



United States Army

Fort Richardson

Fort Richardson was an Army installation in Alaska, adjacent to the city of Anchorage. In 2010, it was merged with nearby Elmendorf Air Force Base to form Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Military Corner

Fort Richardson was named for military pioneer explorer, Brig. Gen. Wilds P. Richardson, who served three tours of duty in the rugged Alaska territory between 1897 and 1917.

During World War II, Fort Richardson was used briefly as a holding center for several family members of Alaskan Japanese Americans arrested after Pearl Harbor. Fifteen Japanese Americans and two German Americans were interned here before being transferred to other camps. Built during 1940-1941 on the site of what is now Elmendorf Air Force Base and established as the headquarters of the United States Army, Alaska (USARAK) in 1947, the post moved to its present location five miles (8 km) northeast of Anchorage in 1950. The post then had barracks for 500 soldiers, a rifle range, a few warehouses, a hospital, and bachelor officer quarters. From 1986-1994 the fort was headquarters of the 6th Infantry Division (Light). Fort Richardson is now headquarters for USARAK, a subordinate unit of United States Army Pacific Command. For more than a decade, the major combat unit at Fort Richardson was Task Force 1-501, the only airborne infantry battalion in the Pacific Theater. Task Force 1-501 deployed to Afghanistan from October 2003 through August 2004.



The post's largest military tenant is the Alaska National Guard, with facilities at Camp Carroll and Camp Denali. Fort Richardson also hosts several non-military activities, including a United States National Cemetery and a state-owned fish hatchery. According to the Fort's website there are 5,418 soldiers, as well as over 8,300 family members housed at the base as of June 2008. The Fort also employs about 1,200 Army and DOD civilian employees. Fort Richardson's military payroll for fiscal year 2003 was \$85 million. The civilian payroll was \$49 million. Including other expenditures of \$111 million, Fort Richardson put more than \$245 million into the local economy.

The fort encompasses 84,000 acres, which includes space for offices, family housing, a heliport, a drop zone suitable for airborne and air/land operations, firing ranges and other training areas. Nearby mountain ranges offer soldiers the opportunity to learn mountain/glacier warfare and rescue techniques.

