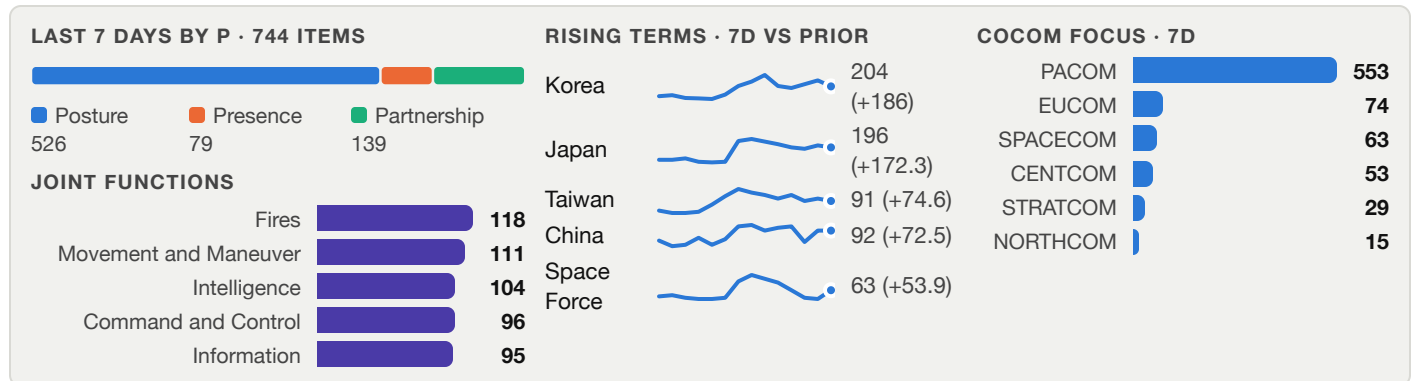


BLUF — DPRK's 20 Sep launches moved to the diplomatic track: senior ROK, US and Japanese diplomats consulted and Pyongyang stayed silent. Presence was partner-led, with New Zealand's frigate Te Mana and oiler Aotearoa through the Taiwan Strait, while USFK stressed readiness after a cut to a major combined exercise. Attention: Xi's Washington visit this week, announced days before Beijing expelled senior PLA officers.



Posture Force structure, capability fielding, readiness, basing, budget/legislation, adversary threats that drive how the force is arrayed.

U.S. Army Contracts First Batch of Maritime Precision Strike Missiles

USNI News · 2026-09-21 [PACOM](#) [Fires](#) [Policy & Budget](#) [China / PLA](#)

Army awarded Lockheed Martin \$1.2B for the first PrSM Increment 2 rounds, a variant with a moving maritime target seeker; work runs to Sep 2031 (USNI News).

So what: Long-range maritime fires lean on space-based targeting and PNT.

Xi Jinping's closest military ally expelled from party, accused of corruption

ABC News Australia · 2026-09-21 [PACOM](#) [Command and Control](#) [China / PLA](#)

Beijing expelled senior PLA officers, including a general cast as Xi's closest military ally, for disloyalty and corruption involving large sums (ABC Australia).

So what: PLA leadership churn shapes how Beijing's forces are run in summit week.

China's Djibouti base upgrade may give PLA eyes on foreign military in Middle East

South China Morning Post (China) · 2026-09-20 [PACOM](#) [Intelligence](#) [China / PLA](#) [SATCOM](#)

CSIS says new communications equipment at China's Djibouti base likely enhances PLA signals intelligence collection against foreign forces 16 km away (SCMP).

So what: PLA overseas SIGINT growth raises EMS protection demands on deployed comms.

US watching Chinese marine presence off Alaska, Arctic Coast Guard chief says

Defense News · 2026-09-21 [NORTHCOM](#) [Intelligence](#) [China / PLA](#)

Four Chinese research vessels worked off Alaska and into the Bering Strait in 2026, unannounced, against five in all of 2025, the Coast Guard Arctic chief told Reuters.

So what: PRC survey activity on the AOR seam adds SDA and maritime cueing demand.

■ Presence Forces operating forward: deployments, exercises, operations, patrols, transits, HADR, launches in support of theater ops.

New Zealand naval ships transit contested Taiwan Strait

The Japan Times · 2026-09-20 [PACOM](#) [Movement and Maneuver](#) [Allies & Partners](#) [Taiwan](#)

New Zealand frigate Te Mana and oiler Aotearoa transited the Taiwan Strait on 18 Sep during a three-month Indo-Pacific deployment (Japan Times).

So what: Partner transits widen the coalition set needing US space support.

US Forces Korea commander stresses readiness after sharp reduction in joint drills

Stars and Stripes (Pacific) · 2026-09-20 [PACOM](#) [Command and Control](#) [Japan / ROK](#) [Exercises](#)

The US Forces Korea commander stressed alliance deterrence and combat readiness a month after a directed cut to a major combined exercise (Stars and Stripes).

So what: Fewer combined reps means less space-effects rehearsal with ROK forces.

CWA tests earthquake alert on National Disaster Prevention Day

Focus Taiwan (CNA) · 2026-09-20 [PACOM](#) [Command and Control](#) [Taiwan](#) [Allies & Partners](#)

Taiwan's Central Weather Administration pushed a test earthquake alert at 0921 on 21 Sep as part of National Disaster Prevention Day drills (CNA).

So what: Island-wide alert tests exercise the warning path a HADR response uses.

■ Partnership Allies, partners, FVEY, combined exercises, agreements, data-sharing, industry and interagency partnerships.

S. Korea, U.S., Japan hold consultations over N. Korea's latest missile launches

Yonhap News (English) · 2026-09-20 [PACOM](#) [Command and Control](#) [Japan / ROK](#) [DPRK](#)

Senior ROK, US and Japanese diplomats held consultations on DPRK's 20 Sep launch of two short-range ballistic missiles toward the East Sea (Yonhap).

So what: Trilateral missile-warning sharing is the channel SPACEPAC supports.

Communist Party sets October plenum date as Xi prepares for Trump summit

South China Morning Post (China) · 2026-09-20 [PACOM](#) [Information](#) [China / PLA](#) [Policy & Budget](#)

Xinhua set the 20th Central Committee's fifth plenum for 26-29 Oct, announced days after Beijing confirmed Xi's state visit to Washington this week (SCMP).

So what: Summit week sets the political frame for PRC activity in the AOR.

Nearly half of Taiwanese lack confidence in US defence commitments, survey finds

South China Morning Post (China) · 2026-09-21 [PACOM](#) [Information](#) [Taiwan](#) [China / PLA](#)

A United Daily News poll released 21 Sep found 47% of Taiwanese not confident the US will keep military aid and arms sales going, against 44% who are (SCMP).

So what: Partner confidence shapes reception of US space cooperation offers.

Japan and ASEAN to consider expanding trade pact

The Japan Times · 2026-09-20 [PACOM](#) [Sustainment](#) [Allies & Partners](#) [Japan / ROK](#)

Japan and ASEAN agreed in Manila to consider expanding their trade pact, citing energy security, AI and supply chains as areas to strengthen (Japan Times).

So what: Regional supply chains underwrite partner space and C2 infrastructure.

WATCH LIST

- Trump-Xi summit in Washington this week; watch PRC military and gray-zone activity in the AOR.
- Long March 8A (23 Sep) and 6A (24 Sep), undisclosed payloads; USSF-385 from Vandenberg 26 Sep.
- PLA leadership churn after the expulsions; further CMC announcements before the 26-29 Oct plenum.
- GAO finding on unmitigated GNSS spoofing and jamming threats; theater interference reporting.