

PRESS RELEASE——

MARIN COUNTY CORONER

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**For Release**

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# **Golden Gate Bridge Suicide Statistics for 2008**

Marin County Coroner, Ken Holmes, today released figures showing at least 34 suicide deaths from the Golden Gate Bridge in 2008. “The figure might be higher as we know other jurisdictions have recovered bodies with injuries consistent with a fall from a high place, yet the place of death has not been established or confirmed.”

Here is the toll :

- 20 people recovered by the Coast Guard and delivered to the Marin Coroner.
- At least two people found in other jurisdictions and identified as the remains of an individual who jumped from the bridge.
- 12 confirmed jumps from the Golden Gate where witnesses reported seeing someone jump or the event was recorded on the Bridge District surveillance cameras and no remains were recovered in spite of search efforts by the Coast Guard and the S.F. Police Boat.

The known number of deaths in 2008 was nearly identical to the previous 2 years and somewhat higher than the presumed average of 24 per year. The total number of suicides exceeds 1,300 since the bridge was opened. That figure is conservative as unwitnessed but confirmed jumps where no body is recovered have never made it into official counts. Also deaths reported in previous years often excluded the count from surrounding jurisdictions. As a result the full magnitude of this problem on the Golden Gate Bridge is unknown.

Over the last ten years Bay Area residents have accounted for more than 85% of the suicides from the bridge. In 2008, 14 of the people who were recovered were from the Bay Area; three from Marin and four were from out of California, one of those from England.

The Golden Gate Bridge is an attractive suicide site because it is easy to access and features a short railing along the pedestrian walkway. Research has consistently shown that suicides can be reduced if easy access to lethal means is restricted.

In 2008 The Bridge District Board voted to construct a suicide deterrent net to greatly reduce the number of suicides, further studies and funding sources are pending.

-- 30 --

*The Marin Coroner's Office is responsible for determination of the cause and manner of death for individuals who die in Marin County. The office receives the bodies of most bridge suicides after the Coast Guard recovers the remains in S.F. Bay.*