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NATO's Civilian Killings in Afghanistan Soaring

Posted By Jason Ditz

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With the Obama Administration once again emphasizing the great “efforts” the US military has gone to in trying to avoid killing innocent civilians in Afghanistan, the Pentagon today released figures showing just how little those efforts have netted.



In the first four months of 2009, NATO forces killed at least 51 civilians, according to their own admittedly conservative estimate. [For the same period in 2010, NATO has killed at least 90, a 76 percent increase.](#)

President Obama insisted that the troops are putting themselves at risk to avoid these killings, saying “they’re hesitating, they’re being cautious about how they operate, even though it would be safer for them to go ahead and just take these locations out.”

That hesitancy certainly isn't showing up in the bottom line, however, and the incidents which are happening certainly don't speak to particularly cautious troops.

On April 12, US troops [opened fire on a civilian bus along the highway in Kandahar Province, killing five and wounding 18 others](#). The next week on April 19 NATO troops attacked another civilian vehicle in Khost, [killing four students](#) that it briefly claimed were "known insurgents."