



**Department of Defense
Quarterly Suicide Report
Calendar Year 2015
1st Quarter**

**Defense Suicide
Prevention Office
(DSPO)**

**Keita Franklin, Ph.D.
Director, DSPO**





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Purpose

Timely and accurate suicide data reporting allows leaders at all levels to have reliable information that facilitates decision-making related to suicide prevention. Timeliness in reporting Department of Defense (DoD) statistics on suicide mortality is a core issue affecting the focus of DoD suicide prevention efforts. One of the principle goals of this Quarterly Suicide Report (QSR) is to improve the timeliness and availability of data from the DoD surveillance systems for support of suicide prevention. Additionally, stakeholders external to DoD can access the information included in the QSR to obtain information on deaths by suicide within the DoD.

The QSR summarizes suicide counts for the Active Component and the Reserve Component (Reserves and the National Guard). The 2015 1st Quarter DoD QSR shows calendar year 2015 1st Quarter suicides for each of the Services.

Data Sources and Collection Process

Suicide mortality data in this report are provided by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES) with inputs from the individual Service suicide prevention programs.

The number of suicides¹ depicted in Table 1 of this document are broken down by component, (Active or Reserve) and Service.

For the Active Component, the number of suicides provided also includes the Cadets and Midshipmen at the military academies.

The data provided for the Reserve Component includes Reserve and National Guard suicides regardless of the Service member's duty status at the time of death.

For all other Service members not tracked by AFMES (e.g., National Guard or Reserve Service members not in active duty status), the suicide data originate from civilian authorities and are made available through the Services to AFMES.

The Reserve Component refers collectively to the Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserve, and the Coast Guard Reserve when the Coast Guard is operating as a Service of the Department of the Navy.

¹ The term suicide is defined as "Death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with an intent to die as a result of the behavior" (Reference: CDC--<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/definitions.html>)



Military retirees and members in Temporary or Permanent Disability Retired Lists (TDRL, PDRL) are not included in this report as those data may overlap with Department of Veterans Affairs data.

Summary of Results

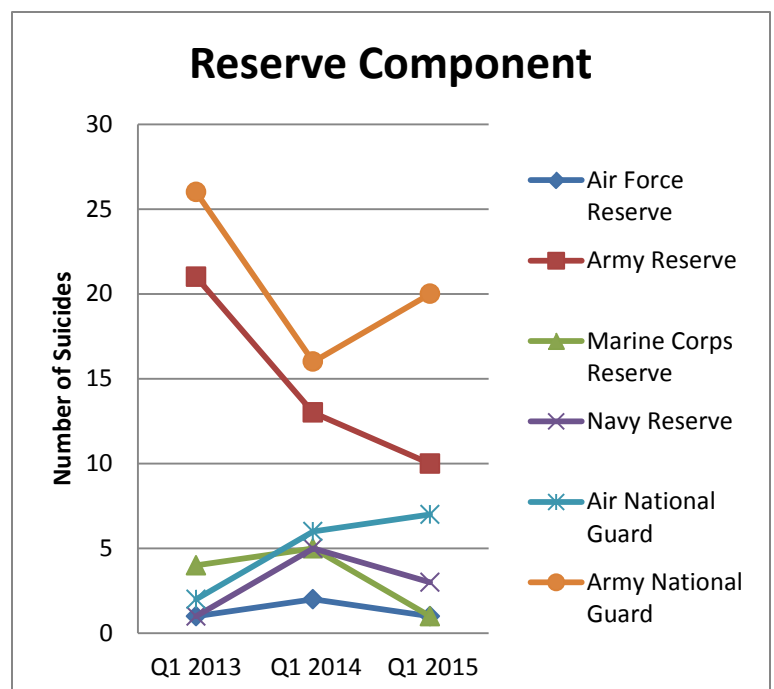
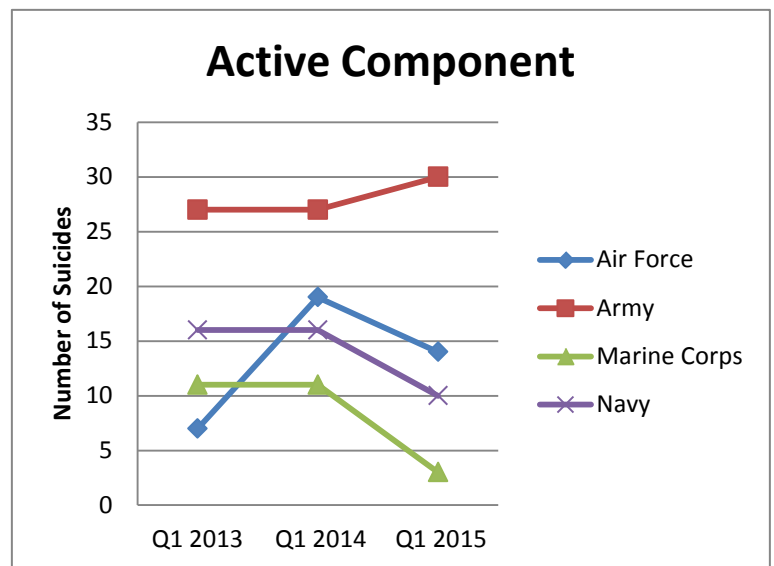
In the 1st Quarter of 2015, the Services reported that there were 57 Active Component suicides and 42 Reserve Component suicides with 15 suicides in the Reserves and 27 National Guard suicides. Please refer to Table 1 for a detailed breakdown of the number of suicides within each Service and component through the first quarter of 2015.

Discussion

A review of the data found in Table 1 for the first quarter of 2013, 2014 and 2015 demonstrates that there was an increase in the number of suicides in the 1st Quarter 2014 compared to the 1st Quarter 2013 (73 versus 61) within the Active Component. This increase was followed by a decline in the number of suicides from the 1st Quarter 2014 compared to the 1st Quarter 2015 (73 to 57). The accompanying graph depicts the individual Services data for this same time frame. A closer review of the data for Q1 2014 and Q1 2015 reveals that while there were decreases in the number of suicides in the Marine Corps, the Navy, and the Air Force, there was an increase in the number of suicides in the Army.

Similarly, within the Reserve Component, there was an overall decrease in the number of suicides from the 1st Quarter 2014 when compared to the 1st Quarter of 2013 (47 versus 55). That was followed by a decline in the number of suicides from the 1st Quarter 2014 compared to the 1st Quarter of 2015 (47 to 42).

When looking at the Q1 2014 data compared to the Q1 2015, the Reserves showed a decrease in all four branches while in the National Guard there were increases in both the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard.





Summary

Throughout the years 2013 to the present, the first quarter suicide data shows fluctuation within the Active Component while the Reserve Component shows a decline during that same period of time. DSPO recognizes the complexity related to drawing conclusions about these data and we have begun to develop approaches to improve our data management process. Some of the approaches include implementation of installation level Suicide Event Boards to collect more detailed data, and after action reviews on selected Suicide Event Reports to check the data for accuracy. DSPO is also developing a DoD Instruction to change DoD policy in a way that will refine the definition of the variables being collected by DoD on suicide and suicide attempts.

Any questions related to this report should be forwarded to: osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.defense-suicide-prevention-office@mail.mil



Results

Table 1. Suicides by Component and Service

DoD Service and Component	2012	2013					2014					2015	
	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2013	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2014	Q1	Total 2015
Active Component	321*	61	61	69*	58*	249*	73	70	57*	73*	273*	57	57
Air Force	50	7	14	15	12	48	19	11	13*	19*	62*	14	14
Army	165	27	28	33	27*	115*	27	31	31	35*	124*	30	30
Marine Corps	48	11	12	13*	9	45*	11	9	6	8	34	3	3
Navy	58	16	7	8*	10	41	16	19	7	11	53	10	10
Reserve Component	192	55	56	53	56*	220	46	34	48*	41*	169*	42	42
Reserve	72	27	16	23*	20*	86	24	14	20	21	79	15	15
Air Force Reserve	3	1	2	5	3*	11	2	1	3	4	10	1	1
Army Reserve	50	21	11	15*	12	59	13	4	15	10	42	10	10
Marine Corps Reserve	11	4	1	2	4	11	4	5	1	2	12	1	1
Navy Reserve	8	1	2	1	1	5	5	4	1	5	15	3	3
National Guard	130	28	40	30*	36	134	22	20	28*	20*	90*	27	27
Air National Guard	22*	2	2	6	4	14	6	2	4	2	14	7	7
Army National Guard	110	26	38	24*	32	120	16	18	24*	18*	76*	20	20

Note: All figures above may be subject to change in future publications as updated information becomes available. Suicide counts are current as of April 20, 2015.

*Indicates a change from the previous QSR based on updated information