

Civilian Death Toll From US Strikes in Syria and Iraq: 1,061 (Official); 6,575-26,224 (AirWars)

Prominent human-rights groups like Amnesty International have rejected the U.S.-led coalition's reported figures on civilian deaths, stating that the coalition is "deeply in denial" about the "large number of civilians killed and injured by [coalition] strikes."

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On Thursday, the U.S.-led coalition targeting Daesh (ISIS) [published a casualty report](#) that has drawn criticism and consternation from independent watchdogs and human-rights groups for severely underestimating the number of civilians killed by coalition airstrikes in Syria and Iraq since operations began in 2014.

According to the "official" figures made public by the coalition – officially known as the Combined Joint Task Force of Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) — "at least 1,061 civilians have been unintentionally killed by coalition strike since the start of Operation Inherent Resolve" four years ago.

The recently released figures count only reports of civilian deaths deemed "credible" by the coalition. The coalition has [often been accused](#) of rejecting the vast majority of reports in order to make the civilian death toll appear lower. Indeed, 15 of the last 18 reports reviewed by the coalition [were deemed](#) "not credible," as only three were accepted.

Notably, the three accepted reports had the lowest civilian death tolls – one dead civilian each – of the 18 recently reviewed reports. In addition, 216 reports of civilian casualties are currently pending and thus were not included in the official figures.

However, the civilian casualty figures released by the coalition are significantly lower than estimates made by independent groups, such as the U.K.-based watchdog AirWars, which [has estimated](#) that a *minimum* of between 6,575 and 9,968 civilians have died as a result of civilian airstrikes. AirWars [has also noted](#) that the overall total of alleged civilian deaths resulting from coalition strikes ranges between 17,674 and 26,224.

The stark differences in calculated death tolls are particularly clear in last month's figures, where [AirWars reported](#) that between 75 and 119 civilians were likely killed by the coalition strikes while the coalition has claimed that only *three* were likely killed.

Thousands of bodies still in Raqqa rubble

The clear disparity between estimates is nothing new, as prominent human-rights groups like Amnesty International [had recently rejected](#) the coalition's reported figures on civilian deaths, stating that the coalition is "deeply in denial" about the "large number of civilians killed and injured by [coalition] strikes." Amnesty International has also previously claimed that the coalition's "monthly reports on civilian casualties across Iraq and Syria rely on vague descriptions and dismiss the vast majority of allegations as 'non-credible'."

Back in June, the human-rights group [had impugned](#) the coalition's claims of using "precision" air strikes with minimal civilian casualties in its campaign to "liberate" Raqqa in Syria as inaccurate, stating that this narrative did "not stand up to scrutiny." A year after the coalition "liberated" Raqqa from Daesh, human remains are [still being exhumed](#) on a daily basis and thousands of bodies are still believed to be lying in the rubble that saw 90 percent of the city's buildings obliterated by coalition strikes.

From August 2014 to the end of this past July, the U.S.-led coalition [has conducted](#) a total of 29,920 "precision" strikes against alleged Daesh targets in Syria and Iraq. While strikes in Iraq are coordinated with the Iraqi military, the coalition's actions in Syria are considered illegal by the Syrian government and have not been authorized by the UN Security Council. Coalition strikes have also targeted Syrian military and allied forces engaged in fighting Daesh on several occasions, including [earlier this year](#) in the Syria-Iraq border city of Abu Kamal.

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