

## **On the Lookout for Terrorists? Most Americans Leave it to the Pros**

When it comes to looking for terrorists, the vast majority of Americans are leaving it to the professionals.

Authorities have called repeatedly on average Americans to be watchful for potential attackers. Attorney General John Ashcroft, releasing videotapes of five suspects on Jan. 17, urged the public "to assist in the effort to identify, locate and incapacitate terrorists."

But only about a quarter of Americans in this ABC News poll say they're in fact "on the lookout for people who look or act like they might be terrorists." Three times as many, 72 percent, are "pretty much leaving that to the law-enforcement authorities."

| On the lookout for terrorists? |     |    |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|
|                                | Yes | No |
|                                | 24% | 72 |

Large majorities across all demographic groups say they're leaving the job to the authorities. Vigilance peaks among higher-income Americans (albeit at just 38 percent), Republicans (31 percent) and people 45 and older (28 percent).

| On the lookout for terrorists? |         |     |    |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----|----|
|                                |         | Yes | No |
| Age                            | 18-44   | 19% | 75 |
|                                | 45+     | 28  | 67 |
| Income                         | <\$100K | 22  | 73 |
|                                | \$100K+ | 38  | 62 |
| Republicans                    |         | 31  | 64 |
| Democrats                      |         | 21  | 76 |
| Independents                   |         | 21  | 73 |

While 72 percent are leaving it to the professionals, fewer - 57 percent in an ABC News/Washington Post poll this week - express confidence in the government's ability to prevent more terrorist attacks. Nonetheless, this poll suggests that more jawboning is in order if the authorities want to mobilize broad public assistance in the search for terrorists.

**METHODOLOGY** - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone Jan. 23-27, 2002, among a random national sample of 1,025 adults. The results have a three-point

error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Dalia Sussman.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:  
<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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Here are the full results:

129. Are you personally on the lookout these days for people who look or act like they might be terrorists, or are you pretty much leaving that to the law-enforcement authorities?

|         | On the lookout | Leaving to Law-enforcement | No opinion |
|---------|----------------|----------------------------|------------|
| 1/27/02 | 24             | 72                         | 5          |

\*\*\*END\*\*\*