

U.S.: Most Baghdad areas now secure

by UPI

BAGHDAD -- U.S. military figures indicate that about 75 percent of Baghdad neighborhoods have been secured -- up from 8 percent one year ago, a report said. The figures show a dramatic increase in the number of secured neighborhoods since President George Bush ordered 30,000 additional U.S. troops to the Iraqi capital last year, USA Today said Friday. The military considers 356 of Baghdad's 474 neighborhoods to fall in the "control" or "retain" categories of the four-tier category system. The designations mean insurgent activity in those areas has mostly been eradicated and normal economic activity in the areas has resumed. U.S. military commanders have warned that the gains made by the troop surge remain fragile, but Col. Ricky Gibbs, a brigade commander in southern Baghdad, said U.S. and Iraqi forces "basically own the streets" at the moment.

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