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Improved Personal Wi-Fi Service Coming to Navy Lodging, MWR Facilities Worldwide

Keeping in touch with loved ones is about to get much easier. The Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM) and its vendor partner, ViaSat, are upgrading personal telecommunications services for Wi-Fi in Navy Lodges, unaccompanied housing, Navy Gateway Inns & Suites (NGIS) and Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) facilities worldwide.

“By expanding our existing pay-as-you-go Wi-Fi service, we are able to offer a true enterprise solution for our military members and their families,” said Mary Morse, Vice President, NEXCOM’s Telecommunications Program Office. “Once a person signs up for basic Wi-Fi service, it can be used on Navy bases where Wi-Fi access is made available, such as lodging and MWR facilities, anywhere around the world.”

In lodging facilities, including Navy Lodges and NGIS, bandwidth speeds on the basic service plan will increase from 2 Mb/s to 5 Mb/s, with a 3 Mb/s guaranteed minimum speed. Users will be able to stream videos and Skype to loved ones back home, quicker and easier. The basic service plan in lodging facilities will be complimentary. However, users can pay to upgrade their service to include additional bandwidth up to 30 Mb/s.

“Previously, users couldn’t purchase additional bandwidth, which is needed if they want to watch movies or play games while staying in a Navy lodging facility,” said Morse. “This is especially important for those military and family members who may be staying for extended periods of time.”

A new feature, Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP), will allow guests free in-room phone calls to and from the United States while staying at NGIS or Navy Lodges. Previously, guests paid for all in-room calls. Guests will also be able to roam seamlessly between rooms within the same building without being disconnected.

For military members residing in unaccompanied housing, the cost for Wi-Fi service remains the same, but the bandwidth has been greatly expanded. Now, users will get 30 Mb/s per month for the same price they are currently paying for 6 Mb/s.

Most Navy locations will receive these new services by the end of 2015, except for Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, which will receive the new services in early 2016.

About NEXCOM

The Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM) oversees 100 Navy Exchange (NEX) facilities and nearly 300 stores worldwide, 39 Navy Lodges, the Ships Stores Program, the Uniform Program Management Office, the Navy Clothing Textile and Research Facility and the Telecommunications Program Office. NEXCOM's parent command is the Naval Supply Systems Command. NEXCOM's mission is to provide authorized customers quality goods and services at a savings and to support quality of life programs for active duty military, retirees, reservists and their families. NEXs and Navy Lodges operate primarily as a non-appropriated fund (NAF) business instrumentality. NEX revenues generated are used to support Navy Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs. In FY14, \$2.7 billion in sales were generated with \$46.6 million in dividends provided to Navy MWR programs.