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1. [US to urge bigger role for Diggers in Afghanistan](#), Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-08-22

General McChrystal wants Australia and other close allies to drop existing "red cards", or national caveats, on where their troops can operate, as he seeks a fuller integration of the coalition's military effort across Afghanistan. For Australia, this would mean allowing the army's mentoring teams currently training the Afghan National Army's 4th brigade to be deployed on combat operations with their Afghan partners outside Oruzgan.

- [Shape up or support will drain away: Smith](#), Brendan Nicholson, SMH, 2009-08-21
- [Afghanistan's war within](#), Paul McGeough, Age, 2009-08-22
- [Afghanistan & East Timor: Dr David Kilcullen](#), Fran Kelly, ABC, 2009-08-24

2. [Mullen issues caution on Afghanistan](#), Brian Knowlton, NYT, 2009-08-23

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that conditions in Afghanistan were "deteriorating," even as Afghans awaited results of their presidential election last week and as the new American

commander in the region worked to complete a major progress assessment and perhaps to propose a further troop increase. "I think it is serious and it is deteriorating," Adm. Mike Mullen said "and I've said that over the past couple of years, that the Taliban insurgency has gotten better, more sophisticated, in their tactics."

- [US 'deadline' for Afghan results](#), BBC, 2009-08-20
- [Saigon 2009](#), Thomas H. Johnson, M. Chris Mason, Foreign Policy, 2009-08-20

3. [Coalition divided on nuclear power](#), Pia Akerman and Matthew Franklin, Australian, 2009-08-24

Serious splits have emerged within the Coalition on nuclear power, with outspoken Nationals senator Barnaby Joyce yesterday calling for a referendum on the issue, while Liberal senate leader Nick Minchin declared any discussion "utterly futile". Senator Joyce demanded Australia abandon its Cold War mindset and end its ban on nuclear power, telling the Nationals federal council meeting it made no sense to continue to take the "peculiar" position of selling uranium overseas, while pretending domestic nuclear energy generation was immoral.

4. [Budget pressure delays landing of new fighter](#), Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-08-21

The RAAF faces at least a two-year delay in acquiring its planned F-35 joint strike fighter force as the Rudd government moves to exert tighter control on the defence budget. The pressure on defence spending, beginning next year, means the air force will not receive its initial squadron of F-35s until 2017, at the earliest.

5. [Shock and ore](#), John Garnaut, SMH, 2009-08-22

The Chinese Government's initial framing of the case as one of "national security" suggests Rio and Australia may also have been caught up in a larger struggle for influence over China's 540 private and state-owned companies, which together produce more steel than the rest of the world put together. The incarceration of Hu suggests Rio and the Australia Government may have underestimated the humiliation and legitimate economic anxieties that could be generated in a country that is so dependent on steel.

- [In this Chinese fable the chicken upsets the fox in his lair](#), Peter Hartcher, SMH, 2009-08-22
- [Stand up to China? Better not to fan the diplomatic flames](#), John Garnaut, SMH, 2009-08-24

6. [Indonesian will give East Timor military aid](#), Markus Junianto Sihaloho, Jakarta Globe, 2009-08-24

The country's top naval official said that Indonesia would provide training and possibly sell equipment to East Timor's Navy as part of a broadening of defense ties between the former enemies. Through the agreement the naval component of the East Timor Defense Force would learn from Indonesian counterparts how to train new recruits, improve officers' capacity through a staff and command academy, as well as naval strategies.

7. [Naval patrols swell to keep out arms used by terrorists](#), Jakarta Globe,

2009-08-23

The Navy has increased its security presence along maritime borders and joined hands with counterparts in neighboring countries to prevent the smuggling of arms by militant groups, a top officer said. Navy Chief Adm. Tedjo Edhy Purdijatno said patrols were being stepped up on the maritime border with the Philippines, with which Indonesia has signed a border security pact.

- [TNI's role 'must be closely monitored'](#), Jakarta Post, 2009-08-22

8. [Overfishing spurs call to halve bigeye tuna catch](#), Tom Arup, SMH, 2009-08-22

Australia and 24 other Pacific nations will have to cut bigeye tuna fishing by up to 54 per cent to protect the species after a finding that the region had recorded its largest tuna fishing catch in history. Australia's annual report found it had increased its bigeye take by just eight tonnes over last year, but Australian bigeye fishing had almost doubled from 2006 to 2008.

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