

# Defence Updates

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CLAWS RESEARCH TEAM

## Capabilities

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is engaged in a modernisation programme fuelled by the country's rapid economic development. The PLA is the supreme body of the defense forces of China. China possesses a fleet of more modern and numerically superior submarines and naval escorts, advanced fighter aircrafts and advanced armoured vehicles, and is now superior to the armed forces of less developed countries of Southeast Asia; the PLA also now matches the capabilities of Taiwan. However, a lack of war-fighting experience (China has not been involved in a significant conflict since the war with Vietnam in 1979), questions over training and morale, and key capability gaps such as anti-submarine warfare mean that it remains inferior to more technologically proficient militaries in the region, such as South Korea and Japan, and is far behind the US. While sovereign territorial integrity remains the PLA's primary concern, force development has provided it with the capability to protect its economic interests around the globe and project power much farther. The table below gives a brief overview of Chinese economy and military budget:<sup>1</sup>

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	Y	2010	2011	2012
GDP	Y	39.8tr	45.8tr	
	US\$	5.87tr	7.06tr	
	US\$ <sup>a</sup>	10.1tr	11.3tr	
Per capita	US\$	4,414	5,278	
Growth	%	10.33	9.47	
Inflation	%	3.3	5.5	

## SCHOLAR WARRIOR

Def exp	Y US\$ US\$ <sup>a</sup>	753bn 111bn 178bn		
Def bdgt <sup>b</sup>	Y US\$	518bn 76.4bn	583bn 89.8bn	

US\$1=Y

MER

6.78

6.49

PPP

3.93

4.05

<sup>a</sup>PPP estimate

<sup>b</sup>Official defence budget at market exchange rates

### Overall Organisation:

Army leadership is exercised by the four general headquarters/departments namely PLA, PLAAF, PLAN and Strategic Missile Command. A military region exercises direct leadership over the Army units under it. Each of the Navy, Air Force and Second Artillery Force have a leading body consisting of the headquarters, political department, logistics department and armaments department. These direct the military, political, logistical and equipment work of their respective troops, and take part in the command of joint operations.

ACTIVE: 2,285,000 (Army 1,600,000 Navy 255,000 Air 300,000-330,000 Strategic Missile Forces 100,000)

PARAMILITARY: 660,000

RESERVE: 510,000 (estimates)

## ORGANISATIONS BY SERVICE

### 1. Strategic Missile Forces (100,000+)

#### *Role: Offensive*

The Second Artillery Force organises and commands its own troops to launch nuclear counterattacks with strategic missiles and to conduct operations with conventional missiles.

#### **MSL – STRATEGIC 470**

**ICBM** 66: 10 DF-4 (CSS-3); 20 DF-5A (CSS-4 Mod 2); 12 DF-31 (CSS-9); 24 DF-31A (CSS-9 Mod 2)

**IRBM** 2 DF-3A (CSS-2 Mod)

**MRBM** 122: 80 DF-21/DF-21A (CSS-5 Mod 1/2); 36 DF-21C (CSS-5 Mod 3); 6 DF-21D (CSS-5 Mod 4 - ASBM) reported

**SRBM** 216: 108 DF-11A/M-11A (CSS-7 Mod 2); 108 DF-15/M-9 (CSS-6)

**LACM** 54 CJ-10 (DH-10)

## **2. Navy**

### **SUBMARINES – STRATEGIC – SSBN: 3**

1 Xia with 12 JL-1 (CSS-N-3) strategic SLBM

2 Jin with up to 12 J:-2 (CSS-NX-4) strategic SLBM (full operational status unknown; 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> vessels in build)

### **Role: Defensive**

**RADAR – STRATEGIC:** some phased array radar; some detection and tracking radars (covering Central Asia and Shanxi on the northern border) located at Xinjiang.

## **3. Space**

### **SATELLITES: 40**

**COMMUNICATIONS 4:** 3 Fenghuo (Zhongxing – dual use telecom satellites for civ/mil comms); 1 Chinasat 1A (Zhongxing 1A – reported dual use satellite for civ/mil comms)

**NAVIGATION/POSITIONING/TIMING 10:** 2 Beidou-1; 1 Beidou-2(M); 3 Beidou-2 (G); 4 Beidou-2 (IGSO)

**ISR 15:** 1 Haiyang 2A; 12 Yaogan Weixing (remote sensing); 2 Zhangguo Ziyuan (ZY-2 – remote sensing)

**ELINT/SIGINT 11:** 8 Shijian 6 (4 pairs – reported ELINT/SIGINT role); 3 Shijian 11 (reported ELINT/SIGINT role)

## **4. FORCES BY ROLE: ACTIVE**

### **COMMAND**

7 military regions, 18 (Group) army HQ

### **SPECIAL FORCES**

7 SF unit

### **MANOEUVRE**

#### **Armoured**

9 armed div, 7 armed bde

#### **Mechanised**

7 mech inf div, 2 (alt high) mech inf div, 5 mech inf bde, 1 (high alt) mech inf bde, 2 indep mech inf regt

#### **Light**

10 mot inf div (high alt) mot inf div, 1 (jungle) mot inf div, 19 mot inf bde, 2 (alt high) mot inf bde

#### **Amphibious**

1 amph armed bde, 2 amph mech div

**Mountain**

2 mtn inf bde

**Others**

1 (OPFOR) armed bde, 1 mech gd div, 1 lt gd div

**Aviation**

1 avn bde, 9 avn regt, 2 trg avn regt

**COMBAT SUPPORT**

2 arty div, 17 arty bde, 9 (coastal defence) AShM regt, 21 Ad bde, 1 indep AD regt, 1 engr bde, 13 engr regt, 5 EW regt, 50 sigs regt

**5. FORCES BY ROLE: RESERVES**

**MANOEUVRE**

**Armoured**

2 armd regt

**Light**

18 inf div, 4 inf bde, 3 indep inf regt

**COMBAT SUPPORT**

3 arty div, 7 arty bde, 17 AD div, 8 AD bde, 8 AD regt, 15 engr regt, 1 ptn br bde, 3 ptn br regt, 7 chem regt, 10 sigs regt

**COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT**

9 log bde, 1 log regt

NAVY £215,000; 40,000 conscript (total 255,000)

The PLA Navy is organised into five service arms: submarine, surface, naval aviation, coastal defence and Marine Corps, as well as other specialised units. There are three fleets, the Beihai Fleet (North Sea), Donghai Fleet (East Sea) and Nanhai Fleet (South Sea).

**1. EQUIPMENT BY TYPE**

**SUBMARINES 71**

**STRATEGIC – SSBN 3:**

1 Xia (Type 092), 2 Jin (Type 094)

**TACTICAL 68**

**SSN 5:**

3 Han (Type 091), 2 Shang (Type 093)

**SSG 1 mod Romeo (Type SSG)**

**SSK 52:**

12 Kilo, 20 Ming, 16 Song, 4 Yuan

**SS 1 Golf (SLBM trials)**

## **PRINCIPAL SURFACE COMBATANTS 78**

**DESTROYERS 13**

**DDGHM 11:**

4 Hangzhou (RUS Sovremenny), 2 Luyang (Type 052B), 2 Luyang II (Type 052C), 1 Luhai (Type 051B), 2 Luhu (Type 052)

**DDGM 2:**

2 Luzhou (Type 051C)

**FRIGATES 65**

**FFGHM 25:**

2 Jiangkai (Type 054), 9 Jiangkai II (Type 054A), 4 Jiangwei I (Type 053H2G), 10 Jinagwei II (Type 053H3)

**FFGH 1:**

1 Jianghu IV (Type 053H1Q – trg role)

**FFGM 2:**

2 Luda mod (Type 051DT)

**FFG 37:**

9 Jianghu I (Type 053H), 8 Jianghu II (Type 053H1), 3 Jianghu III (Type 053H2), 6 Jianghu V (Type 053H1G), 9 Luda (Type 051/051D/051Z), 1 Luda II (Type 051G), 1 Luda III (Type 051G II)

## **2. PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS: 211+**

**PCFG 76+**

65+ Houbei (Type 022), 11 Huangfen (Type 021)

**PCG 26**

6 Houjian (Type 037/II), 20 Houxin (Type 037/IG)

**PB 34+ Haizui/Shanghai III (Type 062/I)**

**3. PRINCIPAL AMPHIBIOUS VESSELS – LPD 1 Yuzhao (Type 071) (capacity 2 LCAC or 4 UCAC plus supporting vehicles; 500-800 troops; 2 hel – 2 further vessels launched, expected ISD 2012-13)**

LANDING SHIPS 87  
LANDING CRAFT 151  
LOGISTICS AND SUPPORT 205

#### **4. Naval Aviation 26,000**

##### **FORCES BY ROLE**

##### **BOMBER**

1 regt with H-5; H-6DU/G; Y-8X, 2 regt with H-6G

##### **FIGHTER**

1 regt with J-7E, 1 regt with J-8F; 1 regt with J-8H

##### **FIGHTER/ GROUND ATTACK**

1 regt with J-10A/S, 1 regt (forming) with J-11B/BS, 1 regt with Su-30MK2

##### **ATTACK**

2 regt with JH-7, 3 regt with JH-7A

##### **ELINT/ISR/AEW**

1 regt with Y-8J/JB/W

##### **MARITIME PATROL**

1 regt with SH-5

##### **TRANSPORT**

1 regt with Y-7; Y-7H; Y-8, 1 regt with Y-7; Y-8; Z-8; Z-9

##### **TRAINING**

1 regt (forming) with JL-9

##### **HELICOPTER**

1 regt with Mi-8; Ka-28; Ka-31, 1 regt with AS365; Ka-28; Z-8; Z-8A/JH/S

##### **AIRCRAFT: 311 combat capable**

**BBR 50:** 20 H-5; 30 H-6G

**FTR 72:** 24 J-7E Fishbed; 24 J-8F Finback; 24 J-8H Finback

**FGA 172+:** 120 JH-7/JH-7A; 24 J-10A/S; 4+ J-11B/BS; 24 Su-MK2

**ASW 4** SH-5

**ELINT 7:** 4 Y-8JB High New 2; 3 Y-8X

**AEW&C 6:** 4 Y-8J; 2 Y-8W High New 5

**ISR 7** HZ-5

**TKR 3** H-6DU

**TPT 66:** **Medium** 4 Y-8 **Light** 62: 50 Y-5; 4 Y-7; 6 Y-7H; 2 Yak-42

**TRG 106+:** 38 CJ-6; 5 HJ-5\*; 21 HY-7; 14 JJ-6; 12 JL-8\*; 12+ JL-9

##### **HELICOPTERS**

**ASW 28:** 13 Ka-28 Helix A (6 additional ac on order); 25 Z-9C

AEW 2 Ka-31

SAR 2 Z-8S

TPT 46 Heavy 38: 15 SA321 Super Frelon; 20 Z-8/Z-8A; 3 Z-8JH

**MARINES: €10,000**

## **FORCES BY ROLE**

### **1. MANOEUVRE**

#### **Amphibious**

2 mne bde (1 spec ops bn, 1 SF amph recce bn, 1 recce bn, 2 tk bn, 4 mech inf bn, 1 arty bn, 1 AT/AD bn, 1 engr bn, 1 sigs bn)

**AIR FORCE: 300,000-330,000**

The PLAAF organises its command through seven military-region air forces (MRAF) – Shenyang, Beijing, Lanzhou, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou and Chengdu – and 14 div-level command posts.

Flying hours Ftr, ground attack and bbr pilots average 100-150 hrs/yr. Tpt pilots average 200+ per year. Each regt has two quotas to meet during the year – a total number of hours, and the percentage of flight time dedicated to tactics trg.

## **FORCES BY ROLE**

#### **BOMBER**

2 regt with H-6A/M, 3 regt with H-6H/K with YJ-63, 1 (nuclear ready) regt with H-6E

#### **FIGHTER**

10 regt with J-7 Fishbed, 8 regt with J-7E Fishbed, 5 regt with J-7G Fishbe, 1 regt with J-8B Fishbed, 2 regt with J-8F Finback, 4 regt with J-8H Finback, 1 regt with Su-27SK/UBK Flanker, 6 regt with J-11/Su-27UBK, 1 regt with J-11B/BS, 3 regt (forming) with J-11B/BS

#### **FIGHTER/GROUND ATTACK**

3 regt with Su-30MKK Flanker, 6 regt with J-10A/S

#### **GROUND ATTACK**

3 regt with JH-7A, 6 regt with Q-5C/D/E Fantan

#### **ELECTRONIC WARFARE**

1 regt with Y-8CB/G/XZ, 1 regt with Y-8CB/G

#### **ISR**

2 regt with JZ-6\*, 1 regt with JZ-8 Finback\*, 1 regt with Y-8H1

**AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING & CONTROL**

1 regt with Mi-171; Z-8

**TANKER**

1 regt with H-6U

**TRANSPORT**

1 (VIP) regt with B-737; CRJ-200/700, 1 (VIP) regt with B-737; Tu-154M; Tu-154M/D, 1 regt with Il-76MD Candid B, 3 regt with Y-7, 3 regt with Y-8

**TRAINING**

1 regt with H-6H, Some regt with CJ-6/-6A/-6B; H-5; HJ-5; Y-7; JL-8 (K-8); JJ-5; JJ-6; JJ-7

**TRANSPORT HELICOPTER**

Some regt with AS332 Super Puma (VIP); Beli 214; Mi-8 Hip; Z-9;

**AIR DEFENCE**

3 SAM div, 2 mixed SAM/ADA div, 9 SAM bde, 2 mixed SAM/ADA bde, 2 ADA bde, 9 indep SAM regt, 1 indep ADA reg, 4 indep SAM bn

**15<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corps**

**FORCES BY ROLE**

**SPECIAL FORCES**

1 SF unit

**MANOEUVRE**

**Reconnaissance**

1 recce regt

**Air Manoeuvre**

2 AB div (2 AB regt; 1 arty regt), 1 AB div (1 AB regt; 1 arty regt)

**COMBAT SUPPORT**

1 sigs gp

**COMABT SERVICE SUPPORT**

1 log gp

**Cyber**

In July 2010, colours were presented by General Cheng Bingde, head of the PLA General Staff Department, to New 'Information Safeguards Base', tasked with addressing cyber threats and safeguarding China's information security and information infrastructure. Some PLA sources claim that the base is not an offensive cyber capability but is intended to bolster resilience.



The PLA has devoted much attention to information warfare over the past decade, both in terms of battlefield EW and wider, cyber warfare capabilities. The main doctrine is the 'Integrated Network Electronic Warfare' document, which guides PLA computer network operations and calls for the combination of network warfare and EW tools at the start of a conflict in order to paralyse (or at least degrade) an opponent's C4ISR capabilities. China's cyber assets fall under the command of two main departments of the General Staff Department (GSD). Computer network attacks and EW would in theory come under the 4<sup>th</sup> Department (Electronic Countermeasures), and computer network defence and intelligence gathering comes under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Department (Signals Intelligence). The 3<sup>rd</sup> Department is supported by a variety of 'militia units' comprising both military cyber warfare personnel and civilian hackers. In 2011, the PLA said that a much reported 'Cyber Blue Team' was a body designed to improve the PLA's ability to safeguard internet security.'

## **Notes**

1. The data has been sourced from China, People's Republic of PRC, The Military Balance 2012, IISS.