



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

FACT SHEET

Joint Hometown News Service, located in San Antonio, Texas, showcases the accomplishments and worldwide activities of individual soldiers and airmen through the production of print and electronic news feature releases. Products are distributed to commercial media outlets in the individual soldiers' and airmen's hometowns free of charge.

Video News Releases: Ninety-second TV feature stories generated from field interviews with individual soldiers and airmen around the world involved in newsworthy events or activities.

Radio News Releases: Sixty-second radio feature stories generated from field interviews with soldiers and airmen around the world involved in newsworthy events or activities.

Print News Releases: Short news releases generated from DD Form 2266 News Release submissions on soldiers and airmen highlighting awards, promotions, reassignments and other accomplishments.

Print/Photo Feature Releases: In-depth personality features on soldiers and airmen generated from field interviews with service members involved in newsworthy events or unique activities.

Holiday Greetings Messages: Short video and audio messages from service members stationed overseas who won't be home with their families during the holiday season.

2003 Production Statistics

<u>Release Category</u>	<u>Number of Releases</u>	<u>Number of Media Subscribers</u>	<u>Potential Audience</u>
Print News	857,885	8,718	8,437,897,000
Print/Photo Feature	5,360	6,369	50,769,000
Radio News	2,203	2,447	23,581,000
Video News	3,051	1,208	107,931,000
Holiday Greetings*	26,740	2,538	56,704,000

*Includes TV and Radio

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

PRODUCTS

Video News Releases: Your chance to visually show the American public what your soldiers and airmen are doing. Ninety-second feature stories on soldiers and airmen involved in newsworthy events are compiled from field interviews and edited into stand-alone stories on each individual service member. Releases are marketed to TV and cable stations in the service members' hometowns. Over 1,200 broadcast outlets subscribe to our service.

Radio News Releases: An excellent alternative to video, these sixty-second feature stories on soldiers and airmen involved in newsworthy events around the world are extremely popular with the 2,440 plus radio stations subscribing to our service. Individual interviews are taped in the field then edited into stand-alone news releases for hometown radio stations. Digital recording and editing equipment ensure a quality product and a high usage rate with commercial radio stations. It's an excellent way to get your organization and your troops on the airways.

Print News Releases: Short news releases on soldiers and airmen world-wide highlighting awards, promotions, reassignments, graduation from military schools, and other accomplishments. Generated from DD Form 2266 Hometown News Release forms submitted from the field, releases average 2-4 column inches and are consolidated into "In the Service" or "Military News" sections by most editors. Accompanying photos can also be submitted. A little effort goes a long way in ensuring your service members get the recognition they deserve through the 8,718 newspapers using our service.

Print/Photo Feature Releases: These in-depth personality features, which normally result in a one-half to full page spread, are generated from interviews conducted at field locations around the world, and include a personal photo of each individual and several "stock" photos of the event or story line. An excellent tool for documenting the activities of your service members, and a popular service with more than 6,369 newspapers who love putting a local face with a national story or a far-away place.

Holiday Greetings Messages: Short, 10-15 second messages from service members stationed overseas from your area who won't be home with their families during the holiday season. Available in both video and audio, this program is in its 25th year and is more popular with commercial TV and radio broadcast stations than ever.

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

DD FORM 2266 NEWS RELEASES

The DD Form 2266 Hometown News Release Program is a commander's program, administered by public affairs offices. It provides commanders worldwide a quick, simple way to showcase the accomplishments and activities of their individual soldiers and airmen.

Events such as promotions, awards, reassignments, participation in exercises, graduation from military schools and many others meet the requirements for Hometown News coverage. The Hometown News Release Guidebook provides additional guidance.

A soldier or airman simply fills out a DD Form 2266 and forwards it through his public affairs office to Hometown News, who uses it to produce a news release which is marketed to hometown newspapers in locations where he or she has family ties. Photographs are not required, but may be submitted with the DD Form 2266 if desired.

Over 8,718 commercial newspapers subscribe to the free Hometown News Service—reaching hometowns in all 50 states and U.S. territories— with a potential readership over 200 million.

Production Statistics

<u>Year</u>	<u>Forms Received</u>	<u>News</u>	<u>Releases Generated</u>
2003	132,373		857,885
2002	159,348		867,262
2001	124,774		1,003,368
2000	151,088		535,880
1999	147,235		618,490

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

PRINT FEATURE RELEASES

It's human nature to seek recognition, and one program that maximizes recognition of soldiers and airmen in their hometown newspapers is the Hometown News Print Features program.

Going far beyond the normal hometown news release recognizing such things as promotions and awards, the print features program spotlights individuals in unique assignments, locales, exercises or events.

Two-person teams travel worldwide, interviewing soldiers and airmen on stories as diverse as participation in current operations like Iraqi Freedom, historic ones like Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia and Hungary or Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, high visibility events like the Olympics, or humanitarian efforts like New Horizons in Ecuador or firefighting in Oregon.

Those interviewed are provided with a modified hometown news release form where they are asked to provide next-of-kin information similar to a regular hometown news release. On the back of the form, they are asked to respond to a series of questions about their role or responsibilities or to describe their surroundings or feelings. These responses are then turned into quotations in the feature story. Each person is then photographed in a position that best portrays his or her job.

An in-depth, three to four page full length feature story is produced, incorporating each person's quotations, a personal photo and usually two or more stock photographs depicting the various aspects of the story. Marketing elements such as a feedback card, request for tearsheet and postage-paid return envelope are included in each features package to maximize a response from each newspaper.

During 2003, over 5,360 releases were sent to daily and weekly newspapers nationwide. These stories, many of which were front page or full-page spreads, were seen by over 50 million readers from throughout the country.

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

VIDEO NEWS RELEASES

Hometown News video news teams produce ninety-second feature stories on soldiers and airmen around the world involved in newsworthy events. Stories are marketed free-of-charge to television and cable broadcast outlets in the service members' hometowns.

Hometown's teams log thousands of miles each year, traveling to the scene of military operations such as major exercises, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian relief efforts. From winter exercises in the snows of Alaska, to the austere mountains of Afghanistan or the sands of the Sinai and Kuwait, Hometown TV crews have recorded the unique and personal stories of the military players in the news event. Often Hometown News reporters are among the first media to get to the story, as told through the service member's own words. And it's all captured using the latest video technology to insure commercial broadcast standards.

Once the interviews are edited with the event's stock footage into stand-alone news releases, Hometown News marketing resources are used to target the news packages to TV outlets serving the service members' families. Only those outlets 'subscribing' to the Hometown News service receive the product. Currently 1,208 outlets in virtually every TV market in the U.S. are included in our marketing database.

Hometown News distributes video products on the most popular tape formats, including VHS, 3/4" U-Matic, DV and 1/2" Betacam SP. Each release includes font information, a suggested anchor introduction, and a script. Pre-paid response cards are also included to collect usage statistics and other comments from News Directors.

During 2003, over 3,050 video news releases were distributed to a potential viewing audience of 107 million people. The Video News Release Program cost an average of \$1.28 for every 1,000 viewers reached, recouping thousands of times that amount in positive exposure for the Army and Air Force.

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

RADIO NEWS RELEASES

Out of all the hometown news products offered to the American media, Radio is the closest to pure hard news. These crisp, concise 60-second bites of information give the hometown audience a glimpse of a national or international event through the voice of a local man or woman.

A radio team made up of a lone broadcaster travels throughout the Army and Air Force focusing on such stories as humanitarian efforts, high visibility or exotic exercises, new technology and “real world” peacekeeping missions. If the event has a public interest, Hometown radio matches a local voice to give radio stations a viable news product. Audio releases have the highest air rate of any hometown news broadcast product.

Individual interviews are collected in the field and each one is inserted into a 30 to 40 second “stock” story back at the studio. Hometown News broadcasters use the latest state-of-the-art digital audio editing equipment to produce quality broadcast products.

Over 2,440 radio stations nationwide subscribe to the hometown news service. During 2003 over 2,203 individual releases netted a potential listening audience of over 23 million.

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

The seedling of an idea that began against the backdrop of the lonely desert landscape of the Sinai peninsula over 25 years ago, in an attempt to allow soldiers and airmen assigned to the multinational peacekeeping force to say hello to family and friends back home during the holiday season, has mushroomed into a program that today literally blankets the world.

The Holiday Greetings program is a Broadcast News Division production involving three video teams— one Pacific, one European, and one Mediterranean— who set up camera and microphone at overseas bases, lonely outposts and aboard ships to allow soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines the chance to send video greetings to family and friends back home.

Over 26,740 of these 15 to 20-second radio and video greetings were mailed to 2,538 radio, television and cable stations nationwide for use during the holiday season in 2003. Most stations create elaborate productions where they key special graphics around the greetings and air them at selected times from Thanksgiving to New Years.

The Holiday Greetings program continues to grow in popularity, both with commercial TV and cable stations and with military organizations overseas. In recent years, Hometown News has teamed up with the Navy's Fleet Hometown News Center to tape greetings for sailors and Marines aboard ships deployed around the world.

The popularity of the program has grown so much that Hometown News is implementing a program to collect and distribute holiday greetings for publication in hometown newspapers.

The Holiday Greetings program is by far the most cost effective of any of our electronic media products. A recent survey showed that if only half of the television stations receiving holiday greetings used them (a conservatively low number), at an average commercial cost for air time of \$17,366 per station, we would net over \$8.5 million in free exposure, after production costs.

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

HOMETOWNLINK

HometownLink, the Joint Hometown News Service web site, contains samples of Hometown News products, including print features, radio and video news releases. It also contains an image section where photographs taken by Hometown photographers are posted in both low and high resolution format. The site is an excellent tool for promoting the Hometown News program with soldiers and airmen or your organization's leadership.

Radio news releases are posted in Real Media and Windows Media formats, and can be listened to using the free players. Video news releases are posted as both Real Media and Windows Media files.

Hometown link has been designed as a tool to assist public affairs personnel in marketing and executing their Hometown News programs. The site includes a password-protected section for public affairs personnel only. This section of the site provides on-line forms for submitting DD Form 2266 Hometown News Releases electronically, using HTML, PDF or FormFlow forms. Guidance on use of the forms, as well as the DD Form 2266 Hometown News Release Guidebook, are available on the site.

The secure area also includes a form for PAO use in submitting story ideas or requesting Hometown News coverage, and public affairs related information and guidance on all aspects of the Hometown News program. The site also includes the capability for registrants to access their statistics on the number of DD Form 2266's submitted, releases distributed, etc...

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 /DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>



JOINT HOMETOWN NEWS SERVICE

CONTACTS

Director Mr. Chad C. Starr	Commercial (210) 925-6541 DSN 945-6541
Deputy Director Mr. Larry Gilliam	Commercial (210) 925-6541 DSN 945-6541
Chief, Marketing Mr. Gerry Proctor	Commercial (210) 925-9733 DSN 945-9733
Chief, Broadcast Div Mr. Kris Grogan	Commercial (210) 925-6261 DSN 945-6261
NCOIC, Television Branch MSgt Angie Sarchet	Commercial (210) 925-6261 DSN 945-6261
Chief, Radio Branch Mr. Erich Schwab	Commercial (210) 925-6261 DSN 945-6261
Chief, Print Division Mr. Rich Lamance	Commercial (210) 925-5961 DSN 945-5961
Chief, DD Form 2266 Branch Ms. Katherine Casanova	Commercial (210) 925-6502 DSN 945-6502
Chief, Print Features Branch Mr. Michael Tolzmann	Commercial (210) 925-5961 DSN 945-5961
Chief, Imaging Branch MSgt Cecilio Ricardo	Commercial (210) 925-5252 DSN 945-5252

Joint Hometown News Service
Defense Media Activity
203 Norton Street • San Antonio, Texas 78226-1848
(210) 925-6541 / DSN 945-6541 • Fax: (210) 925-3467
hometown@afnews.af.mil
<http://hq.afnews.af.mil/hometown>