

## Vietnam Casualty Code Definitions

Taken from Marine Corps Casualty Procedures Manual dated February 1973

**Battle Casualty (BC):** Any person lost to his organization because of death, wound, missing, capture, or internment providing such loss is incurred in action. "In action" characterizes the casualty status as having been the direct result of combat; sustained in combat or relating thereto; or sustained going to or returning from a combat mission provided that the occurrence was directly related to combat or through misadventure, or friendly action. However, injuries due to the elements or to self-inflicted wounds are not to be considered as sustained in action and are thereby not to be interpreted as battle casualties. Examples of injuries not to be interpreted as battle casualties are: frostbite, battle fatigue, sunstroke, heat exhaustion and diseases not verified as cases of biological warfare. Minor injuries or wounds neither requiring admission to a medical facility nor involving loss of personnel are also considered battle casualties for reporting purposes, if otherwise, classified as a battle casualty as defined above. NOTE: THE TERM WILL BE USED ONLY IN CASE OF DECLARED WAR OR AS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS.

**Battle/Hostile Casualty (Disease):** This term will be used only to identify verified cases of biological warfare casualties.

**Body Not Recovered (BNR):** This term will be applied to all casualties who have been determined to be dead and whose remains have not been recovered or interred by United States personnel or personnel of an allied nation. The fact that the place of burial may later become inaccessible to friendly forces is not in itself a basis for use of this term.

**Casualty (CAS):** Any person lost to his organization be reason of having been declared dead, wounded, injured, diseased, interned, captured, missing; or a person whose whereabouts or status has not been determined, provided it can reasonably be determined he is not in an unauthorized absence status. Minor injuries sustained in battle or hostile actions not involving loss of services of personnel are also casualties for reporting and record purposes.

**Dead:** An individual whose remains are positively identified and who has been pronounced dead by a medical or other qualified authority. An individual in a missing status who is either reported as dead from an official source or based on reasonable evidence is declared dead. The following terms will be used in reporting the death of personnel:

**Death from Accidental Injuries (DAI):** Includes all nonbattle/nonhostile deaths from accidents such as explosions, fires, drowning, disasters, vehicle aircraft and misuse of medicine (other than willful misuse of medicine).

**Death from Other Causes (DOC):** Includes all deaths from homicide, suicide, or any other causes not specifically covered in this chapter.

**Died of Disease (DOD):** Includes all deaths from natural causes and disease.

**Died of Wounded Received in Action (DOW):** A battle or hostile casualty who dies of wounds or other injuries received in action, after having reached any medical treatment facility. It is essential to differentiate these cases from battle casualties found dead or who died before reaching a medical treatment facility (the KIA group).

**Killed in Action (KIA):** This term will be used to describe battle or hostile casualties or those who are killed outright in the presence of the enemy or die of wounds or other injuries before reaching any medical treatment facility. This provides an objective basis for distinction between “Killed Action” and “Died of Wounds” cases as it is often impracticable to determine whether deaths in combat were or were not instantaneous. Personnel mistakenly or accidentally killed by friendly fire in the presence of the enemy and personnel found dead on the battlefield will be considered “Killed in Action.” In the latter cases, the date of death will be determined locally from the available evidence, or if such evidence is not available, the date of death will be the date the remains were found by military personnel. Personnel killed in an aircraft crash en route to or returning from a combat mission will be considered “Killed in Action” provided that the occurrence was directly related to hostile action or the presence of the enemy was a contributing factor. The term “Killed in Action” without the statement “body not recovered” (BNR) indicates the body was recovered.

**Hostile Casualty:** A term used to describe combat casualties incurred in armed conflict. The definition for battle casualties accurately describes this term and will be used as criteria for classifying hostile casualties. This term will be used to identify casualties at times other than during declared war and such other times as may be directed by the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

**Wounded in Action (WIA):** A term to describe all battle/hostile casualties, other than “Killed in Action” or in a missing status, who suffer in jury, wound or illness as described under Battle Casualty or Hostile Casualty.

**Wounded in Action Not Evacuated (WIANE):** A term used to describe all personnel wounded in action and not evacuated beyond the regimental level collecting and clearing agency.