

Suicide Risk and Risk of Death Among Recent Veterans

Among deployed and non-deployed active duty Veterans who served during the Iraq or Afghanistan wars between 2001 and 2007, the rate of suicide was greatest the first three years after leaving service, according to a recent study. Compared to the U.S. population, both deployed and non-deployed Veterans had a higher risk of suicide, but a lower risk of death from other causes combined. Deployed Veterans also had a lower risk of suicide compared to non-deployed Veterans. These findings are from a study that looked at the vital status of 1.3 million Veterans from their time of discharge through the end of 2009. Read the [study abstract](#).

Department of Veterans Affairs report on Suicide Among Veterans and Other Americans 2001–2014

Table 6. Suicide Rates per 100,000 Person-Years Among OEF/OIF/OND VHA Users (Active Duty or Reserve/National Guard) by Calendar Year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Active Duty	35.0	43.0	36.2	35.4	48.6	49.2	54.9	54.9
Reserve	25.6	25.8	29.1	24.3	40.9	39.4	43.2	35.6

Main Finding: Compared with rates of suicide among Veterans of the National Guard or Reserve components, rates of suicide were higher among OEF/OIF/OND active duty Veterans.

Office of Suicide Prevention 3 August 2016

(Updated August 2017 by the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention)

<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/2016suicidedatareport.pdf>

VA's Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention has implemented significant suicide prevention initiatives in recent years and months: [expanding the Veterans Crisis Line](#) to three call centers, [launching the S.A.V.E. suicide prevention training video](#), implementing the [Mayor's Challenge](#), and partnering with the departments of Defense and Homeland Security to [support Veterans during their transition from military to civilian life](#).

ROA recently attended a meeting with [Richard A. Stone, M.D.](#), Executive in Charge, Veterans Health Administration and his staff from the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, to discuss suicide rates among National Guard and Reserve veterans and it was recognized that more effort was needed to reach out to this population to prevent suicides. VA has not previously engaged military service organizations like ROA but now recognize that both military and veteran service organizations can work with the department on this issue and many others affecting the Reserve Component.