

U.S. Army suicides at record high

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Army statistics showed a record 109 confirmed or suspected suicides among soldiers this year, USA Today reported Thursday. The Pentagon told the newspaper there were 85 confirmed suicides this year, with 24 other deaths under investigation. Of the confirmed deaths, 27 occurred in Iraq and four in Afghanistan, the Army said. A total of 109 suicides would equal a rate of 18.4 per 100,000, compared with the civilian suicide rate of 11 per 100,000 in 2004, using data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the newspaper said. Since 1990, when the Army was 20 percent bigger than today, the previous high was 102 suicides in 1992, Army figures show. While Army research published in August show almost 70 percent of suicides in 2006 were spurred by failed relationships, Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey told Congress last month there is another significant factor. "Soldiers, families and equipment are stretched and stressed," Casey said of the two war operations. Suicide rates among the other services weren't published.

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