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## PSC WORKING PAPER SERIES

### Mortality of American Troops in Iraq

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**Date of this Version**

8-26-2006

**Comments**

Preston, Samuel H. and Emily Buzzell. 2006. "Mortality of American Troops in Iraq." *PSC Working Paper Series* PSC 06-01.

**Abstract**

Counts of military deaths in Iraq are well publicized, but deaths alone do not indicate the risk for an individual. In order to assess the extent of individual risk, the number of deaths must be compared to the number of individuals exposed to the risk of death. These risks may vary from person to person depending on such factors as one's branch of service, rank, age, sex, race and ethnicity.


In this paper, we construct death rates for members of the military who have been deployed to Iraq. Two excellent and highly consistent websites, one of them maintained by the Department of Defense, provide data on deaths that have been incurred in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Data on the number and characteristics of troops deployed in Iraq (the denominators of death rates) were provided by the Department of Defense on their website, with supplementary tabulations supplied by the Defense Manpower Data Center (2006). [1]. The data permit an examination of how death risks among members of the military deployed to Iraq vary according to certain personal characteristics and aspects of armed service. Some of these differences mimic those in society at large, while others reflect the unique conditions of military service.

**Keywords**

Iraq, Mortality, Military, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Vietnam War, Marine Corps, African-American, Army, Army Reserve, Combat, War, Casualties, Troops, Death

**Date Posted:** 28 August 2006

This document has been peer reviewed.

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