

## War on Terror Update

By Editorial  
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Thirty-eight percent (38%) of voters say the United States and its allies are winning the war on terror. That's the third time in four Rasmussen Reports tracking surveys that confidence has been below 40%. Numbers that bleak haven't been recorded in consecutive surveys since the middle of 2007.

New Rasmussen Reports national telephone surveying finds that nearly one-in-three voters (31%) believe the terrorists are ahead in the war on terror, up just one point from [a month ago](#) and the highest level of pessimism recorded in several years.

Only 36% of voters say the United States is safer today than it was before the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, marking the lowest level of confidence since Rasmussen polling first asked the question in 2002.

For the second month in a row, 47% disagree and say America is not safer now. We have been tracking the question monthly since November 2006 and also measured it regularly in 2004 and 2005. Before that, it was asked on an occasional basis.

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Views on the war in Afghanistan are little changed from a month ago. Twenty-one percent (21%) expect the situation there to get better in the next six months, while 46% think it will get worse. Twenty-four percent (24%) say things will stay about the same.

There was an initial burst of confidence about Afghanistan [following the president's December 1 speech](#) laying out his new war strategy, but the latest findings mark a 13-point drop since then in the number who expect things to get better.

Twenty-nine percent (29%) now believe the situation in Iraq will improve over the next six months, but 30% say they will worsen. Thirty-five percent (35%) predict that the situation will remain about the same. These numbers have remained roughly the same for months as U.S. troops move closer to leaving that country.

Men are more confident than women that America and its allies are winning the war on terror. Women now are evenly divided, with 33% who say the United States is ahead and 33% who think the terrorists are winning.

Female voters are also less sure that the United States is safer today than after 9/11.

Republicans and voters not affiliated with either major party are less confident than Democrats that the United States is safer today than it was before the September 11 attacks.

Iran still tops the list as the country voters view as the bigger threat to U.S. national security, with 30% who view it that way. But now Pakistan and China are tied for second, with 14% each who see them as the bigger threat to America. North Korea, which has been in second for several months now, is viewed as the top threat by 13%.

[Early this month](#), 31% of voters rated the government response to the Christmas Day bombing attempt as good or excellent, but 38% said the response was poor. Twenty-four percent (24%) had a favorable opinion of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, while 47% viewed her unfavorably.

In the same survey, 77% said another terrorist attack in the United States is at least somewhat likely in the next year. That was a 28-point jump from [the end of August](#) when just 49% of Americans felt that way.

Seventy-one percent (71%) of Americans now favor [the use of full-body scanners](#) at airport security checkpoints. Fifty-nine percent (59%) say [factors such as race, ethnicity and overall appearance](#) should be used to determine which boarding passengers to search at airports, but 26% disagree.

Forty-six percent (46%) of voters believe [current airport security procedures](#) are not strict enough, a 13-point increase from April 2008.