



Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians

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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 casualties, respectively.

Table 1. Operation Enduring Freedom, U.S. Fatalities and Wounded
as of September 14, 2010, 10 a.m. EDT from October 7, 2001

| | Fatalities In and Around Afghanistan ^a | Fatalities in Other Locations ^b | Total Fatalities ^c | Wounded in Action | |
|--------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Hostile ^d | 958 | 12 | 970 | Returned to Duty within 72 Hours | 3,762 |
| Non-Hostile ^e | 216 | 82 | 298 | Not Returned to Duty within 72 Hours | 4,279 |
| Total | 1,174 | 94 | 1,268 | Total | 8,041 |

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, <http://www.defense.gov/news/casualty.pdf>.

- a. “Fatalities in and around Afghanistan” includes 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. Fatalities include two Department of Defense civilian personnel.
- d. 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>.
- e. 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. American Casualties by Year through September 14, 2010

| Year | Total Deaths | Total Wounded in Action |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| 2001 | 11 | 33 |
| 2002 | 49 | 74 |
| 2003 | 45 | 99 |
| 2004 | 52 | 214 |
| 2005 | 98 | 268 |
| 2006 | 98 | 401 |
| 2007 | 117 | 752 |
| 2008 | 155 | 793 |
| 2009 | 311 | 2,139 |
| 2010 through September 14 | 332 | 3,268 |

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Statistical Information Analysis Division, <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oefmonth.pdf>.

Table 3. Deaths of Coalition Partners in Afghanistan

| Country | # of Deaths | Country | # of Deaths |
|--|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| Australia | 21 | Lithuania | 1 |
| Belgium | 1 | Netherlands | 24 |
| Canada | 153 | New Zealand | 1 |
| Czech Republic | 3 | Norway | 9 |
| Denmark | 36 | Poland | 21 |
| Estonia | 8 | Portugal | 2 |
| Finland | 1 | Romania | 15 |
| France | 48 | South Korea | 1 |
| Georgia | 1 | Spain | 30 |
| Germany | 43 | Sweden | 4 |
| Hungary | 4 | Turkey | 2 |
| Italy | 26 | United Kingdom | 335 |
| Latvia | 4 | | |
| Total Non-U.S. Coalition Fatalities | | 794 | |

Sources: CNN Casualties in Afghanistan, <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/war.casualties/table.afghanistan.html>; Canada's Department of National Defence, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/news-nouvelles/fallen-disparus/index-eng.asp>; United Kingdom Ministry of Defense, <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/OperationsFactsheets/OperationsInAfghanistanBritishFatalities.htm>; Australia's Department of Defence, <http://www.defence.gov.au/op/afghanistan/info/personnel.htm>; "Factbox: Military Deaths in Afghanistan," Reuters News, July 27, 2010.

Table 4. Afghan Casualties

| Group | Period | # of Casualties | Note |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Afghan Civilians | January 1, 2010- June 30, 2010 | 1,271 killed | 76% of civilian deaths and injuries were caused by anti-Government elements, which includes the Taliban as well as other individuals or groups who engage in armed conflict with the Government of Afghanistan or members of the International Military Forces. |
| | | 1,997 injured ^a | |
| | 2009 | 2,412 killed | 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). |
| | | 3,566 injured ^b | |
| | 2008 | 2,118 ^c | 25% of civilian deaths were attributed to pro-Government forces. 8% of civilian deaths were the result of cross-fire or improperly detonated ordnance. |
| | 2007 | 1,523 ^c | |

| Group | Period | # of Casualties | Note |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------|
| Afghan National Army | January 1 - June 30, 2010 | 214 ^d | |
| | 2009 | 292 ^e | |
| | 2007-2008 | 537 ^f | |
| Afghan National Police | January 1 – June 30, 2010 | 289 ^g | |
| | 2009 | 639 ^h | |
| | 2007-2008 | 1,412 ⁱ | |

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

- a. United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, Human Rights Unit, *Afghanistan: Mid-Year Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2010*, August 10, 2010, p. i, http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/10August2010_Mid%20Year%20Report%202010%20Protection%20of%20Civilians%20in%20Armed%20Conflict_English.pdf.
- b. 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>.
- c. 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.
- d. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, April 30, 2010, p. 58, http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Apr2010/SIGARApril_Lores.pdf and response via e-mail from the staff of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, August 9, 2010.
- e. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, July 30, 2009, p. 55, http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Jul09/pdf/Report_-_July_2009.pdf; *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, October 30, 2009, p. 62, <http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Oct09/pdf/SIGAROct2009Web.pdf>; and Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, January 30, 2010, p. 64, http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/jan2010/pdf/SIGAR_Jan2010.pdf.
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- h. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, July 30, 2009, p. 60, http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Jul09/pdf/Report_-_July_2009.pdf; *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, October 30, 2009, p. 66, <http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Oct09/pdf/SIGAROct2009Web.pdf>; and Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, January 30, 2010, p. 69, http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/jan2010/pdf/SIGAR_Jan2010.pdf.
- i. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, July 30, 2009, p. 60, http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Jul09/pdf/Report_-_July_2009.pdf.

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