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Canada

Poll suggests Canadians want troops out of Afghanistan if casualties rise

Sun May 6 08:18:00 CDT 2007

TORONTO (CP) — A poll suggests 54.6 per cent of Canadians would want the country's troops pulled out of Afghanistan if casualties climb. That compares to 39.3 per cent who consider casualties an an unfortunate but necessary part of the military mission.

Since Canada joined the NATO-led mission in 2002, 54 Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed.

The poll also indicates Canadians are split over how well the government is handling the war, with 48 per cent disagreeing with the government's course and 44 per cent supporting it.

Also of note — a whopping 67 per cent of respondents said they believed Canada's presence in Afghanistan is making the country more vulnerable to a terrorist attack.

The telephone survey of 1,000 Canadian adults was conducted between April 26 and May 1 and is considered accurate within 3.1 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

The poll was conducted by SES Research for Sun Media. SES president Nik Nanos said the numbers suggest an incident with a high death count would smash support for the mission and create a major political problem for Prime Minister Stephen Harper's minority Conservative government.

Canadians understand the political reality, said Nanos "If you're going to pick a fight and somebody else is home, there are repercussions back in Canada."

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