

Current Status of Message Delivery in Kuwait/Iraq March 31, 2003

The staff on the ground in Kuwait continues to be challenged in delivering emergency messages to service members. The great majority of Marines and Army personnel are currently under combat conditions. Due to these combat situations there are frequent communication blackouts.

However, family members can be assured that every emergency message is being delivered to commands on the ground. Commands then pass these messages to the service member.

The communication blackout means it is not possible to reach the unit by telephone or email. It is currently taking an average of 48-72 hours for emergency messages to reach the forward commands for delivery to service members. It is also taking a week or more for the command to confirm messages have been delivered to the service member.

Due to these combat conditions, family members should expect significant delays in confirmation of message delivery. There will also be significant delays in contact from the service member as no individual communication is possible at this time.

These conditions will continue as long as units are moving forward and under combat conditions. It is critical that we manage family expectations. This is the first time in many years when large numbers of US military forces have been engaged in such lengthy combat.

We will continue to keep you advised.