

NEWS RELEASE from the Department of Defense

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"ANY SERVICEMEMBER" WEB SITES ANNOUNCED

The Department of Defense announced today an alternative to the "Any Servicemember" and "Operation Dear Abby" programs, which were suspended indefinitely in the wake of anthrax mail attacks.

The Navy has developed a Web-based alternative to benefit members of all Services. The program can be reached at the Navy LIFELines Services Network at <http://www.LIFELines2000.org> or <http://AnyServiceMember.Navy.mil>

Those who want to send a message of support or holiday greeting to military servicemembers will find a simple process for delivering messages at these sites. The "Any Servicemember" program allows participants to select from one or all branches of the military.

To receive a message of support, servicemembers will log onto the Web site and choose messages for their branch of Service and home state. Those sending a message who wish to receive a response may include a return e-mail address. Since all messages are viewed on the Web, the military's regular e-mail service is not affected.

"Operation Dear Abby" was founded by the newspaper advice columnist and has delivered mail to servicemembers overseas during the holiday season for more than 17 years. The "Any Servicemember" mail program began during Operation Desert Storm in 1990, and continued to grow during operations in Bosnia, starting in 1995.

Other alternatives for supporting deployed servicemembers were announced in an Oct. 30 news release, available at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct2001/b10302001_bt556-01.html