



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on May 29, 2010

1,000th American Soldier Killed in Afghanistan

The U.S. military suffered its 1,000th death of the Afghan war according to an Associated Press count May 27, when NATO reported a service member was killed by a roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan. The New York Times reported the 1,000th death back on May 19, as the Associated Press relied upon official government statistics that typically delay the certification of casualties.



In a related event, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates [met](#) on May 27 with soldiers charged with laying flags at the graves of “Section 60” of Arlington National Cemetery for the Memorial Day holiday. Section 60 is reserved for graves among the more than 1,000 soldiers killed in the Afghan war and the [4,400 killed in the Iraq war](#).

News of the 1,000th Afghan war death comes during a Memorial Day weekend when the Afghan war has become unpopular with the American people. A *Washington Post*-ABC News poll found that a clear majority — 53 percent — say the Afghan war is not worth it. In the April 24 [poll](#) “56 percent of independents say it is not worth fighting, up from 47 percent in December. Among Democrats, 66 percent say it’s not worth it, including half who feel that way strongly. Republicans are solidly behind the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, with 69 percent saying the war is worth its costs.” The Iraq war is even more unpopular among American voters, though the [number U.S. troops in Afghanistan now outnumber those in Iraq](#).

“I stand here humbled by the knowledge that many of you will soon be serving in harm’s way,” President Obama [told](#) graduates at the West Point commencement address May 22. “I assure you, you will go with the full support of a proud and grateful nation.” But the poll numbers tell a different type of support among the American people than Obama implied at West Point. Perhaps falling support for the war means that the American people support keeping more of America’s servicemen alive, and making the kind of support demonstrated by pall-bearers and an expanded Section 60 at Arlington National Cemetery less necessary.

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