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Department of Defense Quarterly Suicide Report Calendar Year 2015 2nd Quarter

**Defense Suicide
Prevention Office
(DSPO)**

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Department of Defense Quarterly Suicide Report Calendar Year 2015 Second Quarter

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 to bolster suicide prevention efforts. 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 second quarter DoD QSR shows calendar year 2015 first and second quarter suicides for each of the military services.

Data Sources and Collection Process

Suicide Data

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

The numbers 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 originates from civilian authorities and are made available through the military 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>)



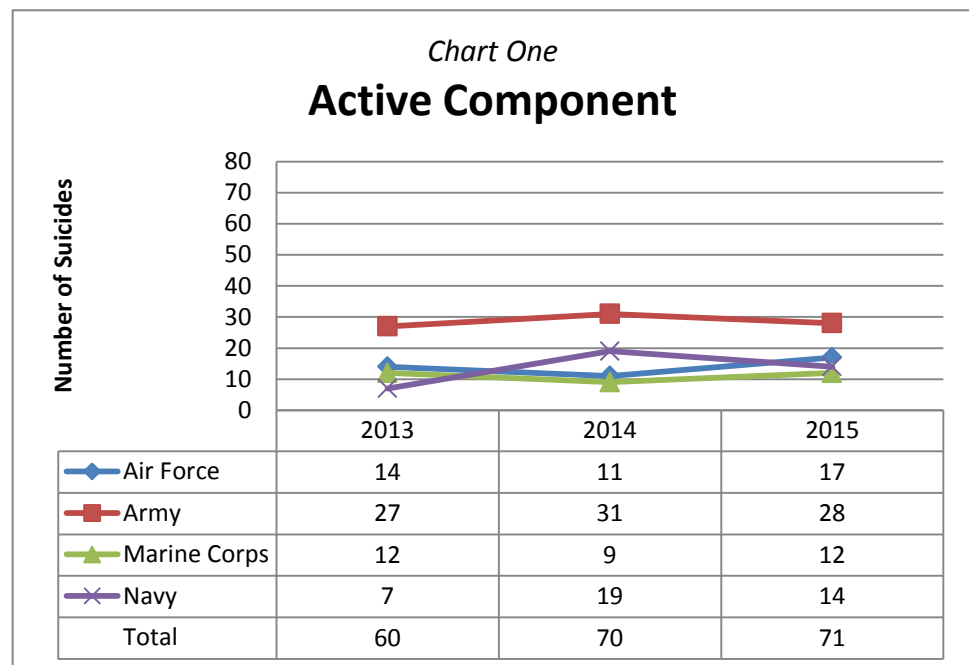
Military retirees and members in Temporary or Permanent Disability Retired Lists (TDRL, PDRL) are not included in this report as those data may overlap with Department of Veterans Affairs data.

Summary of Results

In the second quarter of 2015, the military services reported that there were 71 Active Component suicides and 47 Reserve Component suicides with 20 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 second quarter of 2015.

Discussion

A review of the data found in Table 1, for the second quarter of 2013, 2014 and 2015, demonstrates that there was an overall increase in the number of suicides in the second quarter 2014 compared to the second quarter 2013 (70 versus 60) within the Active Component. This increase was followed by a slight increase in the

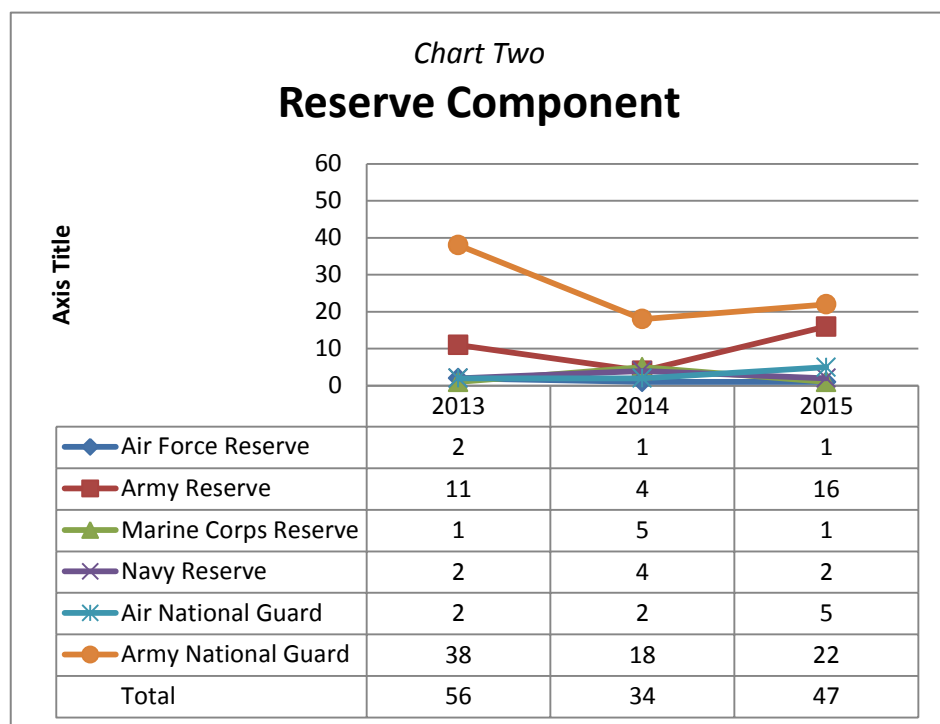


overall number of suicides from the second quarter 2014 compared to the second quarter 2015 (70 to 71). The accompanying graph (Chart One) depicts the individual military services data for this same time frame. A closer review of the data for second quarter 2014 and second quarter 2015 reveals that while there were decreases in the number of suicides in the Army and Navy, there was an increase in the number of suicides in the Air Force and the Marine Corps.



Within the Reserve Component, there was an overall decrease in the number of suicides from the second quarter 2014 when compared to the second quarter of 2013 (34 versus 56). That was followed by an increase in the number of suicides from the second quarter 2014 compared to the second quarter of 2015 (34 to 47).

Comparing the second quarter 2014 data to the second quarter 2015 data, there was a decrease in the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves, an increase in the Army Reserves and no change in the Air Force Reserves. In the National Guard there were increases in both the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard.



Summary

From 2013 to the present, the second quarter suicide data shows fluctuation within both the Active Component and the Reserve Component. Currently, the available data for suicides does not reveal if the fluctuations are based on actual changes in the number of suicides, an increased emphasis on reporting data, improved data and surveillance procedures or an increased focus on screening protocols. DSPO recognizes the complexity related to drawing conclusions about these data and we have begun to develop approaches to improve our data management process.

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	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2015
Active Component	321	*67	*60	69	58	*254	73	70	57	73	273	*59	71			130
Air Force	50	7	14	15	12	48	19	11	13	19	62	14	17			31
Army	165	*33	*27	33	27	*120	27	31	31	35	124	*32	28			60
Marine Corps	48	11	12	13	9	45	11	9	6	8	34	3	12			15
Navy	58	16	7	8	10	41	16	19	7	11	53	10	14			24
Reserve Component	*204	55	56	53	56	220	46	34	48	42	170	42	47			89
Reserve	72	27	16	23	20	86	24	14	20	21	79	*13	20			33
Air Force Reserve	3	1	2	5	3	11	2	1	3	4	10	1	1			2
Army Reserve	50	21	11	15	12	59	13	4	15	10	42	*9	16			25
Marine Corps Reserve	11	4	1	2	4	11	4	5	1	2	12	1	1			2
Navy Reserve	8	1	2	1	1	5	5	4	1	5	15	*2	2			4
National Guard	*132	28	40	30	36	134	22	20	28	21	91	*29	27			56
Air National Guard	22	2	2	6	4	14	6	2	4	2	14	*8	5			13
Army National Guard	110	26	38	24	32	120	16	18	24	*19	*77	*21	22			43

Note: All figures above may be subject to change in future publications as updated information becomes available. Suicide counts are current as of August 5, 2015.

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