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# APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, May 19, 2008

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### 1. [Lack of Spending Drill Costs Us Dearly](#), Brian Toohey, AFR\*, 2008-05-17/18

Discipline is sorely lacking when matching force development to the strategic needs in a cost effective manner. The situation is so dire that the core decision-making should be removed from the military and defence officials. The job should be given to a Treasury/Finance-supervised outside unit and the number of Defence civilians cut from more than 20,000 to less than 10,000.

\* [Subscription required](#).

### 2. [Australian Minister Touts Pacific Guest Worker Scheme](#), ABC, 2008-05-19

Australia's immigration minister, Chris Evans, says he wants to trial a guest worker scheme with migrants from the South Pacific. The Rudd Government is planning an overhaul of the country's migration program and will consider a new unskilled migration program based on similar schemes in New Zealand.

### 3. [Lore and Peace](#), Brendan Nicholson, Age, 2008-05-19

Australian Defence Force head Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston says Australian troops are winning their war at a tactical level and that the strategy of using special forces to track down Taliban leaders, hide-outs and bomb-making factories far from the Australian base at Tarin Kowt is working well. But tracking down insurgents living within a civilian population contains its own recipe for

tragedy.

- Strategic Insights 40 - [Making it Count: Australia's Involvement in Afghanistan](#), ASPI, Raspal Khosa, 2008-05-15

#### **4. [Minister: Indonesian Military Focuses on Disasters](#), Sun Yunlong, Xinhua, 2008-05-16**

"We don't have the money to build a large threatening force in Indonesia. We don't need it and a large proportion of the country's budget is focused on economic development and social protection", said Defence Minister Juowno Sudarsono. The current budget is about \$3.2 billion budget, he said. "So forget about building up a 200-ship navy, or a three squadron airforce, that's not on."

#### **5. [East Timor Signs Military Pact](#), Reuters, Herald Sun, 2008-05-18**

East Timor's army will receive military training from Portuguese-speaking countries such as Brazil and Portugal as part of a military pact signed between the countries today. Defence ministers of eight Portuguese-speaking countries signed the military agreement in former Portuguese colony East Timor's capital, Dili.

#### **6. [The Philippines: Counter-Insurgency vs. Counter-Terrorism in Mindanao](#), ICG, 2008-05-14**

U.S.-backed security operations in the southern Philippines are making progress but are also confusing counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency with dangerous implications for conflict in the region. The U.S. and the Philippines need to revive mechanisms to keep these conflicts apart and refocus energies on peace processes with these groups.

#### **7. [Agent Orange Cancer Inquiry](#), Tom Dick, SMH, 2008-05-19**

The Defence Force will investigate allegations that secret army testing of the toxic spray Agent Orange in Queensland during the 1960s led to an increase in cancer deaths 40 years later. The Australian Army tested the carcinogenic defoliant, used in the Vietnam War, by spraying forest near a river within Innisfail's water catchment, according to documents discovered in the Australian War Memorial archives.

- [Health Rejects Agent Orange Cancer Link](#), Sarah Elks, Australian, 2008-05-19
- [The Politics of Agent Orange - The Australian Experience](#), Jock McCulloch, Heinemann, Richmond, Victoria, 1984

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