



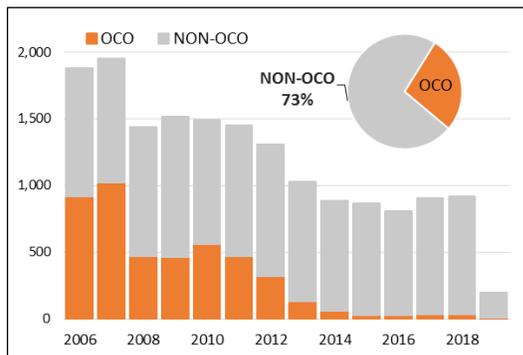
Recent Trends in Active-Duty Military Deaths

Summary of Deaths

Since 2006—five years after the start of major combat operations in Afghanistan and three years after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq—a total of 16,652 active-duty personnel and mobilized reservists have died while serving in the U.S. armed forces. Seventy-three percent of these casualties occurred under circumstances unrelated to war, a category classified in this report as *Non-Overseas Contingency Operations*, or *Non-OCO*. Twenty-seven percent have died while serving in OCO operations—primarily within the territory of Iraq and Afghanistan—during periods of active combat operations. OCO operations related to Afghanistan primarily include Enduring Freedom and Freedom’s Sentinel. For Iraq, OCO operations include Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn, and Inherent Resolve. **Figure 1** summarizes all service deaths since 2006.

Due to quality issues with pre-2006 data, earlier years have been excluded from this analysis.

Figure 1. Active Duty Military Deaths Since 2006



Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), Defense Casualty Analysis System report provided to CRS, March 28, 2019.

Non-OCO Deaths

Approximately 12,116 servicemembers have died in circumstances unrelated to OCO operations since 2006. On average, for each full year from 2006-2018, there have been 917 deaths, with the total number varying by as much as 12% on an annual basis. Personnel perished in more than 70 countries (and at sea), with the majority (93%) of deaths occurring in the United States. Other locations have included Germany, Japan, Korea, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Most servicemembers who died outside of OCO operations during this period died as the result of accident, self-inflicted wounds, or illness. Alcohol was a factor in 14% of all accidental deaths and 7% of non-OCO deaths.

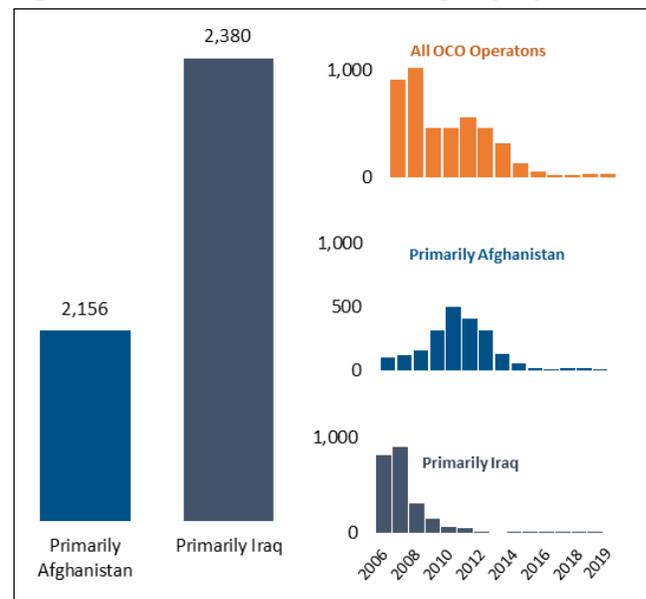
Approximately 16% of all non-OCO deaths, or 1,915, involved vehicles. For these latter records, the data do not indicate whether alcohol was also involved.

OCO Deaths

Section 101 of Title 10, United States Code, defines a *contingency operation* as any Secretary of Defense-designated military operation “in which members of the armed forces are or may become involved in military actions, operations, or hostilities against an enemy of the United States or against an opposing military force.” Approximately 4,536 military personnel have died in such operations since 2006 in more than 25 countries (and locations at sea).

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) caused nearly half (45%) of all U.S. deaths in operational war zones. Their lethality closely tracked surges of troop deployments to OCO operations, primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Figure 2. Deaths in Overseas Contingency Operations

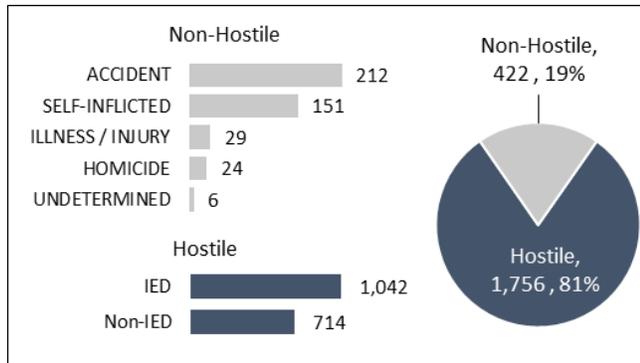


Source: DMDC Defense Casualty Analysis System report provided to CRS, March 28, 2019.

Note: *Primarily Iraq* comprises Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn, and Inherent Resolve; *Primarily Afghanistan* comprises Enduring Freedom and Freedom’s Sentinel. Includes casualties at all associated locations.

Overall Deaths in Iraq

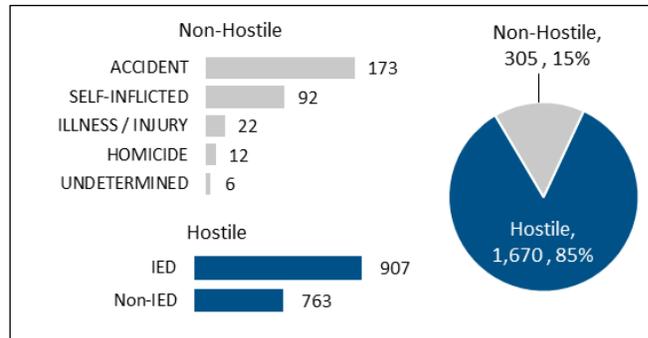
Since 2006, 2,178 U.S. troops have died in Iraq during OCO operations. Approximately half (48%) of all these military deaths are attributable to IEDs (and their variants). Of those that were not killed by IED related incidents, 37% died under nonhostile conditions, primarily from accidents (including loss of aircraft or ground vehicle) or as the result of self-inflicted injury.

Figure 3. Overall Deaths in Iraq

Source: DMDC Defense Casualty Analysis System report provided to CRS, March 28, 2019.

Overall Deaths in Afghanistan

Since 2006, approximately 1,975 U.S. troops have died in Afghanistan. Nearly half (46%) of all these military deaths are attributable to IEDs and their variants, which took their greatest toll between 2009 and 2012. Most U.S. personnel not killed by IEDs during this period died as the result of gunshot wounds, or after suffering other multiple physical trauma in action. A substantial number (162), died in connection with the loss of an aircraft or ground vehicle. Most such incidents were classified as accidental (69%), and occurred under nonhostile conditions.

Figure 4. Overall Deaths in Afghanistan

Source: DMDC Defense Casualty Analysis System report provided to CRS, March 28, 2019.

Source of Casualty Data

Data in this report was provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). When a U.S. casualty occurs, each service is required to complete a form (DD 1300 Report of Casualty) that includes circumstances related to death. This information is subsequently entered into the service's Casualty and Mortuary Affairs database (Defense Casualty Information Processing System, or DCIPS) which, in turn, is made accessible to DMDC. Casualty data is refreshed daily, and past records are subject to change. For details on casualty matters, policies, and procedures, see Department of Defense Instruction 1300.18.

Table 1. U.S. Active-Duty Military Deaths (in all Countries), 2006-2018

Casualty Category	Non-OCO	OCO	Sum of Category	Category (as % of Total)
Accident	4,827	478	5,305	31.9%
Self-inflicted	3,579	284	3,863	23.2%
Illness / Injury	2,791	119	2,910	17.5%
Killed in Action	6	2,704	2,710	16.3%
Died of Wounds	1	885	886	5.3%
Homicide	479	41	520	3.1%
Undetermined	267	17	284	1.7%
Pending	148	2	150	Less than 1%
Terrorist	18	2	20	Less than 1%
While Captured	0	4	4	Less than 1%
Total	12,116	4,536	16,652	100%

Source: DMDC Defense Casualty Analysis System report provided to CRS, March 28, 2019.

Notes: The self-inflicted subcategory includes an apparent-suicide designation, however, for comprehensive statistics on this subject, please consult the Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO). Of the six personnel that were killed in action during Non-OCO operations, four were killed in Niger, one in Iraq, and one in Somalia. Includes 35 alcohol or substance abuse related casualties during OCO operations.

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IF10899

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