

From J9 POLOPS



Freedom of Information
J9 Policy Division
Permanent Joint Headquarters (UK)
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Email: xxxxxxxxxx@xxxx.xxx.xx

Reference 07-12-2012-121009-006

10 January 2013

Dear Mr Watson,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 7 December which is considered to be a request for information under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. The Permanent Joint Headquarters in Northwood is responsible for overseas operations, which is why I have been asked to respond to you.

You requested:

- 1. The number of armed insurgents killed by British and allied forces in Afghanistan since the start of the 2001 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)**
- 2. The number of armed insurgents killed by British and allied forces in Iraq since the start of the 2003 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)**
- 3. The number of British soldiers killed as a direct or indirect result of enemy actions in Afghanistan since the start of the 2001 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)**
- 4. The number of British soldiers killed as a direct or indirect result of enemy actions in Iraq since the start of the 2003 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)**
- 5. The number of British civilians killed as a direct or indirect result of the actions of organisations based in Afghanistan since the start of the 2001 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)**
- 6. The number of British civilians killed as a direct or indirect result of the actions of organisations based in Iraq since the start of the 2003 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)**

7. The number of civilians killed by British or allied forces in Afghanistan since the start of the 2001 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)

8. The number of civilians killed by British or allied forces in Iraq since the start of the 2003 calendar year (or a reasonable estimate thereof if specific figures are unavailable)

I will respond to each item of your request in turn, grouping together relevant answers by subject matter where possible.

With regard to questions 1 and 2 of your request, the Ministry of Defence does not hold a comprehensive record of figures for insurgent casualties because of the immense difficulty and risks that would be involved in collecting robust data.

With regards to questions 3 and 4, from 7 October 2001 (the start of operations) to 9 January 2013, 439 UK Armed Forces personnel have died as a result of operations in Afghanistan, of which 396 were the result of hostile action. From 1 January 2003 to 22 May 2011 178 UK Armed Forces personnel have died as a result of operations in Iraq, of which 135 were the result of hostile action.

With regards to questions 5 and 6, this information is not held by the Ministry of Defence. You may wish to write to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who will be better placed to answer this question.

Finally questions 7 and 8, the Ministry of Defence does not hold a comprehensive record of figures for civilian casualties because of the immense difficulty and risks that would be involved in collecting robust data. Any incident involving civilian casualties is a matter of deep regret and we take every possible measure to avoid such incidents. There are strict procedures, frequently updated in light of experience, intended to both minimise the risk of casualties occurring and to investigate incidents that do happen.

You may be interested to know that the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan released its most recent report on civilian casualties in July 2012, which recorded a total of 1,145 civilian deaths from 1 January to 31 June 2012, 80 per cent of which were attributed to anti-government forces, and 10 per cent of which could not be attributed.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Head of Corporate Information, 6th Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

J9 Policy