



PRESS RELEASE

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410R/05

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CHIEF MINISTER UPDATES THE PUBLIC ON CRIME STRATEGY

Tuesday, October 4 – Chief Minister Dr. the Honourable D. Orlando Smith has updated the Territory on his Government's plan of action to address crime in the British Virgin Islands.

In a statement to the Territory Friday evening, the Chief Minister said the UK police advisor to the Overseas Territories Mr. Larry Covington visited the BVI last week to meet with Acting Commissioner of Police Mr. Reynell Frazer and other top police officials. The Chief Minister said that as a result of these meetings, three recommendations were made to himself and His Excellency Governor, Thomas Macan. These recommendations were accepted.

The first recommendation was for the immediate amalgamation of several existing police units into one department to be called the Drug and Violent Crime Task Force. The second recommendation was for the arrival of another specialist in the Territory early this week, with two more to follow thereafter. The third was for the establishment of a police hotline for anonymous tip.

“Taken together, these steps demonstrate our determination to eradicate the scourge of crime from our midst,” the Chief Minister said.

MORE

The Chief Minister said he is “deeply grateful and inspired by the strength of character that the people of the British Virgin Islands are displaying during this challenging time.” However he also advised the public that there is still much work ahead.

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Notes to the Editors:

Specifics of the three recommendations as announced by the Chief Minister were:

- The immediate amalgamation of several existing units which will be renamed the Drug and Violent Crime Task Force.
 - a) This unit will bring Special Investigations, the Drug Unit, the Marine Unit, the Air wing, and Intelligence Units under a single unified command. It will be dedicated, operating within the rule of law to combat violent crime, armed robbery, drug trafficking, and drug importation.
 - b) This new unit will be the sharp point of the spear in our fight against crime here on our shores – and any attempt to infiltrate our shores.
- Another specialist will arrive in the Territory early this week and two more will follow thereafter. Meanwhile, I am most appreciative to the members of this community who have shared information in relation to criminal activity, and we urge you to be vigilant as we strive to make the BVI a safer place for all of us to live.
- The police are making provision to establish a unique police hotline for anonymous tip-offs, being aware of the general perception about confidentiality. The police are currently negotiating with Cable and Wireless to provide a toll free 1-800 telephone line which will be routed in Miami.