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PRESS RELEASE

Vehicles Stolen from Government Agency Recovered, Suspect in Custody

ST. CROIX, USVI – On September 25 at approximately 1:26 p.m., officers were notified of the theft of two vehicles from the VI Department of Health's headquarters in Estate Richmond. The vehicles were quickly discovered by officers. The vehicles were carefully followed by officers and tracked by the VI Department of Property and Procurement utilizing GPS technology, through Sion Hill, Sion Farm and Peter's Rest. Both vehicles were recovered undamaged, but will undergo a thorough inspection before being returned to the Health Department's fleet for use by staff.

Officers arrested 25-year old Jeremy I. Allen, who admitted to taking one of the vehicles. He was charged with Unauthorized Use of a Vehicle. Bail for Allen was set at $50,000, however unable to post bail, he was turned over to the custody of the Bureau of Corrections pending his Advice of Rights hearing. The other suspect is still at large. The investigation into this incident continues.

Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion expressed her gratitude for the collaboration between all three agencies as they acted quickly to recover the stolen vehicles. "The safety and security of our premises is a top priority for us. This news is disappointing as these vehicles are critical to our operations — especially our COVID-19 response. We use our vehicles for everything from community engagement to patient transport. I am relieved that this matter has been rectified quickly," she added.

St. Croix Chief of Police Sidney Elskoe applauded the joint efforts of the agencies and recovery of the vehicles without damages or injuries. He encourages anyone with information about the incident to contact the VIPD.

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