

STATEMENT

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Statement By Governor Of The British Virgin Islands Daniel Pruce On The Vetting Of Police Officers

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PRESS STATEMENT ON VETTING OF POLICE OFFICERS AND COMMISSIONER OF POLICE RECRUITMENT

FROM THE GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

MR DANIEL PRUCE

When I was sworn in as Governor, I made a solemn oath to serve the people of the Virgin Islands. I stated that the security of these islands would be my number one priority. With those commitments in mind, I wanted to share two important developments today.

Vetting

In 2022, the Commission of Inquiry (COI) recommended the vetting of all officers in the RVIPF. There has been extensive discussion and intensive preparation for this. In recent months, I have been in discussion with the Police Service Commission (PoSC) encouraging its engagement with the Home Office vetting team to get the process underway. The PoSC is not yet in the position to do so. I am grateful to the PoSC for its work on vetting to date - we will continue to work together.

A police force that is not subject to proper vetting poses a risk to the security of the Territory. I have therefore made the necessary amendments to the Regulations, to get the process underway and engage the Home Office team. These have now been gazetted, and I have signed the agreement with the UK Home Office so that vetting can begin.

I wish to reiterate – the vetting of police officers is a standard process, designed to protect and assist professionals doing their job. My objective is to have all serving officers vetted by Autumn. At that point, for the first time in its history, the Virgin Islands will have a fully vetted police force. This will build trust within the force, and between agencies working in partnership with the RVIPF. It will also improve public confidence in the RVIPF. It is a positive step forward for the security of these islands and represents a significant milestone in completing the relevant Commission of Inquiry recommendation.

Police Commissioner Recruitment

Last Autumn, I suspended the recruitment process for the next Commissioner of Police. I did so in anticipation of the publication of the [second volume of the HMICFRS Law Enforcement Review](#), to more accurately define the person specification needed for this critical role. This has now taken place, and a [new recruitment campaign is now live](#).

The person specification identifies the high level of policing expertise and experience the RVIPF needs. It also describes the leadership qualities required to lead the RVIPF at this critical juncture in its history. We need a Police Commissioner who can deliver transformational change in a complex organisation, at a time when the challenges it faces are rapidly evolving. I am confident that the PoSC, Deputy Governor, the central HR team and I will be able to appoint a new Commissioner who is well placed to meet this challenge successfully. I hope to have that person in position by Autumn.

Today marks the start of two processes that will set the RVIPF on a positive pathway. A vetted police force with a permanent Commissioner in place will make the Virgin Islands a safer place, with all the benefits that brings to everyone who lives, works and visits here.

A police force relies on partnership with other agencies and partners beyond government. Above all, it relies on the support and cooperation of the community. Security is rooted in community, and I am confident that the RVIPF can count on us all to support it.

I want to pay tribute to the dedicated officers of the RVIPF who work tirelessly to protect and serve us. They are continuing to deliver as the organisation goes through these important changes. For that I am sincerely grateful, as I am sure are all people on these islands.