

Confederate Names and Military Installations

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On June 8, 2020, an [Army spokesperson made a statement](#) that the Secretary of Defense Mark Esper and the Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy are “open to a bi-partisan discussion” on renaming the Army’s 10 installations named after Confederate leaders. This statement follows the Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. David Berger’s message ([MARADMIN 331/20](#)) on June 5, 2020, instructing commanders to “identify and remove” displays of the Confederate battle flag on Marine bases. Gen. Berger’s order was signed following a [House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on February 11](#) regarding the rise of white supremacy in the ranks. A [2019 *Military Times* survey](#) found that “36 percent of troops who responded have seen evidence of white supremacist and racist ideologies in the military, a significant rise from the year before, when only 22 percent reported the same in the 2018 poll.” In addition to some Department of Defense (DOD) officials, certain Members of Congress have expressed interest in renaming military installations named after Confederate leaders. There is also interest in the DOD’s selection and approval process for naming military installations.

U.S. Military Bases Named in Honor of Confederate Military Leaders

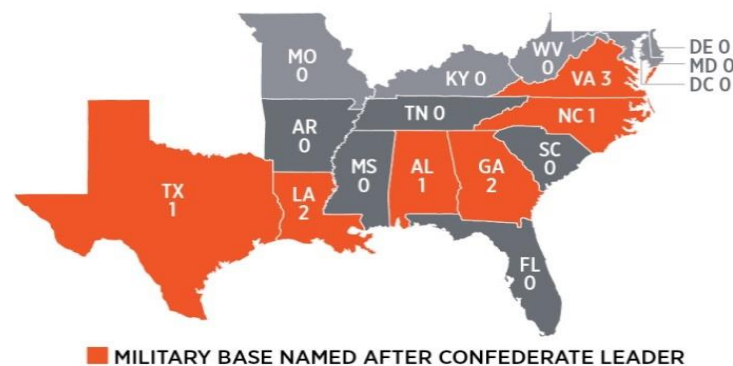
There are 10 major military installations named after Confederate Civil War commanders located in the former states of the Confederacy. These installations are all owned by the U.S. Army. They are: [Fort Rucker](#) (after Col. [Edmund W. Rucker](#), who was given the honorary title of “General”) in Alabama; [Fort Benning](#) (Brig. Gen. [Henry L. Benning](#)) and [Fort Gordon](#) (Maj. Gen. [John Brown Gordon](#)) in Georgia; [Camp Beauregard](#) (Gen. [Pierre Gustave Toutant “P.G.T.” Beauregard](#)) and [Fort Polk](#) (Gen. [Leonidas Polk](#)) in Louisiana; [Fort Bragg](#) (Gen. [Braxton Bragg](#)) in North Carolina; [Fort Hood](#) (Lt. Gen. [John Bell Hood](#)) in Texas; and [Fort A.P. Hill](#) (Lt. Gen. [Ambrose Powell “A.P.” Hill](#)), [Fort Lee](#) (Col. [Charles Cochrane Lee](#)), and [Fort Pickett](#) (Maj. Gen. [George Edward Pickett](#)) in Virginia.

According to the Army Center of Military History, Camp Beauregard and Forts Benning, Bragg, Gordon, and Lee were all established during World War I. The other forts (Hill, Hood, Pickett, Polk, and Rucker) were established in the 1940s. The U.S. Army Center website has a brief history on the process for [Naming Army Installations](#).

Congressional Research Service

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Source: Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), [Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy](#), updated February 1, 2019.

Naming Policy by Military Service

Currently, DOD does not have a department-wide review process to evaluate the naming of military installations. Each military service has its own naming criteria and approval process summarized below.

Army

In general, the naming of Army installations is the responsibility of the [Assistant Secretary of Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs \(ASA \(M&RA\)\)](#). However, the Secretary of the Army retains final approval authority for the Army Memorial Program—a program that oversees the naming of all Army real property. For the Army, the naming of a U.S. Army installation after a deceased individual is considered a *memorialization*, while naming an installation after a living individual is termed a *dedication*. The Army maintains separate criteria for memorialization and dedication of Army real property. The regulation that sets these criteria is Army Regulation (AR) 1-33, [The Army Memorial Program](#) (October 2018). In addition to dedicating and memorializing installations after people, the Army can also name an installation after an event. AR 1-33 provides a separate set of criteria for this “naming” and is defined as “the non-permanent naming of Army real property after famous battles and events.”

Navy

[OPNAV INSTRUCTION 5030.12H](#) (October 2017) explains the U.S. Navy’s policy and procedures for the naming of streets, facilities and structures. According to this instruction, “names selected should honor deceased members of the Navy.” It may also be appropriate to honor deceased persons other than Navy personnel who have made significant contributions to the benefit of the Navy. This instruction is applicable to naming a structure or building that is identified by a real property unique identifier or a street. Naming designations of internal portions of buildings or spaces can be assigned at the discretion of the local installation commander. The spokesman for the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday [announced on June 9](#), that Adm. Gilday directed his staff to draft an order that will ban the Confederate battle flag from all public spaces and work areas on Navy bases, ships, subs, and aircraft.

Marine Corps

The [Manual for the Marine Corps Historical Program](#) addresses the Commemorative Naming Program and specifies that “property may be named for individuals highly regarded within the Marine Corps and/or local communities. Names of deceased Marines, or members of other military organizations who died while serving with or in support of Marine Corps units, will be considered first.” A [Marine Corps Installations Command Policy Letter 3-15](#) offers guidance for Marine Corps Installations Command.

Air Force

[Air Force Manual 36-2806, *Awards and Memorialization Program*](#) (2019), sets Air Force policy for the Air Force’s memorialization program. The manual states “The memorialization program is designed to provide enduring honor and tribute to living and deceased military members and civilians with records of outstanding and honorable service through the naming of Air Force installations, streets, buildings, and interior spaces of buildings.” Chapter 4 of the manual provides naming criteria and approval authorities for Air Force installations, and states: “When naming an Air Force installation ensure only the most deserving individuals are selected for memorialization. Selections should bring honor to the Air Force and reflect the goodwill of the local community.”

Author Information

Barbara Salazar Torreon
Senior Research Librarian

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