



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VIPD Officer Pleads Guilty to Lying to Grand Jury

St. Thomas, USVI - Former veteran Virgin Islands police officer Carlton Charleswell pleaded guilty today before visiting District Court Judge Juan Sanchez on St. Thomas to lying to a grand jury, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced.

Charleswell, who was arrested on September 18, 2009, pleaded guilty to one count of a three-count superseding indictment. The first count charged Charleswell with corruptly endeavoring to influence, intimidate and impede a grand juror in the discharge of the grand juror's duty with respect to the investigation of a robbery at the Subway restaurant in the Nisky Center on St. Thomas. The second count charged him with seeking out a fellow VIPD officer in an attempt to persuade the officer to falsify evidence relating to the investigation of the Subway restaurant robbery.

According to the plea agreement filed with the court, on May 17, 2009, the Subway store at the Nisky Center on St. Thomas was robbed. When VIPD police detectives arrived at the scene of the robbery, they apprehended Michael Hodge, who has since been convicted of the robbery, near the Subway restaurant. The VIPD police detectives also seized a cellular telephone from the pick-up truck that Hodge was using. Further investigation revealed a

connection between the cellular telephone that was found in the pick-up truck and a Subway employee inside the store at the time of the robbery.

In attempts to shield the Subway employee who was a suspect in the robbery case, Charleswell falsely testified under oath before the grand jury that a VIPD officer involved in the robbery investigation told him that the cellular telephone was not found in the pick-up truck, but somewhere else. Charleswell faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison, three years supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine.

This case was investigated by a joint local/federal task force conducting a probe into police corruption within the Virgin Islands Police Department. The task force comprises the VIPD, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Marshals Service, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. In addition to Charleswell, the investigative work of the task force has resulted in the convictions of VIPD Officer Jerome Blyden, VIPD Captain Enrique Saldana and VIPD Sergeant George Greene, Jr.

Anyone with information related to police corruption is asked to call the task force at (340) 715-6516.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Nolan Paige and Kim Lindquist.