
Press Release from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Release Date: 17 July, 2025

16th July, 2025

On 15th July, 2025 a unanimous jury found Cathyoliva Richards guilty of two counts of Uttering Forged Documents contrary to section 257 (1) of the 2013 Criminal Code (as amended). The jury accepted that in two separate instances in January 2021 and June 2021 the Defendant, Ms Richards, presented to the Department of Labour and Workforce Development documents purporting to be Certificate of Earnings issued by the BVI Social Security Board.

On 15th July, 2025 a unanimous jury found Renee Smith guilty of the Acquisition, Possession or Use of the Proceeds of Criminal Conduct. The jury accepted that between 7th February, 2021 and 7th December, 2021, the Defendant, Ms Smith, knowingly had possession of a Mazda CX5 jeep that she suspected or believed was the proceeds of criminal conduct. The Defendant, Ms Smith, was on trial with Jose Antonio Almestica who was found guilty by unanimous jury for the following offences:

- Possession of a Controlled Drug, to wit 12.62kg of Cannabis with intent to supply.
- Possession of a Controlled Drug, to wit 469.76kg of Cocaine with intent to supply.
- Possession of a Prohibited Weapon, namely 1 Premier Firearm PF15 Rifle.
- Possession of an Unlicensed Firearm, namely 2 Glock 19 Pistols.
- Possession of an Unlicensed Firearm, namely 1 Ruger .357 Revolver.
- Possession of an Unlicensed Firearm, namely 1 Glock 27 Pistol.
- Possession of an Unlicensed Firearm, namely 1 Glock 21 Pistol.
- Unlawful Possession of Explosives, namely 6 live rounds of .357mm ammunition.
- Unlawful Possession of Explosives, namely 21 live rounds of .40mm ammunition.
- Unlawful Possession of Explosives, namely 42 live rounds of .45mm ammunition.

Sentencing for all matters will be set on dates in the next law term.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

Additional Documents or Media

- [press release from the odpp.pdf](#)