

U.S. Helps Haitians Keep Earthquake Survivors Informed

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 26, 2010

PORT-AU-PRINCE - Haitian police and civilian volunteers, assisted by the U.S. military distributed more than 43,800 hand-held radios to survivors of the devastating Jan. 12 earthquake. In a collaborative effort, the team handed out self-powered radios at major distribution centers in Cité Soleil, the Presidential Palace, the Petionville Club and other affected areas throughout the city.

The radios allow disaster survivors to receive news and important information concerning international relief efforts and public safety messages daily.

“The radios make a difference (to the Haitian people) in terms of morale and isolation,” said U.S. Army Maj. Dan Castro, from Joint Task Force-Haiti. “The people displaced in camps told me they feel at least connected despite their plight.”

In close coordination with the government of Haiti, local radio stations and JTF-Haiti disseminate news, public health, safety and information regarding relief efforts to the affected populace.

“All were able to operate the solar, hand-cranked radios and are listening to local radio stations now back on the air” Castro added. “Along with critical information, many also are listening to faith-based messages from local radio stations, which are very important to this deeply religious culture.” All information is broadcast in Haitian Creole.

The small emergency radios, which do not require batteries, also are equipped with a small light that provides an added sense of security at night.

U.S. agencies continue to work together as a unified response team in support of the Government of Haiti and the United Nations.

The role of U.S. military forces during this humanitarian assistance and disaster relief effort is to rapidly respond with critically needed supplies and medical services in those areas the Haitian government deems necessary.