By Beth Stebner

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U.S. carried out 333 drone strikes in Afghanistan in 2012, report says, up from 294 in 2011

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Controversial method of fighting uses remote pilots to operate aircrafts

The United States carried out more drone strikes in Afghanistan this year than it has done in all the years put together in Pakistan since it launched the covert air war there eight years ago, it has been revealed.

The statistics, published by the U.S. Air Force and published by Wired's Danger Room blog, show that there were 333 drone strikes in Afghanistan in 2012 alone, up from 294 in the previous year and 278 in 2010.

It is far more than an estimated 338 strikes carried out by the CIA in Pakistan since it began hunting down remnants of al Qaeda, the Taliban and other militant groups in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas eight years ago.

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Enlarge

The U.S. carried out more strikes in Afghanistan this year than the carnage in all the years it has engaged in Pakistan strikes launched this year eight years...

Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2007-2012 Airpower Statistics

UNCLASSIFIED

As of 31 October 2012

United States Air Forces Central Command — Combined Air and Space Operations Center

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM/International Security Assistance Force

Afghanistan

Close Air Support

Sorties	
2009	27,815
2010	32,928
2011	34,286
2012	25,035

Sorties with at least one weapon release	
2009	1,733
2010	1,817
2011	1,981
2012	1,390

Number of Weapon Releases — Less Activity → More Activity

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2009	163	203	364	465	456	442	384	445	254	541	238	208	4,163
2010	157	154	175	197	300	457	325	416	740	1,043	866	272	5,102
2011	405	341	337	339	426	610	695	516	597	661	308	174	5,409
2012	170	116	224	251	405	521	507	603	392	411			3,600

Number of Weapons Releases from Remotely Piloted Aircraft

2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
255	278	294	333	1,160

Combined Data

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Intel, Surveillance and Recon Sorties	11,202	16,193	18,898	28,747	38,198	29,546
Airlift Sorties	56,179	51,945	52,905	63,324	58,914	32,160
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)	270,007	251,738	264,839	298,079	230,230	201,434
Airlift Passengers	1,177,533	1,269,710	1,301,740	1,369,002	1,114,376	631,560
OEF Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	8,182,066	16,576,297	32,267,606	60,400,000	75,956,235	31,557,283
Tanker Sorties	15,875	18,361	17,465	17,296	19,469	13,932
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	946	1,106	1,076	1,050	1,095	855
Aircraft Refueled	79,798	86,288	82,095	82,603	90,476	58,700
Medevac Sorties	-	-	-	3,712	2,959	3,786
Saves	-	-	-	1,888	1,611	1,108
Assists	-	-	-	2,964	2,121	1,539

- Data not available
- Some figures may have changed due to data re-calculation and re-verification

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