

THE AFGHAN MISSION: ONLINE SURVEY

## Report's recommendations welcome, poll finds

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Canadians are giving a supportive welcome to John Manley's report on Canada's involvement in Afghanistan, with 49 per cent of voters surveyed saying they would back extending the mission if Mr. Manley's conditions are met.

By contrast, 35 per cent would oppose extending the mission even if the recommendations were carried out. Another 12 per cent didn't support or oppose the extension, while 4 per cent didn't know.

The poll provides an opportunity for Prime Minister Stephen Harper, said Greg Lyle, managing director of Innovative Research Group, which conducted the survey on behalf of the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute. Mr. Lyle said Mr. Manley has provided an agenda that the Harper government can now adopt.

"If they deliver on what Manley says the conditions need to be, it's better than free trade in 1988 for [former prime minister Brian] Mulroney," Mr. Lyle said.

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A majority of those surveyed supported the panel's main recommendations. For example, 74 per cent were behind the notion that the military should shift its focus from a combat role to training the Afghan national forces, while another 57 per cent said they backed a recommendation that Canada maintain a military presence only if NATO allies deploy another 1,000 troops.

David Bercuson, director of programs for the CDFAI, said the news is also good for Mr. Harper because 43 per cent of Liberals surveyed say they would support an extension if certain conditions are met.

"The report gives the Conservatives an opportunity to serve their own political interests while also serving the national interest," he said. "Why? Because a whole lot of Liberals are prepared to support the extension of the mission if the Manley conditions are fulfilled."

The poll also found that 26 per cent would be more likely to support ongoing Canadian involvement in Afghanistan as a result of the Manley report, while 17 per cent were less likely.

The online survey of 1,170 individuals was conducted between Jan. 21 and Jan. 23 and is accurate to within 2.87 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

### Manley report reaction

John Manley has struck a chord with the Canadian public in the Afghan conclusions he reaches.

As a result of the Manley report, are you more or less likely to support Canada's ongoing military involvement in Afghanistan?

Much

more **12%**

Somewhat

more **14%**

More likely

**26%**

Made no difference

**47%**

Somewhat

less **7%**

Much

less **10%**

Less likely

**17%**

Do you support or oppose the following recommendations?

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Made no difference	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Shift the focus from combat to training Afghan national security forces	36%	38%	13%	5%	5%
Provide troops with new helicopters and unmanned surveillance vehicles	38%	28%	15%	5%	8%
Have the Canadian government take a stronger position to ensure a more effective international response	32%	29%	17%	5%	10%
Make ongoing involvement conditional on Canada's allies deploying another 1,000 troops in Kandahar province	33%	24%	16%	8%	13%
Extend the mission after Feb., 2009, deadline if conditions are met to provide a better chance of success	24%	25%	12%	13%	22%

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