



Vietnam and the Home Front: How DoD Installations Adapted, 1962-1975

Project # 12-518

Background:

In the United States, the buildup for the Vietnam War included construction of mission-related buildings and structures to support the war. Typically the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, requires federal agencies to inventory and evaluate their cultural resources as they near 50 years of age. These properties are about to turn 50, and no historic context exists describing the mission related facility needs for supporting the Vietnam War. This Legacy project addresses the need for a broad overview from 1962 through 1975, providing a knowledge foundation of the U.S. military's involvement in Vietnam. The report highlights the Vietnam War-era influenced construction that created facilities on many installations. This new construction augmented the existing World War II-era infrastructure that was heavily re-utilized in support of the Vietnam War.



Recruit training and housing facility, Lackland AFB, early 1970s (37th Training Wing).

Objective:

The objective of this effort was to research, investigate, and write a broad historic context on how DoD installations in the United States adapted and changed to the conflict in Vietnam.

Summary of Approach:

Since very little has been researched and written about DoD construction history during 1962–1975, this effort looked at the broad history of construction on the home front and highlighted areas that need more in-depth research; in that way, this report is unlike most historic contexts which include a list of important building types, integrity analyses, and character-defining

features. In addition, the report contains proportionately more information about the Army, relative to other services, as a result of the Army having both proportionally more personnel in-country and more installations at home. The process included a literature review, investigation of primary and secondary sources for content, field work at installations, and report production.

Benefit:

This report should be utilized to develop more detailed research that will lead to identification and evaluation of specific Vietnam-era facilities at Department of Defense military installations in the United States. The historical context provides military cultural resources professionals with a standardized approach to determine the historical significance of Vietnam-era facilities, greatly increasing efficiency and cost-savings of this necessary effort to the U.S. military.

Accomplishments:

Determining significance under the Vietnam War context for properties built on U.S. installations between 1962 and 1975 is keyed upon answering the question “what facilities here affected soldiers’ lives in theater?” Facilities may be significant for NRHP Criterion A during this period if directly related to one or more of the following historical themes:

- housing and training of the Vietnam War U.S. troop buildup
- providing specialized military technical training that was utilized by the U.S. military in fighting the Vietnam War
- meeting the Vietnam War’s U. S. medical needs
- meeting the Vietnam War’s U.S. logistical needs

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