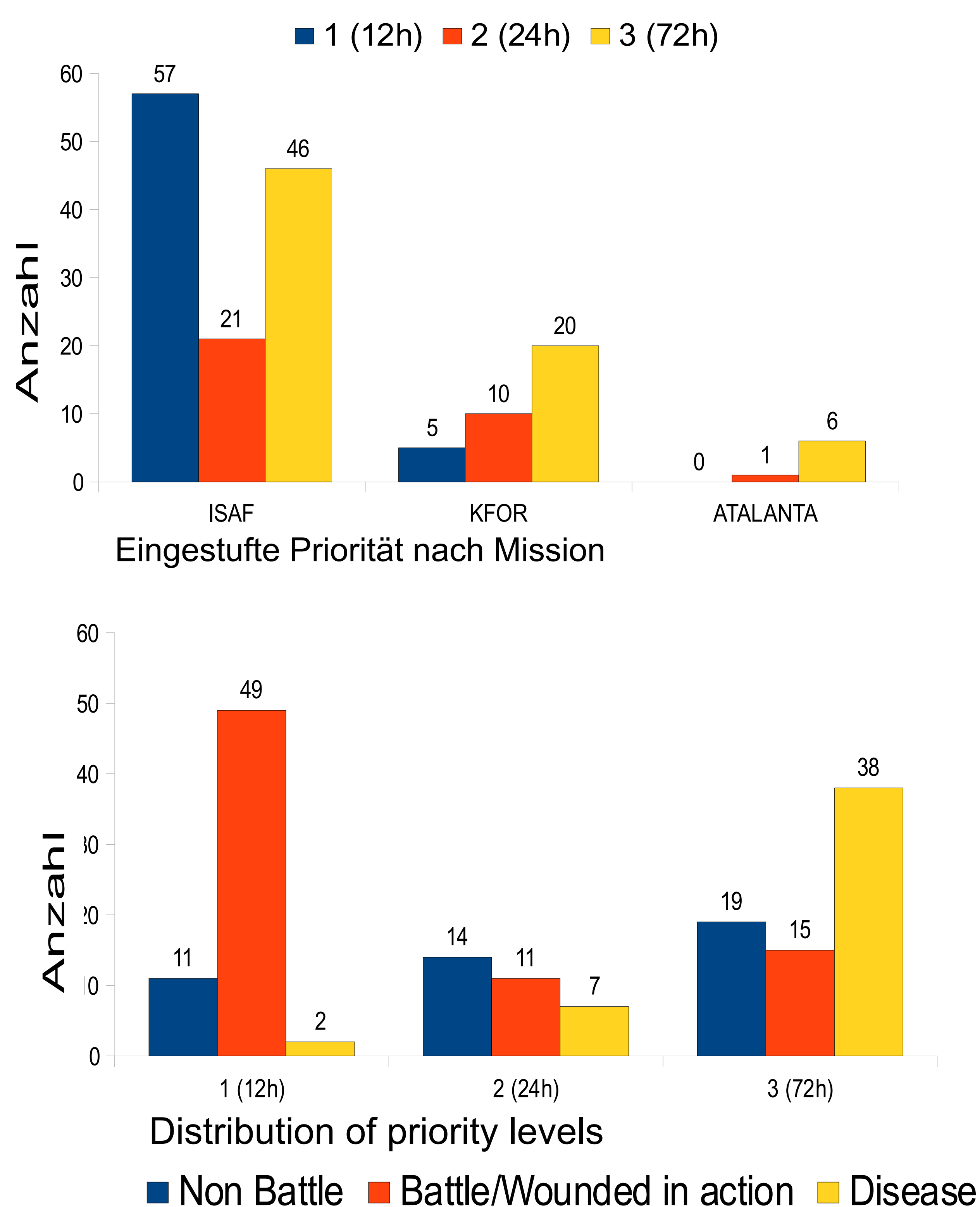


# Medical care on operations and the evacuation of soldiers

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## Introduction

Since the establishment of the Bundeswehr, the Bundeswehr Medical Service has been responsible for the care of sick and wounded soldiers on operations. The structure of medical care during deployment is based on principles of the Military Committee and *Allied Joint Medical Support Doctrine*. These principles are designed to ensure a uniform standard of care. The Bundeswehr Patient Evacuation Coordination Centre is responsible for organising the evacuation of soldiers to Germany. The aim of this study is to collect and analyse the data of 166 Bundeswehr soldiers who had to be evacuated to Germany by air from the ISAF, KFOR, and EU NAVFOR-ATALANTA missions in recent years.

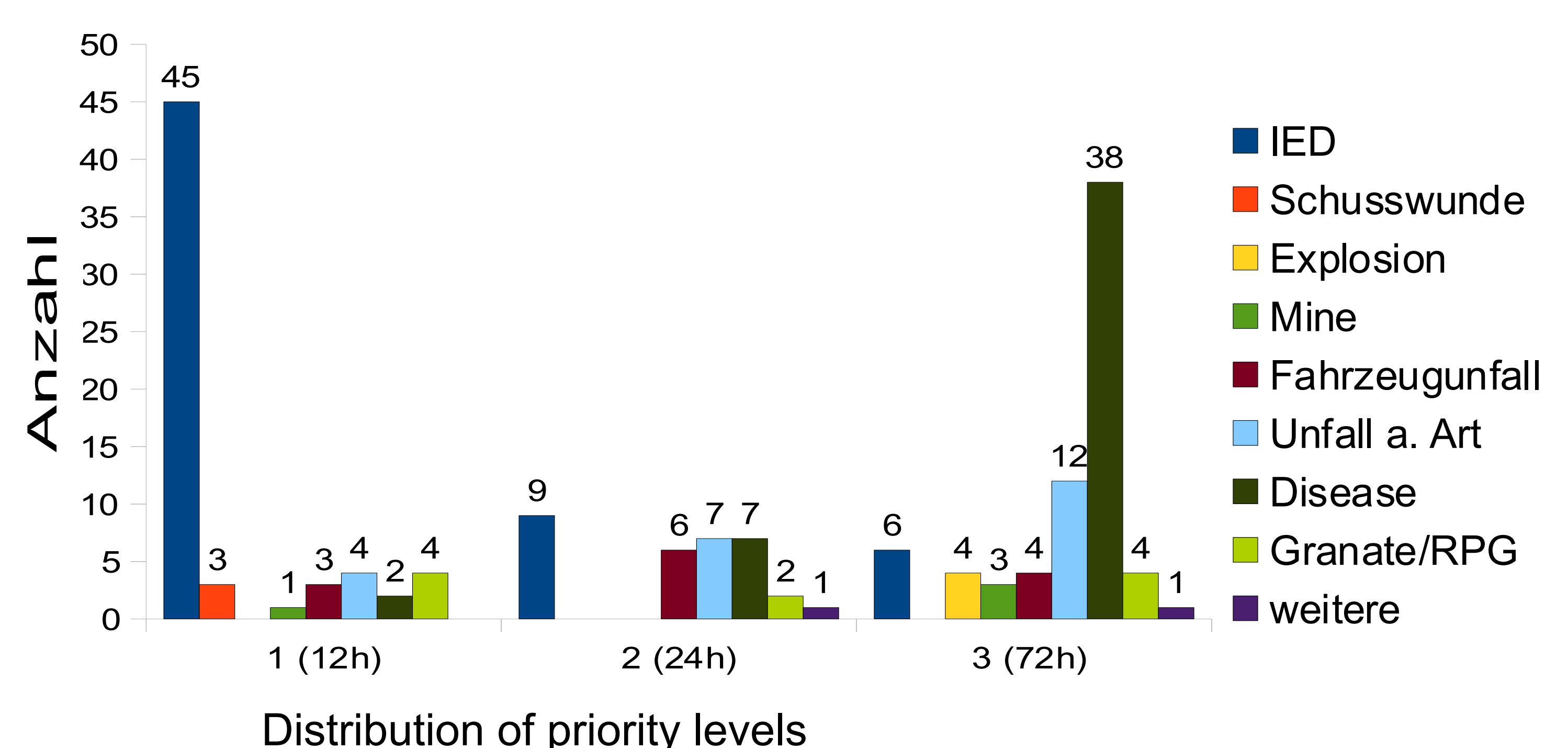


## Methods

The Bundeswehr Patient Evacuation Coordination Centre maintains an archive of all evacuations. From this archive, we selected patients based on diagnoses of diseases and injuries of the mouth, jaws and face. The data on evacuations was analysed using the SAS 9.3 statistics program.

## Results

Priority levels were indicated when requests for evacuation from the country of deployment were made. They were distributed as follows. 72 cases were level 3 (72 h), 62 cases were level 1 (12 h), and 32 cases were level 2 (24 h). The ISAF mission had the highest number of cases, followed by the KFOR mission. The ATALANTA mission had the lowest number of cases. Priority level 1 was most often requested for soldiers wounded in battle. Sickness and injuries resulting from non-battle activities were most often classified as priority level 3. IED attacks were most often classified as priority level 1 (45 of 62) and priority level 2 (9 of 32). Priority level 3 mostly consisted of illnesses (38 of 72).



## Discussion

The rapid evacuation of even complex cases is an important factor in the medical care of soldiers and at the same time ensures high survival rates after attacks and incidents involving severe injuries. The time from the request for evacuation from the country of deployment to the arrival of the means of transport in Germany was the duration of evacuation. 145 of 166 evacuations were completed by the third day. Of these, 11 evacuations were completed on the same day, 86 one day after the request, 30 on the second day, and a further 18 on the third day. This corresponds to a total of 87.3% of all evacuations and confirms the efficiency of the strategic aeromedical evacuation system as well as of the work of the personnel involved.