



Military Corner

United States Army

Fort Rucker, Alabama

Fort Rucker is a U.S. Army post located primarily in Dale County, Alabama. It was named for a Civil War officer, Confederate General Edmund Rucker. The post is the primary flight training installation for U.S. Army Aviators and is home to the United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence (USAACE) and the United States Army Aviation Museum. Its population was 4,636 at the 2010 census.

In the years before the September 11, 2001 attacks, the main post (except airfields and other restricted areas) was an open post with unmanned gates allowing civilians to drive through. Following the attacks, this policy was changed, and the post is now closed to unauthorized traffic and visitors.

The Army Aviation Center is the dominant military facility at Fort Rucker. Training, doctrine, and testing are all key parts of the Center's mission to develop Army Aviation's capabilities. All Army Aviation training has been undertaken at Fort Rucker since 1973, as well as training of US Air Force and ally helicopter pilots and air crew. The Center is home to the US Army Aviation Technical Test Center (ATTC), which conducts developmental aircraft testing for Army Aviation. The United States Army Operational Test and Evaluation Command's Test and Evaluation Coordination Office and TH-67 primary and instrument training are both located at Cairns Army Airfield.

Operational units on the post include the 1st Aviation Brigade and the 110th Aviation Brigade handling Army Aviation training, and the USAF 23d Flying Training Squadron for the training of Air Force helicopter pilots and air crew.

The camp was officially opened on 1 May 1942. Fort Rucker was opened on 1 May 1942 as "Camp Rucker", and had quarters for 3,280 Officers and 39,461 Enlisted Personnel. In September 1942, 1,259 additional acres were acquired for the construction of an airfield to support the training camp. It was known as Ozark Army Airfield until January 1959, when the name was changed to Cairns Army Airfield. The first troops to train at Camp Rucker were those of the 81st Infantry Division, which left Rucker for action in the Pacific Theater in March 1943. Three other infantry divisions received training at Camp Rucker during the Second World War—the 35th, the 98th, and the 66th. The 66th (Panther) Division left for the European Theater in October 1944. At the end of the war, the 91st and 94th Infantry Divisions were sent to Camp Rucker and deactivated. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Rucker]

