



## Air Force mum on details of false rape claim at Vogelweh

By SCOTT SCHONAUER | STARS AND STRIPES Published: November 5, 2005

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KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Air Force investigators on Friday would not explain how they determined that the initial claim that a 12-year-old girl was raped in Vogelweh housing on Halloween turned out to be false.

An Office of Special Investigations spokesman in Washington, D.C., said via e-mail Friday only that “the OSI investigation into this matter concluded that no sexual assault, of any kind, occurred.”

The investigation was conducted by Air Force OSI agents based in Kaiserslautern. However, Air Force spokesman Maj. Michael Blass referred questions about the case to OSI headquarters in Washington.

The OSI e-mail statement also said that any prior information released by Air Force spokesmen indicating the girl may have lied about being raped was “speculative in nature and is not the official statement of the Air Force OSI.”

“The individual in question is a minor. The Air Force is fully committed to the laws in place that protect the rights of minors. Therefore, we can not make any comments or attribute any information to a minor,” the statement said.

The allegations had parents fearing that a rapist was lurking in the Vogelweh housing area, and triggered increased security patrols around military schools in the Kaiserslautern area.

Late Thursday, the Air Force reported the allegations were false but gave little information as to how investigators came to that conclusion.

Three days earlier, Air Force investigators were seeking a black man between 20 and 30 years old for questioning.

Col. Richard Weathers, commander of the 38th Combat Support Wing, went on the military’s radio station to report that the girl had not been sexually assaulted.

He commended the quick reaction of the community and its support during the investigation.

Maj. Benny Barron, commander of the 569th U.S. Forces Police Squadron based at Vogelweh, said his unit received the initial call about the allegation and quickly boosted security. The squadron added three patrols around the schools.

After investigators determined the girl was not raped, security forces squadron members went back to normal operations.

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