

Army reports alarming spike in suicides last month

Thursday, 05 February 2009 22:56 -

The Army is investigating an unexplained and stunning spike in suicides in January. The count is likely to surpass the number of combat deaths reported last month by all branches of the armed forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the fight against terrorism.

"In January, we lost more soldiers to suicide than to al-Qaida," said Paul Rieckhoff, director of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. He urged "bold and immediate action" by the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. According to figures obtained by The Associated Press, there were seven confirmed suicides last month, compared with five a year earlier. An additional 17 cases from January are under investigation.

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