



By: TA | AP Brief

Were the security measures at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner sufficient?



The suspect detained after a **shooting** at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner is believed to have made it past the outermost layer of security at the event at which President Donald Trump was scheduled to speak because he was a guest of the hotel, officials said Saturday.

The **shooting suspect** was identified as Cole Tomas Allen, 31, of Torrance, California, two law enforcement officials told the AP.

Officials told reporters after the incident that Allen was armed with a shotgun, a handgun and multiple knives.

Security for the annual event is always tight when the president attends, especially given the venue's history — 45 years ago, the Washington Hilton was the site of an attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan — and law enforcement argued that their “multi-layered protection” worked as designed.

Still, the incident was sure to set off more questions about security around the president and political events in the wake of high-profile acts of political violence in recent years.

The perimeter at the Washington Hilton

The interim police chief for Washington's Metropolitan Police Department, Jeffery Carroll, told reporters Saturday evening that investigators believe that the suspect was staying in the hotel and that appears to be how he was able to enter the hotel at the time of the event.

The hotel was closed to the public beginning at 2 p.m. Saturday in anticipation of the dinner which began at 8 p.m.

Outside, dozens of protesters gathered in the rain — mostly directing their criticism at the media attending the event.

Access to the hotel was restricted to hotel

guests, people with tickets to the dinner itself, an invitation to one of the receptions that are held at the hotel before or after the dinner, or documents from the White House Correspondents' Association indicating affiliation with the dinner.

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The 2,300 guests at the event in the hotel's cavernous subterranean ballroom had to pass through several additional checks to enter the room, including showing tickets to association volunteers and hotel staff and passing through magnetometers manned by the Secret Service and Transportation Security Administration.

It was not immediately released when the suspect checked into the hotel.

Security camera footage released by Trump to social media shortly after the incident shows the gunman running past security officers who appear to be disassembling the metal detectors.

Once the president was seated in the ballroom, additional attendees were not permitted to enter the secured area, which is why they were taking them down.

“It shows that our multi-layered protection works,” Secret Service director Sean Curran said. His comments were echoed by Carroll, who said the security plan for the evening was developed by the Secret Service and “that security plan did work this evening.”