



Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians

Susan G. Chesser
Information Research Specialist

December 8, 2010

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

www.crs.gov

R41084

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>.

The United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) reports casualty data of Afghan civilians semiannually, and the U.S. Department of Defense occasionally includes civilian casualty figures within its reports on Afghanistan. From July 2009 through April 2010, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) included statistics of casualties of members of the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police in its quarterly reports to Congress. SIGAR has ceased this practice, and there is no other published compilation of these statistics. This report now derives casualty figures of Afghan soldiers and police from the press accounts of the Reuters "Factbox: Security Developments in Afghanistan" series and the Pajhwok Afghan News agency. Both services attribute their reported information to officials of the NATO-led ISAF or local Afghan officials. Pajhwok Afghan News frequently concludes its accounts with statements from representatives of the Taliban, however, these figures are not included in this report.

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 December 6, 2010, 10 a.m. EST from October 7, 2001

	Fatalities In and Around Afghanistan ^a	Fatalities in Other Locations ^b	Total Fatalities ^c	Wounded in Action	
Hostile ^d	1,079	11	1,090		
Non-Hostile ^e	234	83	317		
Total	1,313	94	1,407	Total	9,583

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

- “Fatalities in and around Afghanistan” includes casualties that occurred in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan.
- “Other locations” includes casualties that occurred in Guantanamo Bay (Cuba), Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Yemen.
- Fatalities include two Department of Defense civilian personnel.
- 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>.
- 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 December 6, 2010

Year	Total Deaths	Total Wounded in Action
2001	11	33
2002	49	74
2003	45	99
2004	52	214
2005	98	267
2006	98	401
2007	117	752
2008	155	793
2009	311	2,139
2010 through December 6	471	4,811

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	154	New Zealand	2
Czech Republic	3	Norway	9
Denmark	39	Poland	23
Estonia	8	Portugal	2
Finland	1	Romania	17
France	49	South Korea	1
Georgia	5	Spain	30
Germany	44	Sweden	4
Hungary	4	Turkey	2
Italy	31	United Kingdom	345
Latvia	4		
Total Non-U.S. Coalition Fatalities		824	

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, September 28, 2010.

Table 4. Afghan Casualties

Group	Period	# of Casualties	Note	
Afghan Civilians	January 1, 2010- September 30, 2010 ^a	1,634 killed	In the third quarter of 2010, 90% 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.	
		2,809 injured		
	2009 ^b	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		25% of civilian deaths were attributed to pro-Government forces.
	2008 ^c	2,118 killed	8% of civilian deaths were the result of cross-fire or improperly detonated ordnance.	
	2007 ^c	1,523 killed		

Group	Period	# of Casualties	Note
Afghan National Army	January 1 - November 30, 2010 ^d	314 killed	
		737 wounded	
	2009 ^e	292 killed	
		859 wounded	
	2008 ^f	259 killed	
		875 wounded	
2007 ^f	278 killed		
	750 wounded		
Afghan National Police	January 1 – November 30, 2010 ^g	401 killed	
		728 wounded	
	2009 ^h	639 killed	
		1,145 wounded	
	2008 ⁱ	724 killed	
		1,209 wounded	
2007 ⁱ	688 killed		
	1,036 wounded		

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/Publication/August102010_MID-YEAR%20REPORT%202010_Protection%20of%20Civilians%20in%20Armed%20Conflict.pdf; U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, November 2010, p. 56, http://www.defense.gov/pubs/November_1230_Report_FINAL.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; response via e-mail from the staff of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, August 9, 2010; and press reports from Reuters and the Pajhwok Afghan News agency.
- 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.
- f. 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.
- g. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, April 30, 2010, p. 64, http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Apr2010/SIGARapril_Lores.pdf; response via e-mail from the staff of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, August 9, 2010; and press reports from Reuters and the Pajhwok Afghan News agency.

- 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.

Author Contact Information

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