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St. Croix Gas Station Cashier Faces Charges over Weapons and Drugs Following Payment Dispute

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Mugshot of Jomar Matos Garcia. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A gas station cashier who allegedly pointed a gun at a customer is now facing felony assault, weapons and drug charges in court.

According to court documents, on July 25, a few minutes before midday, police were summoned to Moe's Service Station following a report of someone brandishing a firearm. When officers arrived, they spoke to a man who said that he had pulled up at the gas station around 11:00 a.m. As soon as he got inside, he told officers that he gave Jomar Matos Garcia, who was behind the cashier's counter, a \$20 bill, and pointed to his SUV.

The man then said he went to the freezer and picked out a drink that cost \$2.50, walked back to the counter, paid for the drink with another \$20 bill, and requested a loose cigarette at the cost of 50 cents. He was given change in the amount of \$17.

When he walked back outside to the gas pump, someone yelled out to him, trying to get his attention. The individual was pointing to the service station's window where Garcia was tapping on the glass, beckoning him back inside. The man said when he walked back inside with his drink and change still in his hands, Garcia accused him of not giving him money for the gas. This prompted the man to return the drink and the change, and request the original \$20 back, something Garcia reportedly refused to provide.

The man requested that Garcia review the surveillance footage to prove that he had handed over \$40 in total to the cashier. Otherwise, the man said, he would get the police involved. After this exchange with the service station cashier, the man said he went back to his vehicle and sat behind the wheel. He said he watched Garcia go to his own car, a Toyota Camry, before returning to the door of the service station with a black gun in his hands. Garcia allegedly then began pointing the weapon at the customer, prompting the man to drive away to a nearby service station to await the arrival of police.

After meeting the man at the second gas station, two officers drove to Moe's Service Station to speak with Garcia. They beckoned him outside and detained him in handcuffs. Garcia told officers that he did not have a license to carry a firearm in the territory, and initially declined their request to search his Camry. After learning that a police dog trained to detect firearms would be brought in to check the vehicle, Garcia reportedly consented to a search, informing police about a gun box underneath the front passenger seat.

Police began their search in the trunk, where they discovered a backpack. Garcia reportedly alerted them that there was "a lot of weed" in the backpack, which officers discovered. Police also discovered a firearm with an extended magazine, which a forensics technician identified as a Glock 19 handgun, with the magazine containing 27 live rounds of 9mm ammunition. Officers also found another magazine, this one with 15 live rounds of 9mm ammunition, a plastic bag with 4 spent 9mm casings, two scales, and a total of almost 118 grams of marijuana in various zippered baggies and sandwich bags.

Elsewhere in the trunk police retrieved more marijuana – over 500 grams. In the back seat police retrieved 6 spent 9mm casings, and picked up another 3 spent 9mm casings and one .40 caliber spent casing in the center console. The gun box Garcia alerted officers to was found where he said it would be - near the front passenger seat.

After field testing the plant material and obtaining positive results for marijuana, and checking the firearms bureau to determine that he indeed had no license to possess firearms in the territory or on the mainland, Garcia was arrested and charged with third-degree assault, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute, possession of an unlicensed firearm during a crime of violence, and possession of ammunition.

Jomar Matos Garcia was then remanded to the Bureau of Corrections to await his first court appearance, which was scheduled for July 26.

In court on Wednesday, Magistrate Jessica Gallivan set pre-trial release conditions which have not been made public as of press time, except for a cash component of the assessed bail in the sum of \$2500. His next court appearance will be on August 9.

