

Devens Reserve Forces Training Area (Devens RFTA) is an Army Reserve installation established on April 1, 1996. Devens RFTA was previously a sub-installation of Fort Dix, NJ from January 2008 to the closure of Fort Dix in October 2009. Devens RFTA's Installation/Senior Commander is the 99th Readiness Division (RD) Commanding General located at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL), NJ. Devens RFTA is managed by U.S. Army Garrison (USAG) Devens RFTA which is a U.S. Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) organization. The USAG Devens RFTA Commander is the installation's Garrison Commander directly supporting the Installation/Senior Commander's responsibilities. USAG Devens RFTA is an IMCOM-Readiness (ID-R) suborganization of Army Support Activity (ASA) Fort Dix at JB MDL. Before Devens RFTA, there was Fort Devens.

Fort Devens was established on September 5, 1917 as Camp Devens to serve as a temporary cantonment for training Soldiers during World War I. Camp Devens was named in honor of Major General Charles Devens Jr., a veteran of the American Civil War, a Massachusetts State Senator, Massachusetts Supreme Court Justice, and U.S. Attorney General.

During the World War I era, three divisions (12th, 26th and 76th) were activated and trained at Camp Devens. A reception center for selectees following the end of WWI, the camp was designated a demobilization center. From 1922 to 1931, Camp Devens was utilized as a summer training camp for New England-based National Guard troops, Reserve Units, ROTC cadets, and Citizens' Military Training Camp (CMTC) candidates. In 1929, Robert Goddard, a pioneer in rocketry, used the installation as a rocket test site.

Camp Devens became a permanent installation in 1931 and was officially named Fort Devens in 1932. In 1940, at the onset of World War II, Fort Devens was designated a reception center for all men in New England who would serve one year as draftees. A massive construction program for Fort Devens was instituted in 1940. More than 1,200 wooden buildings, including two new hospitals, were constructed. In 1941, the Fort Devens Airfield (Moore Army Airfield) was built. The 1st, 32nd, and 45th Divisions along with the 4th Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) trained at Fort Devens during WWII. Fort Devens also housed a prisoner of war camp for German and Italian prisoners from 1944 to 1946. In addition to training WWII combat Soldiers, Fort Devens was the home of the Chaplain School, the Cook and Baker School, and a Basic Training Center for Army nurses.

After WWII, Fort Devens Units deployed and bravely fought in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf Wars. The Army Security Agency Training Center & School (ASATC&S) was established at Fort Devens in April 1951. The school became known as the U.S. Army Intelligence School, Devens, or USAISD, and was moved to Fort Huachuca, AZ in 1996. Fort Devens was also the home of the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from 1968 until the Group's move to Fort Carson, CO in 1995.

The 1991 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommended the closure of Fort Devens. Former Secretary of the Army Togo West signed Army General Order 1996-02 which officially closed Fort Devens on March 31, 1996 and opened Devens RFTA the following day. Devens RFTA has since proudly supported New England's Joint Warfighters who have recently fought in both Iraq and Afghanistan and supported numerous other overseas and stateside

operations. Notable Warfighters previously stationed at Fort Devens include: Medal of Honor recipients COL Paris Davis and MSG Gary Gordon, and former U.S. Secretary of State GEN Colin Powell.

“History of Fort Devens.” *Fort Devens Reserve Force Training Center*. Copyright: 2023.
Retrieved 30 June 2023.

<https://home.army.mil/devens/index.php/Misson%20and%20Vision/history>