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<http://www.abc15.com/news/national/army-general-killed-himself-at-home-on-alabama-base>

Army general killed himself at home on Alabama base, investigators say

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The Army said Friday it has determined that suicide was the cause of death of a two-star general who was found dead in his home on a military base in Alabama.

Maj. Gen. John Rossi was found dead July 31 at Redstone Arsenal, two days before he was to assume command of Army Space and Missile Defense Command.

He is the first Army general to commit suicide on active duty since record-keeping began in 2000, according to the Army. Military suicides soared earlier this decade and remain a major source of concern; they typically have affected lower-ranking military members.

Rossi, a West Point academy graduate and an air defense artillery officer by training, had just moved onto Redstone Arsenal and was scheduled to be promoted to lieutenant general when he took command of Space and Missile Defense Command.

A written statement by the Army on Friday made no mention of what might have prompted Rossi to take his own life.

The Rossi family issued a statement through the Army expressing thanks for wide support and urging those who may need suicide-prevention help to seek it immediately.

"To the Army, he was Maj. Gen. Rossi," it said. "To us, he was John -- husband, dad."

"We ask for the time and space to grieve in private, and for the Army to continue to better understand suicide, and to help and treat those in need," the family statement added. "For our family, this has been an incredibly painful time, and we ask that you continue to keep us in your thoughts and prayers. To all the other families out there, to the man or woman who may be facing challenging times, please seek assistance immediately. Compassionate and confidential assistance is available."