

From Personal Conflicts to Terrorism: The Spectrum of Violence at U.S. Military Bases

August 7, 2025

— Categories: Defence & Security



A recent shooting that injured five soldiers at Fort Stewart in Georgia highlights the continued security concerns across U.S. military bases, where violence has ranged from personal disputes to terrorism.

Shootings on military installations in the United States have occurred with troubling frequency over the past two decades. While military bases

are typically seen as secure zones, recent incidents have shown they are not immune to internal threats. The Fort Stewart shooting is the latest example, allegedly involving a fellow service member, drawing fresh attention to how violence can erupt from within the ranks.

The range of motives behind these attacks varies. In 2009, a U.S. Army psychiatrist killed 13 people and wounded more than 30 at Fort Hood, Texas, in an act the government classified as terrorism. In 2019, a Saudi Air Force officer fatally shot three U.S. sailors at Naval Air Station Pensacola, an attack that investigators also linked to terrorism. Other shootings have stemmed from workplace tensions, domestic issues, and untreated mental health conditions.

Although not all incidents have been deadly, many have exposed vulnerabilities in how military communities manage interpersonal conflict and monitor warning signs. In some cases, base personnel expressed concerns before attacks, but the warning signs were missed or downplayed.

Security experts argue that while bases have strengthened physical security measures, the greater challenge lies in identifying behavioral red flags before violence occurs. They also stress the importance of mental health support and improved reporting systems to ensure service members can speak up when they sense a colleague might pose a risk.

The Pentagon has not issued new public guidance in response to the Fort Stewart case but has confirmed that an internal investigation is underway. Officials say the injured soldiers are in stable condition and that the suspect is in custody.

These recurring incidents highlight a growing need for comprehensive approaches to base security, ones that prioritize early detection and prevention of internal threats, not just external ones. As service members continue to operate in high-pressure environments, safeguarding their well-being and preventing future violence remain pressing concerns for military leadership.