



# Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians

**Susan G. Chesser**  
Information Research Specialist

February 29, 2012

**Congressional Research Service**

7-5700

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

R41084

## Report Documentation Page

*Form Approved*  
*OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE <b>29 FEB 2012</b>	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2012 to 00-00-2012</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians</b>		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
		5b. GRANT NUMBER	
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
		5e. TASK NUMBER	
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave, SE, Washington, DC, 20540</b>		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>			
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES			
14. ABSTRACT			
15. SUBJECT TERMS			
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>	<b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>
			18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>7</b>
			19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON

## 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>.

Reporting on casualties of Afghans did not begin until 2007, and a variety of entities now report the casualties of civilians and security forces members. 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. The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, [http://www.aihrc.org/2010\\_eng/](http://www.aihrc.org/2010_eng/), and the Afghan Rights Monitor, <http://www.arm.org.af/>, are local watchdog organizations that periodically publish reports regarding civilian casualties. 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, the Pajhwok Afghan News agency, the Afghan Islamic Press news agency, *Daily Outlook Afghanistan* from Kabul, and the *AfPak Channel Daily Brief*. These services attribute their reported information to officials of the NATO-led ISAF or local Afghan officials. The Afghan news agencies frequently include statements from representatives of the Taliban; however, any figures such spokesmen provide 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 February 28, 2012, 10 a.m. EST from October 7, 2001)

	<b>Fatalities in and Around Afghanistan<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Fatalities in Other Locations<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Total Fatalities<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>Wounded in Action</b>	
Hostile <sup>d</sup>	1,484	12	1,496		
Non-Hostile <sup>e</sup>	302	97	399		
Total	1,786	109	1,895	Total	15,415

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

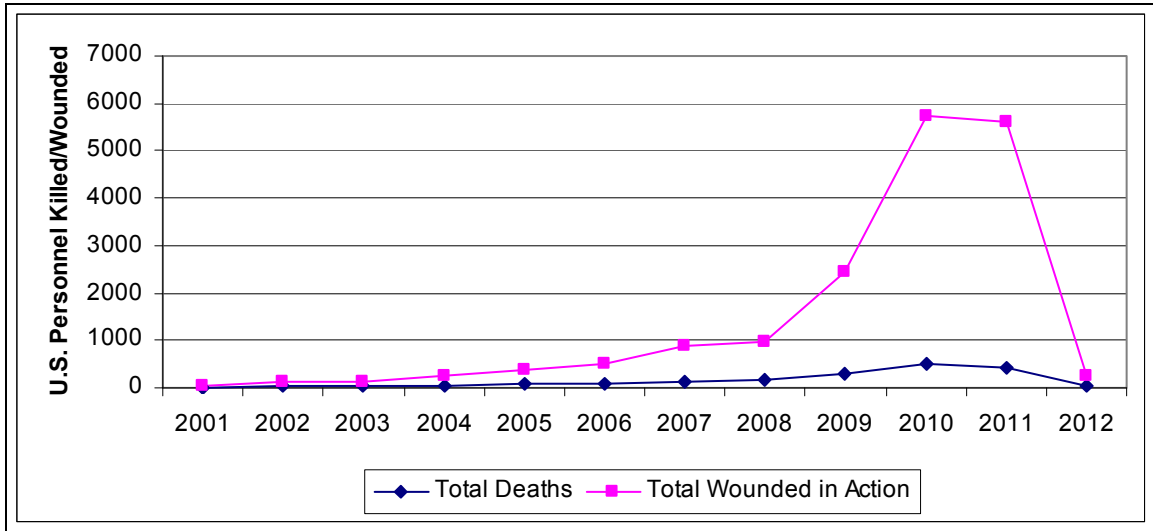
- a. "Fatalities in and around Afghanistan" includes casualties that occurred in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan.
- b. "Other locations" includes casualties that occurred in Guantanamo Bay (Cuba), Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Yemen.
- c. Fatalities include three 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://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod\\_dictionary/](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/).
- 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 February 28, 2012**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>Total Wounded in Action</b>
2001	11	33
2002	49	74
2003	45	99
2004	52	218
2005	98	268
2006	98	400
2007	117	750
2008	155	795
2009	311	2,143
2010	500	5,242
2011	413	5,183
2012 through February 28	46	210

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

Figure 1. American Casualties by Year Through February 28, 2012



Source: Created by CRS based on data from 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 <sup>a</sup>	# of Deaths 2012	Total # of Deaths	Country	# of Deaths 2012	Total # of Deaths	Country	# of Deaths 2012	Total # of Deaths
Albania	1	1	Germany		52	Poland		36
Australia		32	Hungary		6	Portugal		2
Belgium		1	Italy	3	47	Romania		19
Canada		158	Jordan		1	South Korea		1
Denmark		42	Latvia		4	Spain		34
Estonia		9	Lithuania		1	Sweden		4
Finland		2	Netherlands		25	Turkey		2
France	4	82	New Zealand		4	United Kingdom	4	399
Georgia	3	12	Norway		10			
<b>Total Non-U.S. Fatalities of the International Security Assistance Force</b>							<b>15</b>	<b>989</b>

Source: 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, February 26, 2012.

- a. Countries listed indicate the nationality of the military forces, not of the individuals. For example, Fijians who were killed while fighting in French forces are counted as French. Similarly, citizens of other nations who fight in American military forces are counted as Americans.

**Table 4. Afghan Casualties**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Number of Casualties</b>	<b>Note</b>	
<b>Afghan Civilians</b>	January 2012 <sup>a</sup>	116 killed 156 wounded		
	11,864 civilians have been killed in the conflict since 2007, when the United Nations began reporting statistics, to the end of 2011.	2011 <sup>b</sup>	3,021 killed 4,507 injured Includes 495 targeted killings of local, provincial, and district government officials and workers.	Anti-government elements (AGEs), killed 2,332 civilians, 77% of all conflict-related civilian deaths. AGEs include the Taliban and other individuals or groups who engage in armed conflict with the government of Afghanistan or members of the international military forces. Pro-government forces, including international military personnel, were responsible for 410 civilian deaths. It is unclear who caused the remaining 279 deaths.
		2010 <sup>c</sup>	2,777 killed 4,343 injured	AGEs were reported responsible for 75% of the civilian deaths and 78% of civilian injuries.
		2009 <sup>d</sup>	2,412 killed 3,566 injured	67% of civilian deaths were attributed to actions of AGEs (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 <sup>e</sup>	2,118 killed		
	2007 <sup>e</sup>	1,523 killed		
	<b>Afghan National Army</b>	January 2012 <sup>a</sup>	23 killed 53 wounded	
		2011 <sup>a</sup>	511 killed 256 wounded	
		2010	821 killed <sup>f</sup> 775 wounded <sup>g</sup>	Information released by General Zahir Azimi, spokesman for the Afghan Defence Ministry.
		2009 <sup>h</sup>	292 killed 859 wounded	

Group	Period	Number of Casualties	Note
<b>Afghan National, Local, and Border Police</b>	2008 <sup>i</sup>	259 killed 875 wounded	
	2007 <sup>i</sup>	278 killed 750 wounded	
	January 2012 <sup>a</sup>	33 killed 61 wounded	
	2011 <sup>a</sup>	569 killed 552 wounded	
	2010 <sup>i</sup>	1,292 killed 743 wounded	
	2009 <sup>k</sup>	639 killed 1,145 wounded	
	2008 <sup>i</sup>	724 killed 1,209 wounded	
	2007 <sup>i</sup>	688 killed 1,036 wounded	

**Source:** Compiled by the Congressional Research Service from noted sources.

- a. Press reports from Reuters, the Pajhwok Afghan News agency, *Daily Outlook Afghanistan*, the Afghan Islamic Press, and the *AfPak Channel Daily Brief*.
- b. United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2011, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2012, p. 1-2, 4, [http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/UNAMA%20POC%202011%20Report\\_Final\\_Feb%202012.pdf](http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/Documents/UNAMA%20POC%202011%20Report_Final_Feb%202012.pdf).
- c. United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, Human Rights Unit, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2010*, March 2011, p. i-1, <http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf>.
- d. 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>.
- e. 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).
- f. "Bomb Kills Five U.S. Troops in Southern Afghanistan," Reuters News, August 11, 2011.
- g. 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); 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. 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).

- i. 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).
- j. 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).
- k. 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).
- l. 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](mailto:schesser@crs.loc.gov), 7-9547