

Department of Defense (DoD) Quarterly Suicide Report (QSR) 3rd Quarter, CY 2018

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The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$6,770 for the 2019 Fiscal Year. This includes \$3,940 in expenses and \$2,830 in DoD labor.



**DEFENSE SUICIDE
PREVENTION OFFICE**

Introduction

The Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO) routinely collects and reports surveillance data on suicide mortality in the Department of Defense (DoD). The most up-to-date counts of suicide deaths are reported in the Quarterly Suicide Report (QSR).¹ The QSR seeks to comply with Objective 11.1 of the 2015 DoD Defense Strategy for Suicide Prevention (DSSP) by providing timely and accurate suicide data to guide suicide prevention efforts across the Department.²

DSPO collects suicide data via a collaborative effort with the Office of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES) and the Suicide Prevention Program Offices of the Military Services (i.e., Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy). AFMES is the official DoD entity responsible for verifying and reporting deaths by suicides for the Active Component³ and, to the extent applicable, the Reserve Component⁴ to DSPO. These numbers are reconciled with the Military Services to ensure that the most accurate information is reported.

Quarters are based upon the Calendar Year (CY) and defined as:

- Quarter 1 (Q1): January 1st – March 31st
- Quarter 2 (Q2): April 1st – June 30th
- Quarter 3 (Q3): July 1st – September 30th
- Quarter 4 (Q4): October 1st – December 31st

The current report presents data from Q3 of CY 2018. Data include all known or suspected suicides (both confirmed and pending) as of September 30, 2018 for both the Active and Reserve Components. Hence, the numbers presented in this report are preliminary and subject to change in future quarterly reports, as previously unknown suicide cases are reported.

QSR Data

Attachment A details the number of suicide deaths by Service and Component. For Q3 of 2018, the Military Services reported the following suicide deaths:

- 74 in the **Active Component**

¹ The QSR does not account for changes in population size or natural variation in suicide counts over time. Thus, caution should be used when interpreting longitudinal changes in suicide counts.

² Absolute numbers are often used when there is a need to know the exact burden of a disease or condition in a population. This is often the case for programmatic/intervention/policy planning/decision-making as well as decisions regarding resource allocation.

³ Full-time members of the U.S. Armed Forces and Cadets/Midshipmen at the designated military academies.

⁴ Reserve Component personnel included in this report are members of the Selected Reserves (SELRES). SELRES are drilling and training members of the National Guard and Reserves, Individual Mobilization Augmentees, and full-time support Active Guard and Reservists. This excludes those members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) and Inactive National Guard (ING).

- 18 in the **Reserves**
- 34 in the **National Guard**

Comparisons of suicide counts between Q3 CY 2017 and Q3 CY 2018 are provided below.⁵

- For Q3 CY 2018, the number of **Active Component** suicide deaths is greater by 3 than Q3 CY 2017 (74 versus 71 suicide deaths)
 - Air Force is down 2
 - Army is up 9
 - Marine Corps is unchanged
 - Navy is down 4
- For Q3 CY 2018, the number of **Reserve** suicide deaths is lower by 9 than Q3 CY 2017 (18 versus 27 suicide deaths)
 - Air Force Reserve is down 5
 - Army Reserve is down 5
 - Marine Corps Reserve is up 2
 - Navy Reserve is down 1
- For Q3 CY 2018, the number of **National Guard** suicide deaths is lower by 7 than Q3 CY 2017 (34 versus 41 suicide deaths)
 - Air National Guard is up 1
 - Army National Guard is down 8

⁵ Comparisons are made by calendar year quarter to examine the potential influence of seasonal variation. Research on the seasonal effects of suicide death has shown mixed results (Postalache 2012, Gutzwiller 2011, Rossler 2010, McCleary 1994).

Attachment A

DoD Service and Component	CY 2012	CY 2013					CY 2014					CY 2015				
	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2013	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2014	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2015
Active Component	321	67	61	70	58	256	72	72	59	73	276	60	71	72	63	266
Air Force	50	7	14	15	12	48	19	11	13	19	62	14	17	16	17	64
Army	165	33	28	33	27	121	26	33	32	35	126	33	28	32	27	120
Marine Corps	48	11	12	14	9	46	11	9	6	8	34	3	12	13	11	39
Navy	58	16	7	8	10	41	16	19	8	11	54	10	14	11	8	43
Reserve Component	204	55	56	53	56	220	46	34	48	42	170	42	54	72	46	214
Reserve	72	27	16	23	20	86	24	14	20	21	79	13	21	37	18	89
Air Force Reserve	3	1	2	5	3	11	2	1	3	4	10	1	1	3	4	9
Army Reserve	50	21	11	15	12	59	13	4	15	10	42	9	17	21	8	55
Marine Corps Reserve	11	4	1	2	4	11	4	5	1	2	12	1	1	8	1	11
Navy Reserve	8	1	2	1	1	5	5	4	1	5	15	2	2	5	5	14
National Guard	132	28	40	30	36	134	22	20	28	21	91	29	33	35	28	125
Air National Guard	22	2	2	6	4	14	6	2	4	2	14	8	5	5	3	21
Army National Guard	110	26	38	24	32	120	16	18	24	19	77	21	28	30	25	104

DoD Service and Component	CY 2016					CY 2017					CY 2018			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2016	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2017	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total 2018
Active Component	62	56	83	79	280	75	57	71	83	286	79	78	74	231
Air Force	10	15	14	22	61	19	12	14	17	62	9	19	12	40
Army	31	20	42	37	130	33	23	27	33	116	36	31	36	103
Marine Corps	12	11	8	6	37	7	9	15	12	43	12	13	15	40
Navy	9	10	19	14	52	16	13	15	21	65	22	15	11	48
Reserve Component	56	51	45	50	202	53	68	68	40	229	48	44	52	144
Reserve	18	24	18	20	80	21	29	27	16	93	22	16	18	56
Air Force Reserve	5	2	1	2	10	2	4	5	0	11	0	1	0	1
Army Reserve	6	13	11	11	41	12	20	17	14	63	15	11	12	38
Marine Corps Reserve	4	6	5	4	19	5	3	2	0	10	4	1	4	9
Navy Reserve	3	3	1	3	10	2	2	3	2	9	3	3	2	8
National Guard	38	27	27	30	122	32	39	41	24	136	26	28	34	88
Air National Guard	5	5	1	3	14	2	4	3	3	12	2	2	4	8
Army National Guard	33	22	26	27	108	30	35	38	21	124	24	26	30	80

Note: All figures above may be subject to change in future publications as updated information becomes available. Suicide counts (both confirmed and pending) are current as of 30 September 2018.

 Highlighted for comparison
 Indicates a change from the previous QSR based on updated information