

3:15 p.m. press briefing statement from Virginia Tech Police Chief Wendell Flinchum

As you know, we received a report this morning from three young people, we think about 14 years old, who reported seeing a person with a weapon in the vicinity of Deitrick Dining Hall or New Residence Hall East. They gave a good description upon being interviewed.

Based on the information provided and lacking further information, we couldn't rule out that this wasn't credible. Therefore, we felt like there was no other option than to issue a campus alert and ask our people to remain secured indoors.

Let me be more specific. At 9:09 a.m. three juveniles attending a camp at the university reported seeing a white male, 6 feet tall, with light brown hair outside of New Residence Hall East holding what may have been a handgun. They say the weapon was covered by a cloth or covering of some sort. He was walking fast in the direction of the volleyball courts. He was wearing a blue and white striped shirt (stripes were vertical), gray shorts and brown sandals. The subject had no facial hair or glasses.

Officers responded immediately to the area but found no one matching the description. Police have encountered no other witnesses reporting this individual or anything suspicious. Law enforcement officers from VTPD, Blacksburg PD, Christiansburg PD, Virginia State Police, and Montgomery County Sheriff's Office are patrolling the campus, continuing to look for the subject.

We have kept the campus on alert since then through an abundance of caution. We believe that this was a most prudent course of action.

Since the time of the initial call (@9am this morning) there have been no on-going threats known or discovered. We have received NO other reports of a person with a gun or any other threatening behaviors. We have interviewed several persons similar in description to that provided by witnesses this morning. None of those subjects are the person described by the witnesses.

We continue to have a large police presence on campus and continue to search buildings. We will maintain an active presence across campus through the remainder of the day and evening. We will maintain patrols of campus using marked and unmarked police vehicles. We will continue to conduct walk-throughs of campus buildings and grounds

The three young people were from a group called Higher Achievement Camp. They are disadvantaged elementary and middle school students from the District of Columbia. They arrived on campus Tuesday and left today.