

# AMERICAN RED CROSS ARMED FORCES EMERGENCY SERVICES

## The American Red Cross supports military members and their families

The American Red Cross is there for all members of the Armed Forces. While serving 1.4 million active duty personnel and their immediate family members, the Red Cross also reaches out to the more than 800,000 members of the National Guard/Reserves and their immediate family members who reside in nearly every community in America. Around the clock and around the globe, during times of personal crisis, the Red Cross keeps the American people in touch with their family members serving in the U.S. military with:

- **Emergency communication services.** The Red Cross is a lifeline to members of the U.S. Armed Forces sending communications all over the world on behalf of family members who are facing emergencies or other important events. The Red Cross provides this service quickly through a network of chapters, stations, communication centers and staff members serving on military installations and major deployment sites worldwide. This network links military personnel any place in the world (including ships at sea, embassies and isolated military units) with their loved ones. The information in the message assists the command to make a valid decision regarding emergency leave. In FY06, the Red Cross provided 661,986 emergency communication services to military families worldwide.
- **Outreach to members of the National Guard/Reserves and their families.** The Red Cross found that all too often community-based military didn't know about valuable Red Cross services until they were mobilized. Since 2000, the Red Cross has been reaching out to this population through the Get to Know Us Program.
- **Social services** including access to financial assistance, counseling, family support and assistance with representation at the Board of Veterans Appeals.
- **Staff members who deploy overseas** along with members of the military and handle emergency communications. They can offer respite from harsh conditions and bring a little bit of home to the troops by operating a 24-hour canteen service with coffee, cold drinks, snacks, games, videos and books. Red Cross teams also visit patients in clinics and hospitals.
- **Family support groups** at many Red Cross chapters and stations. Here family members can be with others who are also learning to cope with separation and about community resources that can help them.

## How to access Red Cross assistance

- Active duty service members stationed in the United States and their immediate family members may call the Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Service Centers for help 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The toll-free telephone number is available through base or installation operators and from local on-base Red Cross offices.

Other family members who do not reside in the service members' household, members of the National Guard and Reserves, retirees and civilians may access Red Cross services through their local Red Cross chapter, which is listed in local telephone books and at <http://www.redcross.org/where/where.html>.

Overseas personnel stationed on military installations should call base or installation operators or the on-base Red Cross offices.

At overseas deployment sites, contact the American Red Cross deployed staff members.

## How do we do it?

- ★ With 24-hour, 7-days-a-week, 365-days-a-year emergency communication services reaching military installations, embassies and ships at sea around the world.
- ★ With 15,685 volunteers serving in Red Cross chapters throughout the United States and on military installations worldwide.
- ★ With a worldwide emergency communication network with 2 Armed Forces Emergency Services Centers, more than 804 chapters across the nation and offices on 62 nationally-managed military installations across the globe.

## How did we perform in FY 2006?

- ★ The Red Cross provided 661,986 emergency communication services to military families worldwide.
- ★ \$5,287,115 in emergency financial aid was delivered to 6,329 service members, their families, retired military personnel and widows of retired military personnel in partnership with the military aid societies.
- ★ Through the Get to Know Us Program, we briefed 678,452 National Guard/Reserve and ROTC members and families in communities throughout the U.S. as they deployed in response to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Funding for American Red Cross assistance is paid for largely through donations from the American people.