

Comments on “Deutsche Militärische Verluste” by Rüdiger Overmans

The issue of accuracy in reports is of course of paramount importance to anyone that uses archival documents to establish casualties. The accuracy of the German casualty reports has been cast in doubt by Rüdiger Overmans. He has argued that casualties were considerably greater than given in the reports. This is an argument that needs further discussion.

In his recent book, “Deutsche Militärische Verluste im zweitem Weltkrieg”, Rüdiger Overmans has presented his research on the German casualties during WW II. Previous literature has mainly relied on OKH and OKW documents, which have been considered reliable until the end of 1944. To this have been added estimates for 1945, since it has been clear that reporting during the last stages of the war has been inaccurate and incomplete. Overmans has used a different approach.

At the Deutsche Dienststelle archives in Berlin there is a card index covering the men who were serving in the military organizations (including Waffen-SS and Volkssturm) during WW II. There is one card for each person that served, where the fate of the individual is noted. Overmans has used a sample to answer some fundamental questions. The main question is: how many of the men who served lost their lives. To this Overmans answer is that 5,3 million lost their lives, in one way or another. This is higher than previous figures and Overmans has two explanations for this. The first is that losses in 1945 were much higher than previous estimates indicated. The second is that the German casualty reports before 1945 are too low.

The card index at Deutsche Dienststelle is divided into two major card sets, the “Totenkartei” and the “Allgemeine Kartei” (and also an index card on unclear cases but this is very small and was not used in Overmans investigation). The “Totenkartei” contain cards on those that have been declared dead and contain some 3.1 million cards. It can probably safely be concluded that this is a correct source. The “Allgemeine Kartei” contains cards of the remainder of those who served. Those men who appear in the “Totenkartei” shall not be included in the “Allgemeine Kartei”. I have not found that Overmans has ensured that there is no double counting in the two sets of cards. Perhaps he has, but I have not found anything in his book that hints to such a procedure. Most likely the staff at Deutsche Dienststelle has long worked to remove such cases.

What Overmans has done is to take a sample of 3,051 cases from the “Totenkartei” and also a sample of 7,619 cases from the “Allgemeine Kartei”. Of the latter, he found 1,100 cases he classified as deaths (14.4 %). Since there are 15.2 million men represented by the “Allgemeine Kartei”, he concludes that there is another 2.2 million men who died, for a total of 5.3 million overall. He has then used the 3,051 cases from the “Totenkartei” plus the 1,100 cases he found in the “Allgemeine Kartei” to get a sample of 4,151 deceased.

A problem with many of the unclear cases is that we do in fact not know that they died, or when. Overmans discusses many of the possible fates of men whose whereabouts are unknown. For example, men may have suspected that they would be charged with war crimes after the war and thus opted to live covertly or under a new identity. Also some POW who had been brought to the US and Canada may have stayed there after the war to begin new lives, rather than turning back to a Europe in ruins (perhaps they new that their family was dead and then found little reason to move back). Some men may have found that their wives had found another man during their absence and thus opted to begin a new life (perhaps with a new woman), etc, etc. There are many reasons for soldiers who may have passed the system unnoticed. Overmans discusses these cases, but concludes that they are all of minor importance. Probably his conclusion is correct, for each one of these cases. But since all of them point in the same direction, it is not necessarily true that the combined effect is minor. The effect of this would be a smaller number of deaths compared to Overmans figures. In effect, his methodology can be said to establish the upper limit on the number of German soldiers that lost their lives.

Overmans argues that most of these persons would eventually apply for a superannuation, but that of course assumes that the person was still alive when he had reached the age required. It is of course fully conceivable that the person had died due to causes that were not related to the service in military forces. Nevertheless, it seems most likely that in those cases where a person is missing with no further information available, he is dead. It seems more likely that his death is related to his military service than not. Hence it would of course not be possible to dismiss all figures above the 3.1 million cases in the "Totenkartei". Only if these cards were duplicates of cards anyway held in the "Allgemeine Kartei" could we do that. This seems however not to be the case.

But the assumption that a soldier whose fate we have no information about must have died in the war is nevertheless dangerous. Sweden did not participate in the war, but of all men born between 1900 and 1927, 18 408 died 1945-49.¹ Since the German population was about twelve times greater than the Swedish population, it could be expected that well over 200,000 men in the age bracket died 1945-49. However, since Sweden was not devastated by war, the mortality in Germany can be expected to be markedly higher. After all, in Sweden food production and distribution was working normally, housing was no problem, supply of clean water was undamaged, health care was adequate and hygiene caused no particular problem. Thus deaths due to infections can be assumed to have been higher in Germany. Also it is conceivable that men whose families had perished during the war suffered a greater death rate. It is a fact that mortality is greater among unmarried men than among married men, even though the relation between cause and effect is somewhat complicated. To this has to be added a sense of despair and disillusionment, which can hardly have contributed to greater chances of survival. It is also worth noting that Overmans figures show that among older men, the percentage "Verschollen" is greater than among the younger.²

Even though soldiers whose fate is unknown are dead, they need not have died due to combat, or military service. Especially during 1945, it must have been difficult to establish what happened to the individual soldiers. Often the data at Deutsche Dienststelle gives the last sign of life, often the date when the last letter was sent home to the family. If nothing else is known about the soldier thereafter, he is assumed to be dead by Overmans. However, it is worth noting that Overmans own figures show major differences between the three main areas from which the German soldiers were recruited. Overmans has separate figures for "Ehemalige Ostgebiete", "Österreich" and "Bundesrepublik". The first of these areas is the eastern parts of Germany, including provinces like East Prussia, Silesia and Pommerania, which were lost by the Germans after the war and whose population was largely forced to flee westwards. Österreich is of course Austria, while the Bundesrepublik is the area encompassed by the Germany of today. A soldier who had not been in touch with any of his relatives since, say January 1945, can be expected to have greater difficulties to get his fate clarified. A soldier who after the war returned to his parents, where he lived before being inducted into the armed forces, was probably more likely to have his case correctly recorded after the war. Thus it could be expected that it is more difficult to clarify the fate of soldiers born in the eastern provinces, than in the Bundesrepublik. The latter did however suffer from allied air bombardment, which beside causing many deaths, also destroyed a very large number of homes, forcing many people to move. This may have caused some shuffle of people, which, while not as great as for the eastern province, was still greater than in Austria. Consequently, it should be expected that the number of unclear cases are greater among soldiers originating from the eastern provinces than in the Bundesrepublik and smallest among those from Austria. In fact, this is precisely what Overmans figures show.³ Consequently, the fact that there are more soldiers from the eastern provinces, whose fate is unknown, may be taken as an indication that it is not unproblematic to assume that the soldiers whose fate is unknown after a certain date died during the war.

The fact that the nothing was heard of a soldier after for example February 1945, can thus not be taken as showing that the soldier died in February or March 1945. It can well be that he could not send a letter to relatives, because communications was not working (after all, the breakdown of communications is a reason Overmans put forward as an alleged explanation why the German high command had such an –

according to Overmans – incorrect impression of the losses suffered during 1945)⁴. Many explanations for his fate can be imagined, just to give a few here:

1. He may have been taken prisoner by the Red Army at the end of the war, but not being properly registered by the Red Army and subsequently died in captivity.
2. He may have left his combat units toward the end of the war, to save his skin and see if his relatives were alive. As long as Germany was occupied, he may not have felt particularly inclined to reveal his true identity and background (especially as the Soviets arrested tens of thousands of former German soldiers – and also quite a few men who had not been soldiers – under the pretext that they were war criminals and sent them to forced labour camps. He may then have died relatively soon after the end of the war (as shown above, several hundred thousand German men in the ages subject to military services may have done that).
3. He may have lived in the eastern provinces of Germany before inducted into military service. As a result of combat actions, his unit may have happened to be relatively close to his home and he has opted to desert, got home and subsequently died when he tried to escape from the advancing Red Army.
4. He may of course, as Overmans has assumed, have died as a result of combat.

In any case, even if the soldier is dead, he need not have died at such a date that the military reporting system must have recorded it. If we discuss the accuracy of the military casualty reporting system, this is of course important.

But aside from these comments, there is a more serious problem with Overmans data. He has used two sets to take his sample from, both the “Allgemeine Kartei” and the “Totenkartei”. If we accept his conclusion that 5.3 million lost their lives, then 2.2 million of these must be found in the “Allgemeine Kartei”, since the “Totenkartei” contains 3.1 million cases. This means that 58 % of all deaths can be found in the “Totenkartei” and 42 % in the “Allgemeine Kartei”. But the sample Overmans has used consists of 3,051 cases from the “Totenkartei” and 1,100 cases from the “Allgemeine Kartei”. Thus in Overmans sample 74 % is taken from the “Totenkartei” and 26 % from the “Allgemeine Kartei”⁵.

If the distribution in the sets relative to the variables investigated is identical, this does not matter. But there is strong reason to suspect that this is not the case. Especially the distribution over time may be different in the two sets. This can very well place over one or two hundred thousand deaths a year too early.⁶

There are two main reasons to believe that the two sets do not have equal distribution over time. First, the Deutsche Dienststelle is the successor of “Wehrmacht Auskunftstelle”, an authority that existed during the war and was responsible for providing information to relatives on the fate of men serving in the armed forces. “Wehrmacht Auskunftstelle” worked during the war to establish a by name register on deceased soldiers. This register was taken over by the Deutsche Dienststelle and subsequently expanded, as more information became available. Since the staff was reduced when the Wehrmacht Auskunftstelle was relocated in 1944, and the casualty rates for the Germans went up later in the war, there is reason to suspect that the Wehrmacht Auskunftstelle could create a more complete register for those who died before 1944 than for those who died after 1943. Second, the number of unclear cases, and the number reported as missing, rose during the war. Even Overmans own figures show this. Until 1943 (inclusive) the number of missing and unclear formed a relatively small part compared to those who were known to have deceased. In 1944 the number of known deaths were still higher, but only slightly so. In 1945 the number of unclear and missing is greater than the number of known deaths.

Hence, if we want to know how many soldiers that died before a specific date, Overmans sample may give an exaggerated number, even if his total for the entire war is correct.

Overmans claims that the German casualty reports are too low. As discussed above, there are reasons to suspect that his figures are too high, at least for the early and middle periods of the war. We will attend to more specific periods below, but first another issue must be discussed.

It is difficult to claim that the German casualty reporting system was accurate, or inaccurate, since it consisted of so many parts and different types of reports. It is fully conceivable that it worked well in some respects and less good in other. Finally the reports at the divisions, corps and armies at the front may be more or less accurate than the reports at the armed forces high command. It is fully conceivable that the divisions and corps had a sufficiently correct picture, but failed to report this to the higher command echelons. Overmans investigation only covers the reports issued by the highest command echelons. It is fully conceivable that their reports were less accurate than the reports at the front.

The German reports, and in this respect they do not differ much from for example US reports, usually gave losses as “gefallen” (killed in action), “verwundet” (wounded in action) and “vermißt” (missing in action). This is reported by the combat units, often on a daily basis. Since Overmans has only concerned himself with those who lost their lives, he can not tell if the number of wounded is correct or not. This is usually by far the largest category of casualties. It is very important to differentiate between “gefallen” (killed in action) and dead. The category “gefallen” only covers those soldiers who died due to enemy action and whose death was known to occur before being sent to medical facilities. Thus, the number of soldiers who actually died is to be expected to be higher than the number reported as “gefallen”. This is no different from for example US and British armies. How much larger depends on a number of factors. Most obvious is that soldiers reported as missing may actually have been killed. Also missing soldiers may have been taken prisoner, but died in captivity, a phenomenon that tragically was quite frequent on the eastern front.

But aside from these deaths, a percentage of the wounded soldiers may die. Such deaths can, for practical reasons, not be reported by the same channels as the casualties reported by the combat units on a daily basis. Hence, it is certainly possible that the reporting of “gefallene” is correct, but that the number of soldiers that die from wounds is not properly reported. If so, the sum of “gefallene” and “verwundet” is correct, as is initially the proportion between the two categories, but with time passing since the original report, the percentage of deceased will increase.

The share of soldiers who die before they reach medical facilities can vary a lot. It can depend on the character of combat, the efficiency of the evacuation service and the capabilities of the medical services. If the wounded are quickly evacuated, the number of soldiers who die from wounds will increase. If the capabilities of the medical services are poor, a larger share will die from wounds. Likewise, if the influx of wounded soldiers is very great, perhaps the unconscious or conscious decision has to be taken to treat only those with good chances to survive, and leave the others to die. Obviously poor nutrition and other hardships can make mortality higher among the wounded.

Another factor to consider is when the line is drawn between the wounded soldier still remaining with the unit and when he is at a medical facility. For example, if a wounded soldier is loaded on an ambulance and sent to a hospital, is he considered to be killed in action or dead from wounds if he dies during the transport. Even if there is a formal decision made on this, it is by no means certain that it is adhered to. Probably, the unit usually regards a soldier as “gefallen” if he dies before the evacuating vehicle moves away, and dead from wounds if he dies during the transport. This is the simplest way to make a distinction for the unit. It is worth noting that the word “gefallen” is not always used in a proper way. Unfortunately it is sometimes used as a synonym to “Tot” (dead). It is fully conceivable that, in cases where a soldier is noted as “gefallen” in the index cards at Deutsche Dienststelle, he may in fact have been reported as wounded, but died shortly afterwards at a hospital.

Aside from soldiers who die from wounds, there are further causes of deaths. Accidents and diseases can also cause soldiers to lose their lives. Another cause, even though of minor importance, is soldiers who are sentenced to death and executed.

As discussed above, there are many reasons why the number of soldiers who lose their lives are greater than the number of soldiers reported as “gefallen”. There is also strong reason to suspect that it is easier for the combat unit to get an accurate picture on the number of soldiers who are “gefallen” and much more difficult to know what happens to for example those wounded that are evacuated.

It is obviously of great importance to get an impression of the magnitude of the difference between dead and killed in action. An OKH document⁷ gives the situation for the army up to 20 February 1944:

Table 1

Killed in action	795,698
Died due to disease, accidents, etc.	32724
Missing	588,860
Died in medical facilities due to wounds	295,709
Died in medical facilities due to disease, accidents etc.	99,363
Sum:	1,812,354
Sum (excluding missing):	1,223,494

What can be seen from this document is that other deaths than killed in action constitute 35 % of the total (if missing are disregarded). Thus, it can be expected that the number of actually dead is about 53 % greater than the number of soldiers reported as killed in action. This can be compared to the situation on the eastern front up to 31 August 1943. According to the Heeresarzt documents⁸, up to that date casualties amounted to 559,260 killed in action, 2,037,941 wounded, 356,939 missing. If we apply the 53 % “rule”, this would mean that the number of killed would be about 860,000, if deceased due to other causes are included. Taken together with the missing, it would result in almost 1,220,000 killed or missing. It is worth noticing that the Heeresarzt figures sometimes lagged behind, due to delayed reports. The figures above are taken from a document that is dated 4 September 1943, thus it is possible that casualties were actually marginally larger, but given the length of the period the report pertains to and the magnitude of losses, this is not of any significance.

For the same period Overmans gives the losses (dead and prisoners of war) on the eastern front at 1,240,000.⁹ This is an almost perfect match, well within the margins of error in his investigation, if we use his own table on confidence intervals.¹⁰ Thus from Overmans investigation, it can not be concluded that the German casualty reporting system was generally deficient.

It must be observed that the question formulated by Overmans, “How many German servicemen lost their lives” is not the question a casualty reporting system is designed to answer. The German casualty reporting system, and this is not different from US or British systems, was designed to give decision makers an impression of the extent to which combat capabilities had been diminished and to facilitate manpower planning. It is for this purpose irrelevant if a soldier is killed wounded or missing, he is nevertheless temporarily or permanently absent from service. If he is killed he will of course never return to service. If he is reported as missing he is most likely dead or taken prisoner by the enemy and thus not likely to return to service. If he is reported as wounded, there are many more alternatives:

1. He may eventually succumb to his wounds.
2. He may become an invalid and discharged.
3. He may recover, but not to such an extent that he returns to front line service.
4. He may recover to such an extent that he can do front line service.
5. He may recover fully.

In which of these categories the soldier will eventually fall can not be determined initially, even though it can be possible to make a relatively qualified guess. Hence, the casualty reporting system gives the number of killed in action, the evacuated wounded and the missing. To judge the combat capabilities, this

data is considered together with information on the number of replacements sent and the number of convalescents returning. This system also lends itself to a kind of double bookkeeping. If we have the strength at two specific dates we can compare the influx in the form of replacements, reinforcements and returning convalescents in the period between the two dates with the losses.

This can be done for the period 1 July 1943 and 1 June 1944. On 1 July 1943 the Ostheer numbered (including Waffen-SS and Luftwaffe ground combat units) 3,138,000 men.¹¹ Between 1 July 1943 and 1 June 1944 1,900,490 losses were suffered.¹² In the same period the Ostheer received 1,205,030 replacements (including convalescents that had recovered from wounds).¹³ According to this it would be expected that the Ostheer numbered 2,442,540 on 1 June. However, it was slightly stronger, at 2,635,000.¹⁴ The missing piece of data is of course the transfer of combat units.

In the period 24 new divisions were sent to the eastern front.¹⁵ These numbered about 340,000 men, if assumed to be at full strength. During the same period 25 divisions were withdrawn from the eastern front.¹⁶ These numbered approximately 130,000 men when withdrawn.¹⁷ Thus the net increase was 210,000. This would suggest a strength on 1 June 1944 of 2,652,540, or less than 1 % of the reported strength. If the reported casualties were too small, then the number of replacements must have been higher than reported, a highly unlikely situation.

Overmans has argued that it was not only the casualty reports that were erroneous. Also he suspects that this may have caused the strength reports to be wrong. To support this he argues that the German reports on the strength on the eastern front on 1 June 1944 differ considerably. Overmans presents data from two documents, giving the strength on the eastern front on 1 June 1944 as 2,55 million men and 1,85 million me respectively.¹⁸ Such variations in strength reporting should be interpreted that the OKH had vague notions about the actual strength on the eastern front. However, Overmans has completely misunderstood the document giving the lower strength. Quite often the Germans divided the strength on the eastern front into three categories¹⁹:

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------|
| 1. | Verbände | Divisions and Brigades |
| 2. | Fechtende Heerestruppen | GHQ Combat units |
| 3. | Heeresversorgungstruppen u. Sonstige Truppe | GHQ rear services. |

The document giving the lower strength (1.85 million) does in fact only give the strength of “Verbände”, i. e. divisions and brigades.²⁰ Obviously this is lower than the total strength. I have seen many documents giving the strength on the eastern front on 1 June 1944. They almost never show identical figures, but all hover around 2.6 million, within deviations less than one percent. The example given by Overmans does not suggest that the reports were inaccurate, rather it suggests a less than perfect understanding of the documents on his behalf.²¹ If the strength of the Fechtende Heerestruppe, Heeresversorgungstruppe and Sonstige Truppe is added to the strength of the Verbände, we reach the level given by other documents.

There are further reasons why Overmans figures are higher than reports show. In Overmans losses for the various periods on e.g. the eastern front, there is often no distinction between losses by the various arms, but most reports pertain to ground forces only. Clearly the latter suffered the vast majority of losses, but not all. Another factor to consider is that Overmans figures on losses seem to include “Wehrmachtgefolge”. This was a term that included non-military personnel that in some way supported army units, for example civilians running railways used by the Germans in occupied areas. It seems likely that the reporting channels were not as well established for such “formations” as for regular army units. Losses in this category probably mainly occurred in special instances, like the defeats at Stalingrad 1943, Byelorussia 1944 and Romania 1944. This category is probably not great, but it is likely that it is not fully accounted for in the casualty reports. Similarly police formations are included in his figures.

Conclusions

Overmans investigation only covers those soldiers who lost their lives, and partially also those who were taken prisoner. However, the wounded are not included in the investigation. Since the majority of all casualties usually are wounded, this makes claims on the casualty reporting system less relevant. It is obviously difficult to make claims on the accuracy of a system when the largest part of the system is not covered. In this case it is particularly limiting, since there is a connection between killed and wounded, in the form of soldiers initially reported as wounded, but who later die of their wounds. It is fully conceivable that the initial reports, giving killed in action and wounded are correct, but that the system fails to properly take into account the soldiers who die of wounds or disease. That this can make considerable difference is shown above.

To a certain extent Overmans has compared apples with oranges. The reporting system was not primarily designed to answer the question he has formulated, hence it is not surprising that it fails to do that.

It seems that the reporting system generally was quite accurate at giving killed in action, wounded and missing for regular military units in action. It may well have been less accurate concerning soldiers who die of wounds, those who died of disease, non-regular units and certainly the exact fate of those reported as missing. The fact that the system does not properly account for wounded soldiers who die does however not show that it reported too small losses, rather the error is the balance between the various categories of casualties reported.

But there are also many question marks over Overmans own investigation. First we have the fact that he has used two different sets of cards to create his sample. If these have identical distributions this causes no difficulty, but there are strong reasons to suspect they are not identical in their distribution over time. Also he has arrived at the overall casualty figure of 5,318,000 dead by adding together the 3.1 million in the "Totenkartei" with the result of a sample from the "Allgemeine Kartei". This means that the "Allgemeine Kartei contains, according to Overmans sample, 2.2 million "deaths". However, since this is a sample it must be added that there is a margin of error on that figure of almost +/- 200,000.²² Since Overmans uses this total as a basis to calculate the losses for smaller periods, we have a case of two statistical errors of margin piled upon each other. If we look at the figures he gives for losses on the eastern front up to 31 August 1943, this means that the margin of error is in the order of +/- 250,000. Consequently, his losses for each month, often given down to the last digit, must be taken with a large grain of salt.

But these are problems of statistical nature only. These considerations apply for a case where there are no question marks over the set of data used and the methods of sampling. However there are many problems with Overmans set of data. First of all, there are the many ambiguities with those cases where there is no information available on the fate of individuals. Overmans equates these cases with deaths. This is far from safe. Overmans argues that the many other possibilities are small. Probably true, but many small factors can taken together be kind significant, if they mainly pull in the same direction. Since Overmans have assumed that, if there is no information available on the fate of a man after a certain date, he is dead, uncertainties can only pull in one direction. After all, a man can not be more than dead more than once. Hence, there is a basic risk in the kind of investigation performed by Overmans.

Taken together, all these objections makes Overmans claim that the German casualty reporting system was inaccurate untenable. He may be correct about 1945, but not for the period before.

This does not mean that German system was perfect, but up to December 1944 it seems to have worked quite well. In 1944, however, the share of hastily assembled units was increasing. Often these were formed from military schools or air or naval bases. In these cases, the reporting channels may not have been properly established, which can result in many casualties never being properly reported.

-
- 1 "Dödlighets och livslängdstabeller för årtieondet 1941-1950", Statistiska Centralbyrån, Stockholm 1954.
 - 2 Overmans Deutsche Militärische Verluste im Zweiten Weltkrieg (R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München 1999) 276. Among those born 1916-20 (i. e. those who were around 25-30 years old when the war ended), 34 % had just disappeared. For those born in 1901 – 1905 (40 – 45 years old when the war ended) 55,63 % disappeared. In the Swedish data presented above, the mortality was markedly higher in the latter age bracketed, which is not surprising, given that health tends to decline with age.
 - 3 Overmans Deutsche Militärische Verluste im Zweiten Weltkrieg (R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München 1999) 247, 263.
 - 4 Overmans, page 279.
 - 5 Overmans Deutsche Militärische Verluste im Zweiten Weltkrieg (R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München 1999) 190-4.
 - 6 Assume that in reality 30 % of all deaths occurred after 31 December 1944. If the distribution in the Totenkartei is such that 20 % of the deaths registered there is after 31 December 1944 and that the "Allgemeine Kartei" has 44 % the deaths registered after 31 December 1944. If we then use Overmans ratio between cases from the two sets, his results will show more than 200,000 deaths placed before 31 December 1944 that in reality occurred after 1944.
 - 7 Der Heeresarzt im OKH Gen.St.d.H./Gen.Qu. Az 1335 (IIB) Nr. I./01867/44 g.Kdos, 6 März 1944, BA-MA RW 6/v. 555
 - 8 Der Heeresarzt b. Oberkommando des Heeres, Generalquartiermeister, Nr. I/5846/43 g.Kdos, 4. Sept. 1943, NARA T78, R414, F6383359.
 - 9 Overmans, p. 281.
 - 10 Ibid, p. 184.
 - 11 OKH/Gen.St.d.H./Org.Abt. Nr. I/18941/44 g.Kdos, v. 7.9.44 (National Archives, Microfilm Publication T78, Roll 414, Frame 6383114). The figure does not include forces in Finland.
 - 12 BA-MA RH 2/1343.
 - 13 Ibid.
 - 14 FHO, Kräftegegenüberstellung, BA-MA RH 2/2649.
 - 15 These were the following: 1. Pz.Div., 1. SS-Pz.Div., 2. Fallsch.Div., 9. SS-Pz.Div., 10. SS-Pz.Div., 11. SS-Pz.Gren.Div., 14. Pz.Div., 15. SS-Gren.Div., 16. Pz.Div., 19. SS-Gren.Div., 20. SS-Gren.Div., 24. Pz.Div., Feldherrnhalle, 76. Inf.Div., 100. Jäger-Div., 214. Inf.Div., 357. Inf.Div., 359. Inf.Div., 361. Inf.Div., 367. Inf.Div., 371. Inf.Div., 376. Inf.Div., 384. Inf.Div., 389. Inf.Div.
 - 16 These were: 1. SS-Pz.Div. (twice), 2. Fallsch.Div., 2. SS-Pz.Div., 5. Geb.Div., 6. Pz.Div., 9. Pz.Div., 11. Pz.Div., 16. Pz.Gren., 19. Pz.Div., 34. Inf.Div., 38. Inf.Div., 39. Inf.Div., 86. Inf.Div., 113. Inf.Div., 137. Inf.Div., 151. Res.Div., 216. Inf.Div., 223. Inf.Div., 250. Inf.Div., 262. Inf.Div., 321. Inf.Div., 328. Inf.Div., 330. Inf.Div., 331. Inf.Div., 333. Inf.Div., Note that this only includes divisions physically withdrawn to other parts of Europe, not divisions disbanded on the eastern front and whose remnants were absorbed by other formations.
 - 17 The 1. SS-Pz.Div. was withdrawn after Zitadelle, when it numbered at least 17,000. The 2. SS-Pz.Div. numbered around 9,000 when it was withdrawn, it seems that the 1. SS-Pz.Div. was of about the same strength when it was withdrawn in the spring 1944. Probably the 2. Fallsch.Div. had around 7,000 men when withdrawn. The 5. Geb.Jäg.Div. was immediately sent to the Italian front, hence it probably was reasonably strong, perhaps 9,000. The 6., 9., 11., and 19. Pz.Div. 16. Pz.Gren.Div. (according to data when they arrived in the west) seems to have had on average 7,000 men. However, both the 6. and 19. were sent late in May and are possibly still included in the 1 June strength figure for the eastern front. For this reason we only count them with half the indicated strength. The infantry divisions withdrawn were depleted and usually left elements (particularly infantry) to beef up units remaining on the eastern front. What was withdrawn were usually the staffs, rear services, signal units and some personnel from the artillery. Here we estimate these elements to have numbered, on average, 3,000 men. This would mean that around 48,000 men were withdrawn with these infantry divisions, or a total of approximately 130,000.
 - 18 Overmans, p. 282.
 - 19 See for example page 3 of the document OKH GenStdH/Org.Abt. Nr I/2000/44 geh, 25.4.44, "Festlegung der Stärkebegriffe", BA-MA RH 2/60 and OKH Org.Abt. "Gliederung des Feldheres nach Verwendungsart, Stand 15.12.43, NARA T78, R414, F6383115.
 - 20 Even in his own footnote, he states that the document refers to "Verbände".
 - 21 In fact, had Overmans looked further into the file he has used for the strength on "Verbände", he would have found a similar report on the strength of "Fechtende Heeresrtruppe".
 - 22 Derived from Overmans tabel on page 184.