



## Free VoIP Calls for U.S. Troops in Iraq

October 5, 2005

By [Ted Stevenson](#)

RNKVoIP, a division of full-service CLEC and telecommunications company [RNK Telecom](#), based in Dedham, Mass., today announced it is working with the [Freedom Calls Foundation](#) to provide free VoIP calls to U.S. service men and women, from three locations Iraq.

"U.S. troops want to reach out and touch their families and friends," said RNK Telecom president Richard Koch "With RNKVoIP, U.S. soldiers can make unlimited calls to anywhere in the U.S. free of charge," he added.

Koch noted that the three locations served are 'transfer points,' with large numbers of military personnel passing through each day. At Camp Taji, 23 miles northwest of Baghdad, some 1,500 troops on an average day, have an opportunity to stop in at RNK's IP phone stations and call home to the U.S. Did we mention that calls are totally free of charge? They are, and the phone facilities are open 24x7. Similar facilities are in operation at Camp Fallujah, and at Al Asad airbase.

RNK's phones communicate over a Freedom Calls Foundation-supplied satellite VoIP uplink. Stateside, RNK downlinks the traffic to its switch in Massachusetts, transporting calls anywhere in the U.S. by the most efficient means—IP or PSTN.

It's just a way to make a contribution, commented Rich Koch. "These kids are putting their butts on the line for us every day," he told *VoIPplanet.com*. "This is something we can offer in return."

In fact, since 2003, RNK has been engaged in a similar program—which they've dubbed Connect for Freedom—in conjunction with the USO of New England. With Cff, members of service personnel's families can not only call their mothers, fathers, or other relatives on overseas deployment, they can use the VoIP service to stay in touch with other important family members, should parents be unreachable, on special assignment, for example.

If there were any doubt that the Iraq phone project was meeting a real need, the Army has requested that the Freedom Calls Foundation set up an additional eight calling centers in Iraq and two more in Afghanistan. Will RNKVoIP be a participant? "If the Foundation asks us, we will be there," said Koch.