision of the police and prosecutors.

Te'Quori Lans was also arrested on Saturday, after police stopped his green Honda Civic on Emile Milo Francis Drive near Lindquist Beach. The Civic did not have a front bumper, and its windshield was tinted in violation of prevailing regulations. Lans, age 23, reportedly ignored officers' instructions to exit the vehicle while reaching for a bag near him in the vehicle. Police say that Lans was "eventually removed" from the Honda, and a subsequent search of the car found that the bag Lans was trying to reach contained a firearm. Lans was arrested and charged with possession of an unlicensed firearm, possession of a firearm within 1000 feet of a church, possession of illegal ammunition, two counts of illegal transfer of license plates, and delaying and obstructing.

Lans also appeared in court for his advice of rights hearing on Monday, where a judge set bail at \$50,000, but allowed his release into the third-party custody of his mother upon the posting of 10 percent of the bail requirement.