



Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians

Susan G. Chesser
Information Research Specialist

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Summary

This report collects statistics from a variety of sources on casualties sustained during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), which began on October 7, 2001, and is ongoing. OEF actions take place primarily in Afghanistan; however, OEF casualties also includes American casualties in Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Guantanamo Bay (Cuba), Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Yemen.

Casualty data of U.S. military forces are compiled by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), as tallied from the agency's press releases. Also included are statistics on those wounded but not killed. Statistics may be revised as circumstances are investigated and as records are processed through the U.S. military's casualty system. More frequent updates are available at DOD's website at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/> under "Casualty Update."

A detailed casualty summary of U.S. military forces that includes data on deaths by cause, as well as statistics on soldiers wounded in action, is available at the following DOD website: <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/castop.htm>.

NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) does not post casualty statistics of the military forces of partner countries on the ISAF website at <http://www.isaf.nato.int/>. ISAF press releases state that it is ISAF policy to defer to the relevant national authorities to provide notice of any fatality. For this reason, this report uses fatality data of coalition forces as compiled by CNN.com and posted online at <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2004/oef.casualties/index.html>.

Casualty data of Afghan civilians are reported quarterly by the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA). Deaths of Afghan National Police and Afghan National Army personnel are reported by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction in the quarterly reports to Congress that are required as part of P.L. 110-181.

Because the estimates of Afghan casualties contained in this report are based on varying time periods and have been created using different methodologies, readers should exercise caution when using them and should look to them as guideposts rather than as statements of fact.

This report will be updated as needed.

The following tables present data on U.S. military casualties in Operation Enduring Freedom, deaths of coalition partners in Afghanistan, and Afghan civilian casualties, respectively.

Table 1. Operation Enduring Freedom, U.S. Fatalities and Wounded

as of March 4, 2010, 10 a.m. EST from October 7, 2001

| | Fatalities In and Around Afghanistan ^a | Fatalities in Other Locations ^b | Total Fatalities | Wounded in Action | |
|--------------------------|---|--|------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Hostile ^c | 720 | 8 | 728 | Returned to Duty within 72 Hours | 2,177 |
| Non-Hostile ^d | 207 | 68 | 275 | Not Returned to Duty within 72 Hours | 2,954 |
| Total | 927 | 76 | 1,003 | Total | 5,131 |

Source: <http://www.defense.gov/news/casualty.pdf>

- a. "Fatalities in and around Afghanistan" include casualties that occurred in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan.
- b. "Other locations" includes casualties that occurred in Guantanamo Bay (Cuba), Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Yemen.
- c. According to the Department of Defense *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, as amended through 31 August 2005, a "hostile casualty" is a victim of a terrorist activity or a casualty as the result of combat or attack by any force against U.S. forces, available at <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA43918>.
- d. The above-named reference defines a "nonhostile casualty" as a casualty that is not directly attributable to hostile action or terrorist activity, such as casualties due to the elements, self-inflicted wounds, or combat fatigue.

Table 2. Deaths of Coalition Partners in Afghanistan

| Country | # of Deaths | Country | # of Deaths |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| Australia | 11 | Lithuania | 1 |
| Belgium | 1 | Netherlands | 21 |
| Canada | 140 | Norway | 5 |
| Czech Republic | 3 | Poland | 16 |
| Denmark | 29 | Portugal | 2 |
| Estonia | 7 | Romania | 12 |
| Finland | 1 | South Korea | 1 |
| France | 40 | Spain | 28 |
| Germany | 31 | Sweden | 4 |
| Hungary | 2 | Turkey | 2 |
| Italy | 22 | United Kingdom | 268 |
| Latvia | 3 | — | — |
| Total Non-U.S. Coalition Fatalities | | | 650 |

Source: CNN U.S. and Coalition Casualties, <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2004/oef.casualties/2010.02.html> as viewed on March 5, 2010, 10:20 a.m., EST.

Table 3. Afghan Casualties

| Group | Period | # of Deaths | Note |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|
| Afghan Civilians | 2009 | 2,412 killed 3,566 injured ^a | 67% of civilian deaths were attributed to actions of anti-Government elements (78% of these deaths were caused by improvised explosive devices and suicide attacks). 25% of civilian deaths were attributed to pro-Government forces. 8% of civilian deaths were the result of cross-fire or improperly detonated ordnance. |
| | 2008 | 2,118 ^b | |
| | 2007 | 1,523 ^c | |
| Afghan National Army | January-September 20, 2009 | 227 ^d | |
| | 2007-2008 | 537 ^e | |
| Afghan National Police | January-September 20, 2009 | 536 ^f | |
| | 2007-2008 | 1,412 ^g | |

Sources: Compiled by the Congressional Research Service from noted sources.

- a. United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, Human Rights Unit, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2009*, January 2010, p. 1, <http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/Protection%20of%20Civilian%202009%20report%20English.pdf>.
- b. United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, Human Rights Unit, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2008*, January 2009, p. 12, http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/UNAMA_09february-Annual%20Report_PoC%202008_FINAL_11Feb09.pdf.
- c. United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2008*, Human Rights Unit, January 2009, p. 12, http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/UNAMA_09february-Annual%20Report_PoC%202008_FINAL_11Feb09.pdf.
- d. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, July 30, 2009, p. 55, http://www.sigar.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/Jul09/pdf/Report_-_July_2009.pdf; and *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, October 30, 2009, p. 62, <http://www.sigar.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/Oct09/pdf/SIGAROct2009Web.pdf>
- e. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, July 30, 2009, p. 55, http://www.sigar.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/Jul09/pdf/Report_-_July_2009.pdf
- f. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, July 30, 2009, p. 60, http://www.sigar.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/Jul09/pdf/Report_-_July_2009.pdf; and *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, October 30, 2009, p. 66, <http://www.sigar.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/Oct09/pdf/SIGAROct2009Web.pdf>.
- g. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, July 30, 2009, p. 60, http://www.sigar.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/Jul09/pdf/Report_-_July_2009.pdf.

Author Contact Information

Susan G. Chesser
Information Research Specialist
schesser@crs.loc.gov, 7-9547