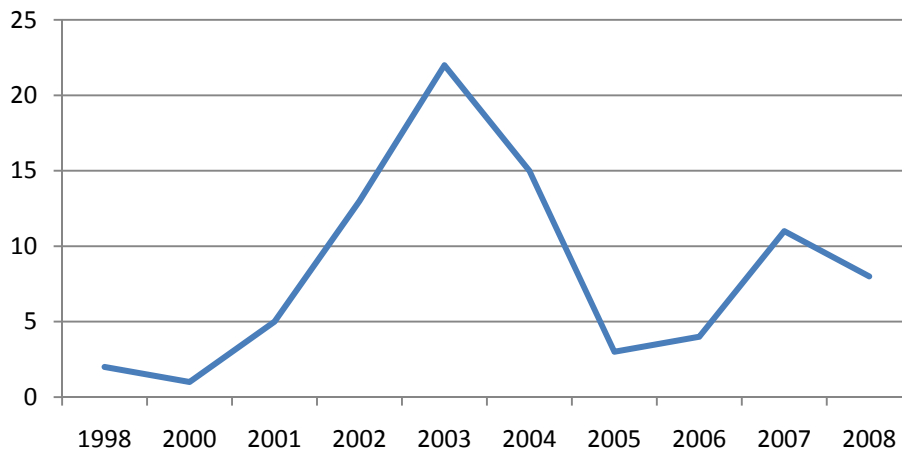


## **Background Report: The Fatal Terrorism of al-Qa'ida**

### Al-Q'aida Terrorist Attacks by Year



Source: GTD

Al-Qa'ida central<sup>1</sup>, under the direction of Osama bin Laden, was responsible for or suspected to be responsible for **84 terrorist attacks** around the world since 1998, an average of more than 8 attacks per year. These attacks resulted in the **deaths of at least 4,299 individuals**.<sup>2</sup>

Year	Al-Qa'ida Terrorism Fatalities
<b>1998</b>	235
<b>2000</b>	19
<b>2001</b>	2,994
<b>2002</b>	101
<b>2003</b>	215
<b>2004</b>	459
<b>2005</b>	30
<b>2006</b>	30
<b>2007</b>	81
<b>2008</b>	135
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,299</b>

Source: GTD

<sup>1</sup> References in this report to "Al-Qa'ida" refer to Al-Qa'ida central, and not to their affiliates (Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Magreb, Al-Qa'ida in Iraq, and others).

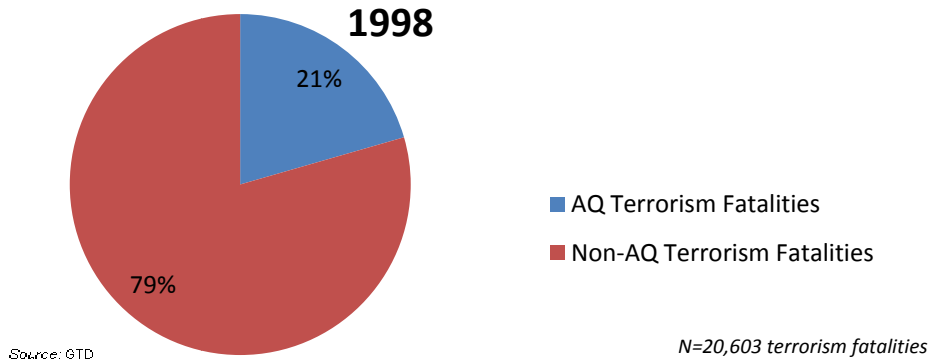
<sup>2</sup> Osama bin Laden and a nascent Al-Qa'ida have also been loosely linked to terrorist attacks on hotels in Yemen in 1992, in which three people died, and the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing, in which six people died and more than 1,000 were injured. However, the 1998 African Embassies Bombings were the first attacks directly attributable to them.

Another **6,300 people were wounded** in al-Qa'ida attacks. Almost 3,000 people were killed in the al-Qa'ida attacks of September 11, 2001, while another 1,300 individuals were killed in fatal al-Qa'ida attacks in:

- Afghanistan
- Iraq
- Kenya
- Pakistan
- Saudi Arabia
- Somalia
- Tanzania
- Turkey
- Yemen

More than 600 other groups have been engaged in terrorism worldwide since 1998. During this period, al-Qa'ida was responsible for less than 1% of all terrorist attacks. (There have been 20,204 terrorist attacks globally since 1998.) However, al-Qa'ida has been **responsible for more than 20% of terrorism fatalities** during this same period, indicative of the intensely deadly nature of al-Qa'ida operations and efforts.

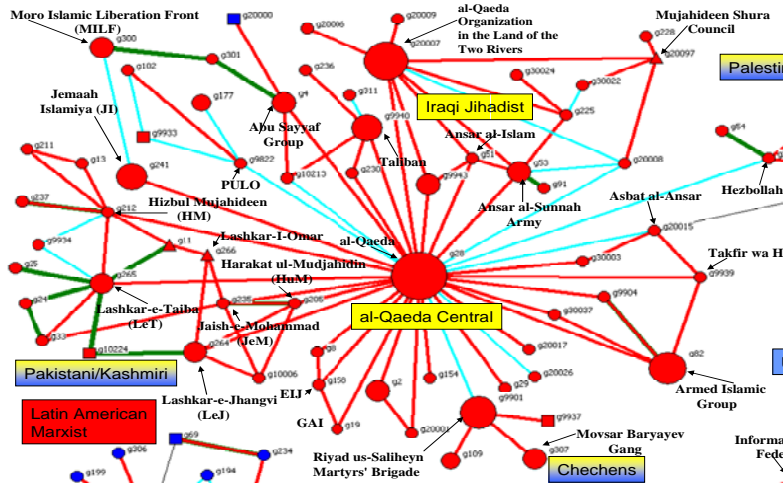
### Responsibility for Terrorism Fatalities Since 1998



Al-Qa'ida's operations were especially deadly even in comparison to other notorious, long-term terrorist organizations: ETA, the Basque nationalist terrorist group in Spain, has been responsible for approximately 820 deaths from 1972 to 2008. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) was responsible for 1829 fatalities dating back to 1970—less than half of the number of people killed by al-Qa'ida. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has been responsible for 4,835 terrorism fatalities in its history. While FARC has imposed this bloodshed over the course of more than 30 years, Al-Qa'ida's **4,299 deaths were concentrated in just a 10-year period.**

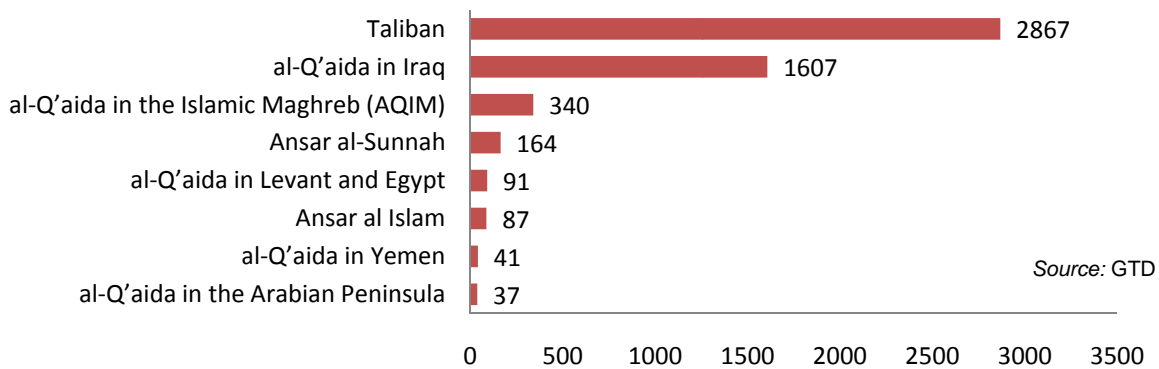
Since 1998, there have been 408 incidents of mass-casualty terrorism—single events in which more than 25 people were killed. Al-Qa'ida was responsible for **16 mass-casualty terrorism attacks**—more than any other group during this same period.

Al-Qa'ida has also become a crucial “node” of a network of deadly terrorist organizations—some created in the hopes of replicating al-Qa'ida, others aligning with al-Qa'ida for ideological or practical reasons. Research by Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer at the University of Albany (SUNY) has identified **33 different terrorist organizations with direct links and alliances to al-Qa'ida.**



Several of these AQ-allies have adopted al-Qa'ida's practice of trying to inflict mass casualties (al-Qa'ida in Iraq, for instance, is responsible for 15 mass-casualty attacks) and, together, this network with al-Qa'ida at the core is responsible for deaths of thousands of civilians around the world.

### Terrorism Fatalities by AQ Affiliates/Allies (through 2008)



Unless otherwise specified, the data presented here are drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD, [www.start.umd.edu/gtd](http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd)). The GTD contains information on more than 87,000 terrorist incidents that have occurred around the world since 1970. An updated version of the database, with information on incidents through 2009, is scheduled to be released in Summer 2011.



GTD is a project of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence. START, based at the University of Maryland, College Park, aims to provide timely guidance on how to disrupt terrorist networks, reduce the incidence of terrorism, and enhance the resilience of U.S. society in the face of the terrorist threat. The material presented here is the product of START and does not express the official opinion of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Additional information on START is available at: [www.start.umd.edu](http://www.start.umd.edu).

For additional information on this release or the GTD, please contact START at 301.405.6600 or [gtd@start.umd.edu](mailto:gtd@start.umd.edu). For more urgent media requests, please use [www.start.umd.edu/start/media/contact/](http://www.start.umd.edu/start/media/contact/).

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