

Media Roundup Issue 77 (23/06/18 – 29/06/18)

1. China takes over Radio Australia frequencies after ABC drops shortwave

22/06/18

Bill Bainbridge

ABC News

A Chinese station has taken over some of the shortwave radio frequencies once used by the ABC in the Pacific region, following the broadcaster's decision to end shortwave services.

Radio Australia switched off its shortwave transmissions to remote parts of northern Australia and across the Pacific in January 2017.

The ABC insisted at the time the shortwave technology was out of date and it would save \$1.9 million by cutting the service, which it said would be reinvested in expanding content and services.

The decision was met by an outcry from affected listeners, and there has been continued agitation to bring the service back.

The Australian newspaper has reported Radio Australia's former shortwave frequencies are now being used by China Radio International, the country's state-owned overseas broadcaster.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-22/china-takes-over-radio-australias-old-shortwave-frequencies/9898754>

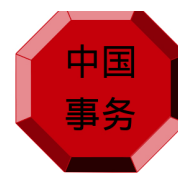
2. Malcolm Turnbull pledges security boost for Vanuatu to counter Chinese influence

25/06/18

Andrew Tillett

Australian Financial Review

Australia will negotiate a security treaty with Vanuatu, amid concerns the Pacific Island nation was slipping into China's orbit following claims Beijing was planning to establish a military footprint there.



The Turnbull government's latest diplomatic push with Pacific island nations coincides with Parliament's joint intelligence and security committee urging serving and former politicians face greater scrutiny over their advocacy on behalf of foreign governments through further changes to the proposed foreign influence transparency scheme.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull confirmed negotiations for the new security agreement during a visit to Canberra by Vanuatu's Prime Minister Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas .

The bilateral treaty will focus on aid, disaster response, maritime surveillance and border security, training 200 police officers and greater defence co-operation.

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.afr.com/news/malcolm-turnbull-pledges-security-boost-for-vanuatu-to-counter-chinese-influence-20180624-h11t6h?logout=true>

3. Chinese tech company Huawei has sponsored more politicians' overseas travel than any other

25/06/18

Dylan Welch
ABC News

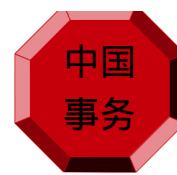
Global tech company Huawei has become the biggest corporate sponsor of overseas travel for Australia's federal politicians, new research released on the eve of a crucial decision by Canberra about Australia's digital future reveals.

The research is based on 12 trips by Australian federal politicians to visit Huawei's headquarters in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen.

The trips involved business class flights, domestic travel, free accommodation and meals.

The international flights alone would have cost tens of thousands of dollars.

The new report comes amid government debate about whether the Chinese telco giant should be allowed to provide equipment for Australia's next generation communications network, 5G.



Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-26/chinese-tech-company-huawei-sponsors-politicians-trips/9907064>

4. Maldives accused of undermining democracy amid China push

26/06/18

Primrose Riordan

The Australian

Australia has accused the Maldives government of undermining democracy, amid concerns about growing Chinese government influence in the country. Former Maldives president Mohamed Nasheed has argued that his country is so heavily indebted to China it will be forced to cede territory to the communist nation.

Mr Nasheed lives in exile and believes Chinese interests have leased at least 16 islands in the country, and the country's opposition has argued ports are being constructed in order to host Chinese naval ships.

The country is facing an election in September and Australia's Ambassador to the Maldives Bryce Hutchesson released a sharply worded statement on Tuesday.

"The Australian government is increasingly concerned at actions taken by the Maldives government that undermine democracy and democratic institutions and reduce the prospect that the upcoming Presidential Election can be free and fair," the statement said.

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/maldives-accused-of-undermining-democracy-amid-china-push/news-story/7f76fc40a0f8b1591aeb50d1ad686c4a>

5. What's driving Chinese infrastructure investment overseas and how can we make the most of it?

26/06/18

Shahar Hameiri

The Conversation

Chinese infrastructure investment in Australia has rarely left the headlines lately. It's reported that telecommunications giant Huawei will likely be banned from



building Australia's 5G network on national security grounds. Hong Kong-based company CK Infrastructure's bid to buy APA Group's gas pipeline network is also proving controversial.

Scrutiny of the national security implications of infrastructure has been upgraded. The new Critical Infrastructure Centre is assisting the Foreign Investment Review Board in this. Though not made explicit, the main focus is China.

Greater scrutiny of investment projects is welcome, especially if community and environmental concerns are also considered. However, Australia could benefit from the availability of Chinese infrastructure financing.

Australia's north has significant infrastructure needs. And in the major Australian cities, public transport systems are inadequate, leading to ever-longer commuting times. China also possesses world-class expertise in high-speed rail, which could be harnessed to better connect cities on the eastern seaboard.

Read more: <https://theconversation.com/whats-driving-chinese-infrastructure-investment-overseas-and-how-can-we-make-the-most-of-it-98697>

6. Huawei boss John Lord defends telco as foreign interference debated in parliament

27/06/18

Andrew Greene

ABC News

The local boss of Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei has vowed to do his best to protect data gathered in Australia from access by Beijing.

Huawei chairman John Lord fronted the National Press Club today to launch a spirited defence of his company's security credentials, as it pushes to be allowed to participate in Australian projects while Federal Parliament continues its debate on foreign interference legislation.

Federal politicians and intelligence agencies have raised concerns about Huawei's technology giving China a backdoor into Australia's telecommunications infrastructure, and are urging the Government to block the company from having any role in the development of the 5G mobile network.



Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-27/huawei-boss-defends-telco-foreign-interference-debate-continues/9915164>

7. Why Australia is not making the most of its China seafood opportunity

27/06/18

Michael Smith

Australian Financial Review

Australia's seafood export trade with China is being held back by bureaucratic delays and a blackmarket trade from Hong Kong and Vietnam falsely claiming to be Australian.

The value of Australia's direct seafood trade to China soared to \$358 million in 2017 compared with \$85 million the previous year after the implementation of the China Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA).

But a study to be released on Thursday argues that the figure can be much higher if the Australian government intervenes at a senior level to iron out a number of hurdles.

The University of Technology Sydney report commissioned by the Australia-China Relations Institute-calls for more " high-level representation" from the Australian government to resolve the issues.

Read more (Paywall): <https://www.afr.com/news/economy/trade/why-australia-is-not-making-the-most-of-its-china-seafood-opportunity-20180626-h11wh8>

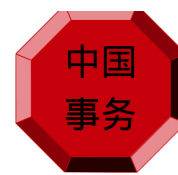
8. Mad, bad and dangerous? Australia in Chinese eyes

27/06/18

Jocelyn Chey (Associate of China Matters)

Pearls and Irritations

Once upon a time, Chinese people regarded Australia as a friendly, safe, stable country with a beautiful natural environment and reliable system of law and government. No longer. In 2018, Chinese parents prefer Britain or Canada when considering where to send their children for education. Chinese scholars note that Australia has been involved in every war launched by the United States.



Since they do not regard Donald Trump as a responsible leader, they think it quite likely that he could launch a military attack on China. In that case, they believe that Australia would side with America.

The biannual conference of the Chinese Association for Australian Studies in Beijing 21-23 June provided a venue for discussion of the current state of bilateral relations with over two hundred participants and a range of experts from both countries. Professor Zhang Yongxian of Renmin University, Beijing has been monitoring them relationship over many years.

Read more: <https://johnmenadue.com/jocelyn-chey-mad-bad-and-dangerous-australia-in-chinese-eyes/>

9. John Howard warns China could use its expats to grow influence in Australia and the region

28/06/18

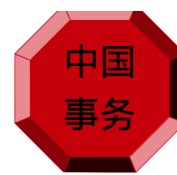
ABC News

China could use its 1 million expats in Australia to help grow its influence and power in the region, former prime minister John Howard says.

Speaking in London on a panel discussion about the Five Eyes intelligence network, Mr Howard said "Chinese assertiveness" was more pressing than the cyber threat posed by the world's most populous nation.

"China has a massive diaspora in South-East Asia," Mr Howard said. "Australia's population will reach 25 million soon, 1 million of them are ethnic Chinese. "[They are] terrific citizens making enormous contributions to our nation, but it remains the case that China is very interested in the capacity to use those people to further her own power and her interests."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-28/john-howard-warns-china-could-use-expats-to-grow-power-in-region/9918114>



10. Huawei is a test case for Australia in balancing the risks and rewards of Chinese tech

28/06/18

Adam Ni

The Conversation

Chinese communications giant Huawei has hit back at detractors in the lead-up to an anticipated decision by the Australian government. The company is likely to be barred from participating in the building of Australia's next-generation 5G mobile network because of its links to the Chinese government and military.

John Lord, Chairman of Huawei's Australian subsidiary, in his address to the National Press Club yesterday, has called claims that the company is a national security risk "uninformed" and "plain wrong".

Lord asserts that Huawei is not controlled by the Chinese government because unlike state-owned enterprises, Huawei is privately owned. While this may be technically true, the company has an opaque history with strong links to the Chinese government and military.

In fact, government support was crucial to Huawei's success. As one of China's "national champions", Huawei was nurtured through a combination of protectionist measures, cheap financing, subsidies, favourable regulations, and diplomatic support abroad.

Read more: <https://theconversation.com/huawei-is-a-test-case-for-australia-in-balancing-the-risks-and-rewards-of-chinese-tech-99081>

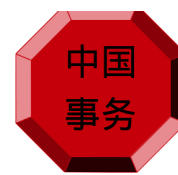
11. Coping with the Beijing freezer

28/06/18

Bec Strating and James Leibold

The Strategist

In a 2017 poll conducted by the Chinese newspaper *Global Times*, Australia had the dubious honour of being voted 'least friendly country to China'. In the same Chinese Communist Party-linked newspaper, a recent editorial argued that a temporary cooling of China-Australia bilateral relations would be 'a good lesson for Australia to learn', while declaring that there were 'no benefits for any country that chooses to take provocative measures against China'.



There's been much commentary on the Australia-China relationship in the wake of the Australian government's introduction of foreign interference legislation and the sharpened political rhetoric of Australia's political leaders towards China—and the chill that followed from Beijing. The punitive refusals of visas, for instance, has even extended to the Australia-China Relations Institute, a 'think tank' headed by one of the most pro-Chinese voices in Australia, former foreign minister Bob Carr.

But Australia isn't the only state that has found itself inside the 'Beijing freezer'. China has long deployed a diplomatic carrot-and-stick approach, wherein states are rewarded when they engage in activities that are favourable to Beijing's interests and selectively punished for public criticism of the CCP's actions and intentions. Status recognition is an important factor in Chinese foreign policy, with any perceived slights resulting in strained relations—as Australia and other countries are now learning.

Read more: <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/coping-with-the-beijing-freezer/>

12. Australia passes anti-foreign meddling laws in message to China

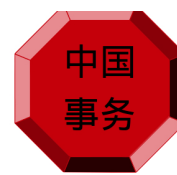
28/06/18

Jason Scott
Bloomberg

Australian lawmakers overwhelmingly passed bills to crack down on foreign interference, with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull saying they're needed to stop reported meddling by China and other nations in the nation's government, media and universities.

The legislation toughens penalties for espionage and requires people or organizations acting in the interest of overseas powers to register and disclose their ties. It was passed with 39 votes in favor with 12 against. A similar bill was introduced in the U.S. Congress that would mandate a report on Chinese attempts to influence American politics, and other Western nations may soon follow with their own regulatory measures.

The laws risk exacerbating diplomatic tensions between China and Australia, which have soured this year after Turnbull cited reports that organizations affiliated with Beijing had attempted to influence national affairs as a catalyst for the bills.



Read more: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-06-28/australia-passes-anti-foreign-meddling-laws-in-message-to-china>

13. Australia's approach to both China and the United States needs to change, says Bob Carr

29/06/18

**Gavin Fernando
news.com.au**

Australia is in need of an attitude makeover. Amid the escalating threat of a large-scale trade war between the United States and China, former foreign minister Bob Carr has warned that Australia's approach to both major powers needs to change.

In his new memoir, *Run For Your Life*, Mr Carr warns that we need to consider the "big disturbing idea" that if conflict was to arise between the US and China, following the US into war by default "might be a danger to Australian security, not a guarantor of it".

Speaking with news.com.au, Mr Carr warned us not to underestimate the gravity of a potential flare-up between China and the US, saying it may lead to a "shooting war".

"The greatest threat Australia faces is the prospect that a trade war between America and China could become a Cold War," he said. "And that Cold War could flare into a shooting war as a result of a misjudgment."

Read more: <https://www.news.com.au/finance/economy/world-economy/australias-approach-to-both-china-and-the-united-states-needs-to-change-says-bob-carr/news-story/02a3ec080b04c35a8a0b164f7291bc75>