



# Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians

Susan G. Chesser  
Information Research Specialist

September 14, 2010

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

[www.crs.gov](http://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>.

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 <sup>a</sup>	Fatalities in Other Locations <sup>b</sup>	Total Fatalities <sup>c</sup>	Wounded in Action	
Hostile <sup>d</sup>	958	12	970	Returned to Duty within 72 Hours	3,762
Non-Hostile <sup>e</sup>	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		
<b>Total Non-U.S. Coalition Fatalities</b>			<b>794</b>

**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 <sup>a</sup>	
	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 <sup>b</sup>	
	2008	2,118 <sup>c</sup>	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 <sup>c</sup>	

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

**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](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](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](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](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](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](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](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.
- 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](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](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](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