

China's National Defense Mobilization System

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Introduction

National defense mobilization rallies national labor, economic resources, and other elements of comprehensive national power in response to war and non-war emergencies. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) national defense mobilization system coordinates economic development with anticipated wartime and emergency requirements and enables authorities to requisition publicly-owned and privately-owned resources during a crisis. It is the mechanism through which authorities can draw on the PRC's vast economic base when national strategic and military reserves are insufficient and implement "people's war". It is also an enabler of efficiency and readiness for People's Liberation Army (PLA) logistics. PRC authorities likely have moderate and increasing confidence in the national defense mobilization system's ability to perform its core duties during a conflict, despite recognizing long-standing and continuing deficiencies in the system. Since 2015, authorities have made organizational, procedural, and legal reforms that they likely assess are having positive results. As early as 2016, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) General Secretary Xi Jinping expressed confidence in the system.

Section I introduces the purpose and effectiveness of the PRC's national defense mobilization system, including its challenges and the views of national leadership. **Section II** details the national defense mobilization bureaucracy and explains the effects of recent organizational reforms. **Section III** discusses how the national defense mobilization system collects and tracks data on national resources, challenges facing this work, and recent procedural reforms. **Section IV** describes the PRC's legal authority and process for requisitioning civilian resources in a crisis. **Section V** explores the likely roles of the private sector and "new-type" militias during a conflict. **Section VI** surveys select aspects of preparations for national defense mobilization in the transportation sector and the effects of the 2017 National Defense Transportation Law. **Section VII** provides recommendations for Congress.

Key Findings and Judgements:

- The PRC national defense mobilization system is a complex bureaucracy of military and civilian government coordinating bodies under CCP leadership. The primary coordinating organizations in this system are national defense mobilization commissions at each PRC administrative level. The system coordinates development plans with national defense requirements; builds armed forces reserves, including militias; maintains records of all relevant national resources; and enables the conversion of those resources for use during wartime and emergencies.
- The PRC national defense mobilization system has long been impaired by its complex and confusing bureaucracy; poor staffing and implementation of duties, especially on the civilian side; and overreliance on the military. Other issue-specific problems include unreliable collection of data on available national resources and poor-quality militia training.
- To address these challenges, authorities have issued new laws and regulations to strengthen civilian (i.e., government and industry) responsibilities and obligations related to national defense, and pursued organizational and procedural reforms to rectify specific impairments.
 - In 2017, authorities implemented the National Defense Transportation Law, which has likely succeeded in improving the military's ability to implement national defense requirements related to the design of transportation networks.
 - In 2018 and 2021, authorities introduced new auditing and survey procedures to improve the reliability of data on national resources that can be mobilized during a crisis, which reportedly achieved moderate success.
 - In 2022, authorities began organizational reforms to relocate administrative responsibilities from the military to the civilian government, specifically placing these responsibilities directly under civilian authorities in charge of economic planning.
 - In 2024, authorities implemented new efforts to improve militia training that seek to break down geographic barriers, encourage resource sharing between localities, and ensure that militias receive training on advanced topics (e.g., drone operation).
- With some exceptions, the PLA can requisition and modify any publicly- or privately-owned resource with the government's approval. The requisition process involves several steps: 1) the military drafts and submits requests, 2) the government coordinates among specialized offices and issues requisition orders to property owners, and 3) authorities provide compensation in cases where resources are damaged, modified beyond return to their original state, or the owners suffer other direct economic harm. Compensation extends to the owners and operators of transportation infrastructure.
- Private enterprises are increasingly important to national defense mobilization. Efforts are underway to pre-prepare enterprises for mobilization requirements in the fields of equipment manufacturing, information technology, logistics, medicine, and others. During a conflict, private enterprises are likely

to be called on to support the war effort according to their specific strengths, potentially to include contributing technical personnel for operations in cyberspace.

- “New-type” militia units are intended to be capable of supporting the PLA in all domains. They are created from high-skill professionals — including those from the private sector — in the information technology, communications, cybersecurity, robotics, unmanned systems, artificial intelligence, and other fields. However, militia development and training have been deficient for a long time, partly due to inherent contradictions between military and business requirements.
- Examples of national defense-related modifications to transportation networks and transportation planning decisions since the 2017 National Defense Mobilization Law include the creation of new dual-use terminals at ports, addition of military-use infrastructure (e.g., stations and platforms) along railways and (likely) at airports, and retention of out-of-use railways due to their military value. Other lines of effort include pre-enlisting and pre-modifying civilian vehicles like heavy truck cranes and aligning special-use train cars with military requirements. However, more research is needed to wholistically understand how the law has been implemented.
- Wartime mobilization in the transportation sector is likely to generate detectable changes in patterns of activity within the PRC. Changes may include disruptions to normal civilian passenger and cargo air traffic, abnormal movements of dual-use civilian ships, placement of concealment devices (e.g., tarps) at likely ports and airports of embarkation, and social media activity documenting military transportation activities in major cities. The challenge is that, at best, such signals are likely to be visible only months ahead of a conflict. Signals in other areas may provide warning on a longer timeline.

Appendix G summarizes key findings according to the Commission’s specific questions.

Additionally, in case it is of interest to the Commission, **Appendix H** offers an assessment on recent civil air defense activities (including construction of air raid shelters) in Fujian province.

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List of Abbreviations Used

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CMC	Central Military Commission
CMC LSD	CMC Logistics Support Department
CMC NDMD	CMC National Defense Mobilization Department
DRC	Development and Reform Commission
JLSC	Joint Logistics Support Center
JLSF	Joint Logistics Support Force
MCF	Military-Civil Fusion
NDM	National Defense Mobilization
NDMC	National Defense Mobilization Commission
NDMO	National Defense Mobilization Office
NDTL	National Defense Transportation Law
PAFD	People's Armed Forces Department
PAP	People's Armed Police
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PMD	Provincial Military District
PRC	People's Republic of China

Section I: PRC National Defense Mobilization — Purpose and Effectiveness

Section I.I: Purpose of the National Defense Mobilization System

Summary: The national defense mobilization system ensures PRC authorities' ability to leverage comprehensive national power against any threat, including wars, natural disasters, and other crises; the system is also critical to supporting the military's joint logistics.

National defense mobilization (国防动员; NDM) refers to the conversion of political, economic, technological, cultural, social, and other resources from a peacetime status to a war footing in support of national defense.^{1 2 3} The PRC NDM system seeks to coordinate national development plans and policies with the likely requirements of future crises; build armed forces reserves, including militias; maintain accurate records of the status and availability of all relevant national resources; and enable the conversion of those resources in times of need as quickly and effectively as possible.⁴ NDM is an outcome and component of the PRC's military-civil fusion (军民融合; MCF) strategy.^{5 6}

The NDM system responds to war and other threats to PRC sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, security, and development interests.⁷ The NDM system also responds to non-war emergencies, such as natural disasters and epidemics,⁸ and is increasingly intertwined with the PRC's national emergency response management (应急管理) system.^{9 10 11} NDM entails a wide range of activities along at least eight lines of effort: political mobilization, armed forces mobilization, national economic mobilization, equipment mobilization, civil air defense mobilization, transportation readiness mobilization, science and technology mobilization, and information mobilization. Details on what these different forms of mobilization entail are provided in **Appendix A**.

The NDM system provides an important mechanism for applying comprehensive national power (综合国力) to, and carrying out “people's war” (人民战争) in support of, CCP and PLA tasks and objectives during a crisis.¹² ¹³ PRC authorities take pride in the ability to mobilize mass patriotism and work ethic in support of the country's national defense.¹⁴ This ability served them well in revolutionary campaigns,¹⁵ during the COVID-19 pandemic,^{16 17} and during evacuations after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.¹⁸

Fundamentally, the NDM system exists so that authorities are able to draw on the PRC's vast economic base to manage a conflict or emergency when necessary resources and capabilities are not available in military stockpiles or national strategic reserves. The PLA has also sought to establish a joint logistics support system that pre-prepares and integrates public and private civilian resources and capabilities wherever possible, assessing that doing so can “maximize combat capabilities, ensure peacetime efficiencies, and guarantee a constant state of combat readiness” as well as achieve “greater efficiency, flexibility, and timeliness.”^{19 20} The NDM system is a “critical enabler” of PLA logistics.²¹

Section I.II: Effectiveness of the National Defense Mobilization System

Summary: PRC authorities likely have a moderate level of confidence in the national defense mobilization system despite long-standing organizational, procedural, and legal problems; they likely assess that reforms since approximately 2015 have achieved progress in rectifying some of these challenges.

Since assuming the positions of CCP general secretary and Central Military Commission (中央军委; CMC) chairman in 2012, Xi Jinping has heavily focused on modernizing and improving the PRC's national defense and the ability of PRC armed forces to fight and win wars.²² NDM is an important component of this work. However, the PRC's NDM system has faced significant challenges for decades, its development swinging between progress under stress during times of crisis and neglect during times of peace.²³ References to NDM in authoritative Chinese sources since 2013 indicate party-state and military leadership awareness of organizational, procedural, and legal problems, as well as the need to modernize NDM to support modern forms of conflict.^a

Specific issues with the NDM system identified in Chinese military media, academic sources, and other research include:

- Confusion and ambiguity regarding roles, responsibilities, and tasking²⁴
- Unclear chain of command²⁵
- Insufficient staffing of NDM implementation organizations²⁶
- Poor adherence to legal obligations among officials^{27 28}
- Neglect of NDM work by civilian authorities due to their focus on economic development^{29 30}
- Military leadership over civilian organizations^{31 32}
- Limited authority among institutions responsible for coordinating NDM work³³
- Overreliance on the military for administrative and implementation work^{34 35}

To begin addressing these challenges, Xi Jinping centralized oversight of mobilization planning, control of the military side of the NDM system, and reserve force construction by creating the CMC National Defense Mobilization Department (国防动员部; NDMD) in 2016.³⁶ Authorities had previously implemented at least three transportation-related NDM regulations in 2015, which were followed by the National Defense Transportation Law in January 2017.^{37 38 39} In October 2017, during the 19th CCP National Congress, Xi Jinping directly asserted the need to improve the NDM system.⁴⁰ Since then, other NDM-related laws have been updated, adjusted, or are currently on the national legislative agenda for modification;^{41 42 43 44 45 46} new processes for tracking national resources have been implemented;⁴⁷ and the organization of the NDM system itself has been reformed.⁴⁸

Xi Jinping's likely goals for the NDM system include ensuring that 1) the CCP leads NDM work absolutely, 2) NDM serves the PRC's strategic ambitions, 3) economic plans account for NDM requirements, 4) NDM preparations are woven into peacetime activities, 5) militia forces and modes of people's war are strengthened

^a See The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Force (government white paper, 2013), *Science of Military Strategy* (PLA textbook, 2013), China's Military Strategy (government white paper, 2015), 13th Five-Year Plan (government policy, 2016), China's National Defense in the New Era (2019), *Science of Military Strategy* (PLA textbook, 2020), 14th Five-Year Plan (government policy, 2021), and *Comprehensive State Security Concept Study Outline* (CCP cadre education material, 2022).

and innovated, and 6) there is a passion for national defense and commitment to struggle throughout the military and society.⁴⁹ PRC armed forces and the NDM system have been urged to “correct peacetime ills” — the “accumulated inertia” of a long peace that impairs combat readiness.^{50 51}

Xi Jinping and other party-state and military leaders likely assess they have made some progress in tackling the challenges associated with NDM. The “Resolution of the CCP Central Committee on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century” issued in November 2021 states that “national defense mobilization has become more effective, unity between the military and government and the military and people has become more firm.”⁵² A CMC NDMD party committee conference on May 10, 2024, further noted that the “cross-military and government,” “integrated military-civilian,” “cross-process,” “integrated peace and war,” “cross-domain,” “integrated supply and demand,” “cross-functional,” and “fusion” characteristics of the PRC’s NDM system are “becoming more prominent.”^{53 54}

At the same time, PRC leadership continues to recognize room for improvement. The same May 2024 CMC NDMD party committee conference emphasized the need to maintain high readiness and make continued efforts to investigate, identify, and correct problems affecting the NDM system. A January 2024 Tianjin Garrison party committee meeting on NDM and reserve force construction emphasized the continuing need to strengthen party leadership, awareness of political responsibility, military-government coordination, military-government communication, and the efficacy of reforms.⁵⁵ In October 2023, the political commissar of the Sichuan Military District similarly noted the need to “fully release the effectiveness of national defense mobilization system reforms” and “further sort out the relationship between peacetime leadership and organization of national defense mobilization and wartime organization and command.”⁵⁶ Other areas of focus include improving implementation and adherence to relevant national laws.⁵⁷

Despite the many notable challenges to the PRC’s NDM system, Xi Jinping expressed confidence in it as early as 2016. During remarks to the CMC Joint Operations Command Center (联合作战指挥中心), he stated, “we have a complete national defense mobilization system, [we] have this magic weapon of people’s war, [we] can rapidly mobilize.”⁵⁸

Section II: The PRC National Defense Mobilization System — Organization and Reform

Section II.I: Organization of the National Defense Mobilization System

Summary: The national defense mobilization system consists of a complex bureaucracy intended to integrate military and civilian government decision-making under CCP leadership; however, the civilian side has often not actively participated, leading to an inefficient overreliance on the military.

The state and military jointly manage PRC NDM. At the national level, the leading body is the National Defense Mobilization Commission (国家国防动员委员会; NDMC) under the leadership of the State Council (国务院) and CMC.⁵⁹ The national NDMC is a “deliberative and coordinating” organization responsible for organizing nationwide NDM work and coordinating relevant relationships between national defense, the military, the economy, the government, labor, and material resources, including by drafting laws, regulations, and plans.⁶⁰ Sub-national NDMCs exist at each administrative level down to the county.⁶¹ They work with the

military commands of the CMC NDMD-led provincial military district (省军区; PMD) system.^{62 63 64} The CCP leads both the state and military, including on NDM work.⁶⁵

The national-level NDMC is directed by the state premier, with deputy directors drawn from the State Council and CMC.^{66 67 68} It involves the participation of various CCP, government, and military organizations.⁶⁹ At the sub-national levels (province and below), the NDMCs are likewise jointly led by civilian government and military personnel.^{70 71 72 73 74} The PMD system — comprising military districts at the provincial level, sub-districts at the prefectural level, and People’s Armed Forces Departments (人民武装部; PAFD) at and below the county level — is under the dual leadership of the military and government institutions at the same and higher administrative levels.^{75 76}

NDM working offices that prepare for and coordinate implementation of each NDM line of effort described in **Appendix A** exist at the national and local levels. At the national and sub-national levels, NDM working offices are hosted and staffed by various government and military organizations.^{77 78 79} For example, the national NDMC has six working offices, four of which are under the CMC NDMD, one of which is under the CMC Logistics Support Department (后勤保障部; LSD), and one of which is under the national-level Development and Reform Commission (发展与改革委员会; DRC).⁸⁰ Other national ministries likely host other NDM working offices.⁸¹ The national NDMC General Office (综合办公室) is responsible for “national defense mobilization planning, policy formulation, regulatory research, organization and coordination, and secretarial services”;⁸² it is directed by the head of the CMC NDMD and managed and assisted by the CMC NDMD General Office.⁸³ Thus, the CMC NDMD “director has the most active role in defense mobilization planning and coordination but likely relies on the more senior NDMC leaders for whole-of-government support.”⁸⁴

Although the NDM system is intended to ensure effective military-civilian coordination at all levels under the unified leadership of the CCP, it is undermined by a number of problems. Two significant organizational issues have been 1) lack of civilian participation and overreliance on the military for the implementation of NDM work;⁸⁵ and 2) a situation in which sub-national NDM working offices within local government departments are subordinate to national-level working offices under the CMC, creating an arrangement in violation of the PRC Constitution that is known as “the military above, the people below” (上军下民).^{b 86 87}

Section II.II: Reform of the National Defense Mobilization System

Summary: Legal and organizational reforms since 2020 seek to strengthen civilian government participation in national defense mobilization work, including through the creation of new offices under economic authorities to lead coordination; as of early 2024, these reforms likely have not yet achieved their full intended effect.

PRC authorities have implemented at least two reforms to address overreliance on the military in matters of NDM administration and implementation. First, revisions to the PRC’s National Defense Law in 2020 significantly emphasized the State Council’s responsibility to develop, organize, and implement NDM work,

^b As discussed in **Section II.II**, legal and organizational reforms have sought to shift greater administrative and implementation responsibility to the state while likely strengthening the military’s guiding role. This has produced changes in sub-national divisions of labor, but whether it has changed the foregoing description of the distribution of NDM working offices at the national level is not clear.

particularly in relation to economic, civil air defense, and transportation mobilization (among other areas, but likely not including armed forces mobilization).^{88 89 90} Second, since late 2022, sub-national organizational reforms to the NDM system have relocated responsibilities for NDM general coordination and NDM construction management (国防动员综合协调、建设管理) that were formerly held by the PMD system to the civilian government.⁹¹ To do so, new NDM offices (国防动员办公室; NDMO) have been established down to the county level.^{92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99} NDMOs are subordinate to the DRCs at each level,¹⁰⁰ and NDMO directors are often DRC directors or deputy directors.^{c 101 102 103 104 105 106 107} Further, NDMOs form the joint offices of local NDMCs with the mobilization bureau or office (动员局[处]) of the military district or sub-district at their same level (with the military affairs section [军事科] of the county-level PAFD); these joint offices are now the “daily work institutions” (日常办事机构) of all NDMCs below the national level.^{108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118} **Appendix B** provides an organizational chart of the NDM system following these reforms.

NDMOs are responsible for implementing the NDM and civil air defense policies of the CCP central authorities and government authorities at and above their level; coordinating NDM work implementation; organizing NDM resource surveys (see **Section III**); and other NDM tasks.^{119 120 121} NDMC Joint Offices are responsible for defining the NDM-related responsibilities of NDMC members, among other duties.¹²²

The new sub-national organizational arrangement is likely intended to improve the NDM system and related work in three ways. First, by placing NDMOs under DRCs, the reforms institutionalize the mandate that civilian authorities who are focused on economic planning must consider NDM requirements. Second, the reforms likely give NDM general administrative staff greater authority; the previous bureaucracy encountered difficulties because general coordination offices were often under military organizations and attempting to coordinate with higher-ranking NDM working offices in civilian agencies.¹²³ Third, by removing the administrative burden, the reforms likely enable the PMD system to better focus on guiding NDM preparations to be carried out by civilians, contingency planning, and militia and reserve development.^{124 125}

Time will tell if these reforms achieve their goals. As of March 2024, however, it appears authorities are likely still facing obstacles and attempting to fully “release” the “efficacy” of organizational reforms.¹²⁶ It is unclear whether there have been organizational reforms at the national level to address the problem of “the military above, the people below” — such as by redistributing NDMC working offices from the CMC NDMD and LSD to government departments under the State Council.

Section III: Tracking National Defense Potential — Surveys and New Methods

Section III.I: National Defense Potential Surveys

Summary: National defense potential surveys are an annual, monthly, and ad hoc process through which authorities collect and verify information on relevant resources throughout the PRC economy that could be mobilized during a crisis; despite their importance, the surveys have often been unreliable.

^c NDMOs were established on the basis of existing Civil Air Defense Offices (人民防空办公室; CADO) so that NDMOs and CADOs are now often integrated as one organization with two nameplates (possibly on a temporary basis).

A key task of the NDM system is to collect, maintain, and verify records about the resources that authorities can draw on in a crisis. During peacetime, the national resources available for mobilization constitute the PRC's "national defense potential" (国防潜力).¹²⁷ The process of surveying national defense potential involves the military defining their requirements and government agencies implementing national defense potential surveys as coordinated by NDMCs (since the end of 2022, NDMOs have likely taken a leading role in coordination).¹²⁸¹²⁹ ¹³⁰ People's government statistical offices and NDM working offices, such as information mobilization offices, at and above the county level support this work, with surveys conducted on annual, monthly, and ad hoc schedules.¹³¹ ¹³² ¹³³ ¹³⁴ ¹³⁵ ¹³⁶ ¹³⁷

Data is drawn from local government departments, enterprises, working units (事业单位), and social organizations and organized into "national defense mobilization potential evaluation reports" (国防动员潜力评估报告) that are provided to military authorities so that commanders know what is available, how much is available, and the quality of available resources.¹³⁸ ¹³⁹ ¹⁴⁰ **Appendix C** shows the general steps of the annual national defense potential survey.

Like other aspects of the NDM system, national defense potential survey work has been impaired by many problems for a long time. Problems identified in PRC military media as recently as 2022 include neglect of survey work due to shared but ill-defined responsibilities among government and military organizations, overreliance on the military and passivity among government, unwillingness (in violation of the law) on the part of some organizations to fully disclose relevant information to protect their self-interest, low skill workforces being tasked with data collection and verification, and the treatment of national defense potential data surveys as a formality.¹⁴¹ Traditionally, the survey process has also been a very manual exercise — involving the grassroots level filling out forms¹⁴² — and, as of 2019, the adoption of information technology solutions to improve this situation was still "insufficient."¹⁴³ Further, it has been difficult to align descriptors of specific resources between military users and data collectors.¹⁴⁴ ¹⁴⁵

The overall effect of these challenges is erroneous, inaccurate, undetailed, and unclear accounting of available resources.¹⁴⁶ As a result, it has been common that when military forces request an "apple," the NDM system provides a "pear."¹⁴⁷

Section III.II: New National Defense Potential Survey Methods

Summary: To address shortcomings in national defense potential surveys, PRC authorities have urged the adoption of information technologies, including integration with smart city networks; implemented new audit procedures; and updated catalogs (indexing systems) of the resources to be tracked.

Various efforts have sought to address issues with NDM survey work in recent years. There has likely been progress in implementing "big data"-driven and networked solutions to improve data collection, resource tracking, and resource tasking. Many information management systems for each NDM line of effort (see **Appendix A**) have reportedly been created at every administrative level in recent years, with at least some vertical integration between administrative levels.¹⁴⁸ ¹⁴⁹ ¹⁵⁰ ¹⁵¹ Military training events highlight the ability of commanders to reference national defense potential databases in the field; a January 2023 Ningxia Military District event, for example, involved the use of an "Operations Brain" (作战大脑) that reportedly had limited

access to a “national defense mobilization comprehensive information system” (国防动员综合信息系统), “veterans information management system” (退役军人信息管理系统), and other systems.¹⁵² Information collection efforts are being aided, in part, by the development of smart cities, with the goal being to establish centralized networks with confidential, secure, accurate, and timely information on the status of relevant resources.^{153 154 155}

As of early 2022, however, the overall effort to modernize national defense potential data management with information technology was likely impeded by poor integration, with different information systems using different standards and interfaces.¹⁵⁶ Implementation of technology solutions at the county level was likely also incomplete as of mid-2023.¹⁵⁷

To address issues related to data quality, reliability, and specificity, the CMC NDMD implemented new annual national defense potential data auditing practices in 2018.^{158 159} In 2021, the CMC NDMD also introduced new guidance for conducting surveys.¹⁶⁰ One piece of this guidance was an updated indexing system that classifies a range of more than 4,000 types of resources about which national defense potential surveys should collect information.¹⁶¹ The indexing system offers a view of the civilian resources that the party-state and military may seek to leverage or requisition in a conflict or emergency. The indexing system includes resources such as foodstuffs, medical equipment, construction materials, engineering equipment, transportation support specialists, legal services, broadcast infrastructure, cyberspace and artificial intelligence technologies, and overseas ports.¹⁶² **Appendix D** provides a full list of the national defense potential resource categories identified in the 2021 indexing system.

Notably, the annual audit conducted after the implementation of the new survey guidance reportedly assessed progress in raising the quality of reported national defense potential data, noting the data’s evolution from “rough, few, and biased” to “precise, complete, and high[-quality].”¹⁶³ Nevertheless, since 2021, there have been calls to continue improving the indexing system, such as in relation to resources in emerging domains.¹⁶⁴

Section IV: The Requisition of Civilian Resources — Powers and Processes

Section IV.I: Party-State and Military Powers to Requisition Resources

Summary: With some exceptions, the PLA can requisition and modify any publicly- and privately-owned civilian resources with the government’s approval; the owners of civilian resources, including infrastructure like ports, are eligible for compensation if they suffer direct economic harm.

The PRC government — and through the government, the PLA — can requisition and modify almost any publicly-owned or privately-owned civilian resource for their purposes. The PRC Constitution, 2010 National Defense Mobilization Law, and many other laws and regulations provide this power in the context of “public interest” and “national defense requirements.”^{165 166 167 168 169 170} The 2015 National Security Law also contains the obligation that citizens and organizations assist the military if required.¹⁷¹ There has been some debate, but PRC academics have argued from a maximalist viewpoint that the state can requisition movable, immovable, and intangible property; personal labor; and goods and materials that have not yet been produced.¹⁷² Foreign-

owned property in the PRC can also likely be requisitioned, given that the 2000 Foreign Enterprise Law (外资企业法) allows the state to expropriate foreign-invested enterprises “under special circumstances.”¹⁷³

The owners of requisitioned resources are eligible for compensation in cases where national defense construction or military activities cause direct economic harm to citizens and organizations and when the requisitioned resource cannot be returned to its original state, either because it was modified or destroyed.^{174 175} Legal right to compensation covers transportation infrastructure; according to 2019 regulations governing civilian transportation national defense mobilization (民用运力国防动员条例; hereafter “civilian transportation regulations”), persons and organizations that own or manage civilian transportation tools, including ports, airports, and train stations, shall be compensated if these suffer depreciation or damage.¹⁷⁶ The state will also likely cover the salaries of operating and support personnel.¹⁷⁷ At least in the context of expropriation under special circumstances, foreign enterprises may also be entitled to compensation.¹⁷⁸

As with other aspects of the NDM system, there are various points of contention regarding the requisition of civilian resources. A 2021 article by a professor and graduate student at the Army Command College, for example, argues that the specifics of the process are not defined by law and that there is a need to improve incentives for supporting, and punishments for obstructing, requisitions.¹⁷⁹ The latter suggests compliance with the law remains a challenge. There have also been issues related to ambiguity and diverging interests in how compensation is implemented.^{180 181} Others have argued that the military should have the authority (which is currently held by the government) to approve decisions about the requisition of civilian resources.¹⁸²

Section IV.II: The Resource Requisition Process

Summary: To requisition civilian resources, PRC armed forces submit requests to government authorities, which coordinate with each other and the military and then issue directives to property owners; to maintain readiness, authorities pre-prepare mobilization hubs and reserves.

According to the 2010 National Defense Mobilization Law, requisitions of civilian resources can be initiated *after* the government orders a national defense mobilization and *if* available reserve materials cannot promptly satisfy mobilization requirements.¹⁸³ PRC armed forces, including the PLA, People’s Armed Police (人民武装警察部队; PAP), and militia organizations, cannot unilaterally organize requisitions. Instead, they must submit requisition requests to be implemented by the government.¹⁸⁴

As outlined in the aforementioned article by authors affiliated with the Army Command College, the general process (in practice, if not law) involves armed forces filling out requisition requests and passing them up their respective chains of command, such as to the theater commands, the headquarters of the PLA services and PAP, or the PMDs in the case of militias. Unified requisition plans are formulated at these levels and then passed to the military-civilian coordination mechanisms of the NDM system. Local governments fulfill the requests. Under special circumstances, military forces at lower levels also have the authority to directly request resources from the local government.¹⁸⁵

More specifically, in a wartime context, it is theater command mobilization bureaus (战区动员局) that collect requisition requests from subordinate units, review and draft mobilization plans, and align needs with national

defense potential.¹⁸⁶ The theater command mobilization bureaus work through theater command joint operations command centers (联合作战指挥中心) to submit resource requests to the PMDs for approval by provincial NDMCs.¹⁸⁷ There are other military organizations inside and outside of the theater command involved in organizing requisitions within specific sectors, such as when organizing transportation resources.¹⁸⁸ For large-scale operations that span across theaters or industries, requests for resources are first submitted to the CMC NDMD and the national-level NDMC so that mobilization requirements can be centrally coordinated.¹⁸⁹ Once NDMCs receive requisition requests, they coordinate implementation through NDM working offices and other government offices to arrange the acquisition of civilian resources.^{190 191 192}

Additionally, to accommodate potential future mobilization requirements, authorities pre-arrange NDM hubs and material reserves. For example, economic mobilization centers (经济动员中心) established within large state-owned enterprises and industrial parks “manufacture products that meet national defense material requirements... [and] maintain latent production capacity and the excess components, semi-finished products, and standard parts needed to surge... production... to support contingency requirements.”^{193 194}

In cases where civilian resources must be modified to support military uses, an even greater range of actors is involved. **Appendix E** provides a case study of the process for requisitioning and modifying a civilian ship for military service.

Section V: The Private Sector in Conflict — Private Enterprise and Militias

Section V.I: The Role of Private Enterprise

Summary: PRC private enterprises are an important part of national defense mobilization, especially in relation to the production of advanced technology and related skilled labor; when mobilized, they are likely to provide enterprise resources to support logistics, maintenance, technology development, and other activities.

While state-owned enterprises are likely the primary conduit for mobilizing resources from the PRC’s economic, industrial, and transportation base,^{195 196} private enterprises are also important. This is particularly true given their significant contributions to the PRC’s innovation of advanced technologies and authorities’ focus on technology as an enabler of victory.^{197 198 199} Local authorities in Beijing have reportedly had success establishing national economic and equipment mobilization centers (国民经济和装备动员中心) and “key mobilization units” (重点动员单位) within private enterprises in the fields of equipment manufacturing; information communications; medicine; nuclear, biological and chemical surveillance; and fire and disaster relief.²⁰⁰ In Shanghai, authorities have created a “National Defense Mobilization Alliance” (国防动员联盟) to enroll more technology enterprises in MCF efforts.²⁰¹ In Tianjin, the NDMO has focused on increasing the range of products from private enterprises that are listed in military procurement catalogs, particularly in the “unmanned intelligence” (likely meaning drones), biomedicine, logistics, and warehousing fields.²⁰² Through these partnerships and other activities, the party-state and military are likely building relationships, aligning military requirements with private sector potential, and preparing material reserves to facilitate rapid conversion to a wartime or emergency footing.

During a conflict, private enterprises are likely to be called on to provide their specific strengths in whatever ways might support the war effort. This could include shifting production to focus on military-relevant equipment and medicine; developing new solutions to specific technological challenges related to, for example, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance as well as communications transmission;²⁰³ and providing skilled personnel and equipment to facilitate logistics support and maintenance activities.

Examples of these kinds of private sector contributions have been seen in times of crisis, during military training, and NDM preparation efforts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, “high-tech companies in Shanghai” were mobilized to provide robotics systems “used for autonomous distribution, self-disinfection, and unmanned guidance for diagnosis.”²⁰⁴ Many enterprises, including privately-owned firms, also mobilized to produce and distribute masks.^{205 206} Private logistics companies have signed contracts with PLA logistics departments, reportedly significantly decreasing material delivery times in some situations; they have specifically trained to provide delivery of medical and equipment maintenance parts to military forces via aerial drones.^{207 208} Software development companies have developed programs to support national defense potential data tracking and civilian transportation dispatch for military uses.²⁰⁹ In 2018, the Shanghai Garrison used the aforementioned “alliance” to organize a maritime drone exercise.²¹⁰ Leaked documents in February 2024 showed one network security firm selling “WIFI Close-In Attack Systems” and “realistic training” platforms to PLA units.²¹¹

It is also possible for the PLA to mobilize technical talent in private enterprises to support network (cyber) operations. Multiple versions of the PLA textbook *Science of Military Strategy* identify civilian forces as spontaneous or organized contributors to network attack, defense, and reconnaissance.²¹² However, it is not clear from open sources how civilians — who may be treated as contractors — would be incorporated into the armed forces command structure.²¹³ One known way in which private enterprises contribute cyber expertise to the armed forces and otherwise support the PRC’s national defense is by establishing or contributing personnel to militia organizations.

Section V.II: The Role of “New-Type” Militias

Summary: “New-type” militias are armed forces units established among civilian professionals, including those from the private sector, in advanced technology industries; authorities are attempting to correct long-standing problems with militia development so that PRC militias can support the PLA in all domains.

Militias (民兵) are the third component of the PRC’s armed forces, along with the PLA and PAP.²¹⁴ Militias are established under the PMD system, with the CMC NDMD Militia Reserve Bureau (民兵预备役局) managing related policies, standards, procedures, and requirements.²¹⁵ Militias are subject to the dual leadership of military and civilian government authorities, most directly through PAFDs,^d and are increasingly integrated into civilian emergency response mechanisms.^{216 217 218} They undertake war readiness duties (战备勤务), operations

^d There are two categories of PAFD, those at the county-level and those at the grassroots-level. The county-level PAFDs “are manned by active duty PLA personnel” and grassroots PAFDs “are manned by civilian cadres whose salaries are paid by local governments and sometimes work on a part-time basis. These grassroots PAFDs are the closest interface through which militia interact with the PLA command on a regular basis, as their direct managers for recruitment, planning, organization, training, and policy execution.” See Conor M. Kennedy and Andrew S. Erickson, “China Maritime Report No. 1: China’s Third Sea Force, The People’s Armed Forces Maritime Militia: Tethered to the PLA,” China Maritime Studies Institute, March 2017, p. 4, <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=cmsi-maritime-reports>.

to “support the front” (支援前线) and resist invasion (抵抗侵略), defensive operations (防卫作战), military operations other than war (非战争军事行动), and activities to maintain social order (维护社会治安) and respond to non-war emergencies.^{219 220 221} Militia personnel retain their civilian jobs during peacetime.²²²

Since approximately the late 1990s, and accelerating under Xi Jinping’s leadership and the elevation of MCF as a national strategy, military authorities have sought to leverage “specialized and professional skills from the PRC’s modern economy and specialized enterprises” for militia construction.^{223 224 225 226} The focus of this effort is to ensure that the PRC’s militias can effectively support joint operations under conditions of “informatized warfare... on land, at sea, in the air, in space, and within the electromagnetic spectrum as well as [computer] networks’.”^{227 228}

The outcome of this drive is the creation of “new-type” (新型) or “new-quality” (新质) militia forces that are established within or enlist skilled personnel from civilian state-owned and privately-owned enterprises (and other organizations like universities) in the information technology, communications, cybersecurity, software, electronics, robotics, aerial and undersea unmanned systems, “big data,” artificial intelligence, and other sectors.^{229 230 231} Militia forces established at or from these types of organizations include those listed below.^{232 233 234 235 236} Note that militia construction practices are highly localized, and the specific units (分队) available in a given city or county can vary greatly.

- Network (cyber) units for defensive and offensive operations
- Network (cyber) units for public opinion guidance
- Intelligence and information support units
- Aerial drone reconnaissance and logistics units
- Drone countermeasures units
- Meteorological and hydrological information support units
- Surveying and mapping units
- Emergency communications support units
- Maritime search and rescue units
- Undersea target detection and rescue units
- Multifunctional robotics units

Appendix F provides further details on the range of “new-type” or “new-quality” militia forces that authorities are interested in establishing, based on the aforementioned 2021 national defense potential indexing system.

There are likely several million enlisted militiamen; however, a specific number is not known. In 2010, there were eight million militiamen, and reforms since 2016 have sought to reduce that number.^{237 238 239} The number of militiamen classified as “new-type” or “new-quality” is likewise not known. In 2016, PRC media reported that 114 private enterprises had established PAFDs and more than 1,000 private enterprises have organized militia units;²⁴⁰ however, the report was unclear whether these numbers reflect nationwide activity or only activity in Ningbo, Zhejiang province.

Despite ambitious goals for “new-type” militia forces and the support they can offer the PLA, PRC militia organizations broadly have been plagued by significant challenges for a long time. Problems, many of which stem from tensions inherent in the MCF concept, include poor quality training that is routine, non-standard, and

basic; insufficient equipment; and reluctance and non-compliance among enterprises to commit personnel and equipment to militia responsibilities.^{241 242 243 244 245} One manner of reluctance that has been observed since 2021 is technology enterprises creating militia units from non-technical sales staff and members of enterprise party organizations, instead of from specialized personnel.²⁴⁶ A key concern among enterprises and others is that militia training responsibilities are disruptive to productivity.²⁴⁷

There are various local efforts to address these challenges and some indications of improvement.²⁴⁸ For instance, some local authorities have reportedly improved the participation of technology enterprises in militia enrollment efforts through consultative mechanisms and by adjusting training to be minimally disruptive.²⁴⁹ A district in Shenzhen, Guangdong, is reportedly “offering guaranteed housing and economic assistance” to non-public enterprises that establish militias.²⁵⁰ Increasing and improving political education among militiamen in private enterprises is also seen as an important line of effort to ensure that they heed the CCP’s command, faithfully carry out their missions, and assist in improving combat effectiveness and productivity.^{251 252}

Improving the content of militia training is likely to benefit from a more centralized approach, as the military leadership has more direct control through the CMC NDMD.^{253 254 255} Since the start of 2024, authorities have developed a new training pattern focused on improving the quality of militia instructors;²⁵⁶ the CMC NDMD and PMDs provide training on special and important subjects while the military sub-districts focus on standard subjects. The new pattern implements group training for instructors, seeking to break down geographical boundaries and share resources in a likely attempt to overcome unsatisfactory and uneven militia training. Lessons are also designed with input from military personnel, military academics, veterans, and civilian industry personnel.²⁵⁷

In a wartime context, militia forces, including those from private enterprises, are most likely to be called to contribute to logistics, area defense, intelligence, other support operations, and offensive operations (such as in cyberspace) that can be carried out within PRC territory (or within the PRC’s claimed maritime spaces in the case of maritime militias^{258 259}). The 2020 edition of *Science of Military Strategy* describes militia forces as responsible for “transport support, material and oil support, medical rescue, equipment repair, communication support, intelligence reconnaissance, [and] camouflage protection” during air, border and coastal defense, maritime, and information operations.²⁶⁰ A 2010 PLA textbooks suggest militias may contribute to the war effort by resisting attacks against in-depth targets, supporting enemy delay and harassment operations, and working to maintain social order.²⁶¹ However, other PLA textbooks also suggest a role closer to the front line during offensive activities like port landing operations.²⁶² Other research has also suggested that maritime militias could, prior to or at the start of a conflict, support intelligence collection, battlefield reconnaissance, minelaying, and covert deployment of special operations forces.²⁶³

Militias are more regularly training with PLA theater command and service forces in recent years,²⁶⁴ providing another means of assessing their likely roles during a conflict. Militia activities in such training include providing drone countermeasures support to troops conducting cross-regional maneuvers; supporting transportation brigade troops (运输旅兵) through militia support points (民兵保障网点) across a 500-mile stretch of the Tibetan plateau; setting up radar corner reflectors; firing Dongfeng-11 short-range ballistic missiles; providing communications, encampment, fuel, and meteorological information support; and clearing and repairing bridges.^{265 266 267 268}

In general, the mobilization and mission orders of militia forces run through the PMD system and are issued by PAFDs at the county level.^{269 270} However, operational command of militias can likely be shifted on a temporary basis to other authorities; operational command of maritime militia units, for example, can be variably assigned to the PLA Navy or China Coast Guard, though the civilian and military authorities of the PMD likely retain at least a supervisory (and possibly direct) role.²⁷¹ During a significant crisis — war or other emergency — theater commands can also likely assume command over militia forces “operating within their areas of geographic responsibility.”^{272 273 274}

Section VI: Transportation Mobilization — Preparations and Signposts

Section VI.I: Preparing Transportation Infrastructure

Summary: PRC law requires that transportation infrastructure (e.g., roads, railways, and ports) must implement national defense requirements, but adherence has long been affected by complex bureaucracy; the 2017 National Defense Transportation Law has likely improved, but not solved, this impediment.

Some of the earliest efforts undertaken by Xi Jinping’s government to strengthen PRC NDM work occurred in the transportation field. Efforts included 2015 regulations for implementing national defense requirements during the construction of new civilian ships and guidance on retrofitting existing ships for military requirements issued by the national-level Transportation Readiness Office (交通备战办公室).^{275 276} In 2016, authorities passed the National Defense Transportation Law (NDTL), which was implemented in January 2017.²⁷⁷ The NDTL strengthened the legal basis for ensuring the military has access to, and can make use of, the PRC’s transportation infrastructure. This access is likely unlimited, except by physical and technical considerations. For example, while the PLA does use the PRC’s high-speed rail network, military analysts have identified challenges that may limit its usefulness in certain mobilization scenarios.^{e 278 279 280}

The NDTL aims to ensure that the planning, construction, and use of railroads, roads, waterways, airways, pipelines, and postal services account for national defense transportation requirements, including by providing priority access to PRC armed forces during times of need. Among other provisions, the NDTL also establishes (or strengthens) requirements and mechanisms for stimulating the purchase (by the industrial base) of certain categories of civilian vehicles (民用运载工具) relevant to national defense transportation so they are available if needed and establishing strategic projection support forces (战略投送支援力量) at transportation enterprises to facilitate long-distance and large-scale national defense transportation operations.²⁸¹

With regard to implementing national defense requirements in the design and construction of transportation infrastructure, the NDTL builds on requirements found in the 2010 National Defense Mobilization Law.²⁸² Per that law, the state and military develop a catalog of projects that are required to implement national defense requirements. The 2016 version of the catalog includes railways; roadways; airports; ports; refined oil pipelines; fixed, mobile, satellite, and broadcast communications systems; data centers and the data exchange platforms of

^e As of 2019, the designs of train cars, stations, bridges, and power supply mechanisms likely inhibited the high-speed rail system’s use for transporting heavy troops and oversized equipment through some parts of the network. PLA engineers are likely working to overcome these challenges.

government departments; geopolitical, meteorological, and hydrological information systems; radio frequencies; and civil air defense infrastructure.^{283 284}

Examples of national defense requirements being implemented in transportation infrastructure construction and planning since the NDTL include Qingdao Port building a military-civilian dual-use terminal for naval vessels and large civilian roll-on/roll-off ships, which includes 100,000 square meters of assembly area (集结地域) as well as water and power supply facilities;²⁸⁵ a state-owned railway operator in Shanghai adding military-use platforms to a logistics park;²⁸⁶ a state-owned railway operator agreeing not to demolish an out-of-service track connecting Anhui and Guangxi provinces due to its military value;²⁸⁷ the same state-owned railway operator adding new military-use stations, ration supply stations, and other military-use improvements to its lines;²⁸⁸ and all airports establishing preferential treatment procedures for military personnel.²⁸⁹

Railway departments in Shandong have also worked to align (对接) their “special train cars” with military needs to support the transportation of equipment that is too large for regular train cars.²⁹⁰ These Shandong departments have also reportedly worked with the military to achieve technological breakthroughs supporting more effective national defense transportation.²⁹¹ Transportation readiness offices at all levels across Guangdong are organizing (纳编), “pre-reserving and pre-requisitioning” (预储预征), and modifying equipment such as general-use aircraft, semi-submersible ships, cold-chain transportation equipment, rapid bridge-launch vehicles, heavy truck cranes, large flatbed trucks, roll-on/roll-off ships, and other equipment.²⁹² Other research has documented efforts to develop strategic projection support forces among airlines and shipping enterprises since 2012.^{293 294 295 296}

A more wholistic assessment of how the NDTL has been implemented in the context of preparing transportation networks for NDM requires more research. Reflections of this effort are only inconsistently present in national and sub-national transportation-focused five-year plans, for example.^{297 298 299 300 301} When included, references are typically not specific. Guangdong’s “14th Five-Year Development Plan for a Comprehensive Transportation System” is relatively descriptive and only says, “actively promote the military-civilian integrated development of transportation infrastructure” and “strengthen regional military-civilian airspace coordination and air traffic control cooperation.”³⁰² Additionally, according to a 2017 article, CMC LSD Transportation Bureau (运输投送局) efforts to establish a strategic projection capability that draws heavily on civilian resources included 43 projects to support deep military-civil integration of military requirements at international cargo airports.³⁰³ However, the details of these projects are unknown as of this writing.

Nonetheless, the NDTL has likely eased some of the difficulties that military authorities previously faced in adding national defense requirements to transportation infrastructure construction plans. Analysts from the PLA Transportation Academy have asserted that the NDTL supported major steps toward “achieving an effective ‘top-down construction plan’ rather than the ‘bottom-up reporting and top-down approval’ that characterized an earlier era.”³⁰⁴ In 2018, a commander of the Wuxi Joint Logistics Support Center (无锡联勤保障中心; Wuxi JLSC), which is subordinate to the PLA Joint Logistics Support Force (联勤保障部队; JLSF), indicated to reporters that after the NDTL, national defense requirements are directly put into construction plans without layers of bureaucratic approval.^{305 306} According to Wuxi JLSC military representative office personnel, the NDTL has also improved airline compliance with military training requirements.³⁰⁷

Problems and limitations also likely remain. As recently as March 2024, participants in a forum on NDM hosted by the National Defense University Joint Operations College reportedly expressed dissatisfaction with the ambiguous responsibilities of different parties in implementing national defense requirements when building roads, bridges, ports, and other infrastructure.³⁰⁸ This likely echoes concerns from as early as 2019 about deficiencies in the NDTL regarding its implementation.³⁰⁹ Other concerns in the transportation sector include cost and bureaucracy impeding efforts to retrofit existing civilian ships;³¹⁰ limited loading and unloading facilities suited for military needs at civilian airports, which prevents the military's use of many airports (it is possible this is one aspect that the CMC LSD Transportation Bureau's efforts have focused on);³¹¹ and training for railway national defense transportation teams being underfunded, of poor quality, and beset by other issues.³¹²

Section VI.II: Signposts of Transportation Mobilization

Summary: In a major conflict, such as against Taiwan, mobilization to a wartime footing would likely create observable distortions or anomalies in the PRC transportation sector despite possible PLA efforts to conceal such irregularities; however, other signposts of a conflict may be clearer or more visible on a longer timeline.

If the PRC were to initiate a large-scale joint operation, such as an invasion of Taiwan, the PLA “would require about 3,000 train trips, 1 million vehicle trips, 2,100 aircraft sorties, 15 oil pipeline battalions... and more than 8,000 ship voyages,” according to one set of estimates from the PLA Logistics Academic Research Center.³¹³ According to a separate single estimate, by 2025 the PLA hopes to be able to complete outbound loading of materiel within 24 hours and loading of outbound brigades and regiments within four hours.³¹⁴ This tempo likely does not account for earlier stages of preparation, however, such as forward deploying weapons to key locations, which would likely occur months ahead of a conflict.³¹⁵

Mobilization on this scale is likely to generate detectable changes in transportation patterns and other activities within the PRC. The challenge is that most of the clearest signals of imminent threat in this sector will likely occur in relatively close temporal proximity (likely months) to the onset of aggression. Although the authoritative PLA textbook *Science of Campaigns* (2006) advises that some campaigns — such as airborne campaigns — should carry out preparations and force concentration in secret, aided by activities to deceive the enemy, it also acknowledges that the scale of activities required to prepare for a joint landing campaign make concealing the initiator's intention “extremely difficult.”³¹⁶

Observable changes in the transportation sector might include large disruptions in civilian passenger and cargo flights as the military amasses required materiel and abnormal patterns of behavior by civilian vessels, especially roll-on/roll-off ships but also deck cargo ships and others.^{317 318} Some concealment activities may also produce indicators observable through satellite imagery, such as the installation of tarps at ports used to load military equipment on civilian ships.³¹⁹ It may be possible to monitor the relatively limited number of military and civilian airports likely to be used as points of embarkation for a campaign against Taiwan (approximately 33 airports, depending on the criteria applied) for similar atypical activity.³²⁰ Additionally, it is possible — maybe even likely — that Chinese social media users will document military transport activities and

other indicators of mobilization in their localities (although authorities would likely take measures to prevent this).^f

Signals outside of the transportation sector may be clearer or available on a longer timeline. Some analysts assess the CCP is likely to order a general mobilization “at least three or four months” before an invasion of Taiwan and halt demobilizations of enlisted PLA personnel six to 12 months before an invasion.³²¹

Section VII: Recommendations

1. The foregoing survey of the PRC’s NDM system in relation to the Commission’s questions highlights several topics that could benefit from further research. PRC authorities hold significant expectations for the ability of the NDM system — and militias — to efficiently and rapidly convert PRC comprehensive national power from a peacetime to a wartime footing. However, the system and authorities’ efforts to improve it are understudied in public sources. Greater attention to the subject would be beneficial to furthering the U.S. government and public’s understanding of MCF, potential signposts of a looming conflict, and forces that the PRC will be able to bring to bear in a conflict. As such, Congress should consider directing or funding public-facing research that examines the following topics:
 - The effects of the 2017 National Defense Transportation Law on local government transportation infrastructure planning, as well as potential modifications to existing transportation networks
 - PLA expectations and goals for the operational tempo of mobilization for large-scale joint operations
 - PRC progress in addressing challenges related to militia development and training
2. Congress should consider passing (with amendments if needed) the Open Translation Center Act of 2024 (H.R.7942/S.4118) to help maintain and expand foreign access to key materials from the PRC government and broader PRC information space. In 2021, the Commission received a similar recommendation that Congress should “pass legislation to create and fund an open-source center or repository of material on issues relating to the entire breadth of China’s domestic, foreign, and security policies.”³²² Since that time, access to publicly available sources of insight on developments within the PRC, including developments addressed in this testimony, has notably deteriorated. Public access to original PRC materials and quality translations is vital to the U.S. government and public’s ability to accurately assess intentions, capabilities, and other developments in the PRC.

^f For example, around the time then-Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan in August 2022 — China responded with significant military exercises — alleged videos of military platforms moving into and around Fujian province found their way to international social media platforms.

Appendix A: PRC National Defense Mobilization Lines of Effort

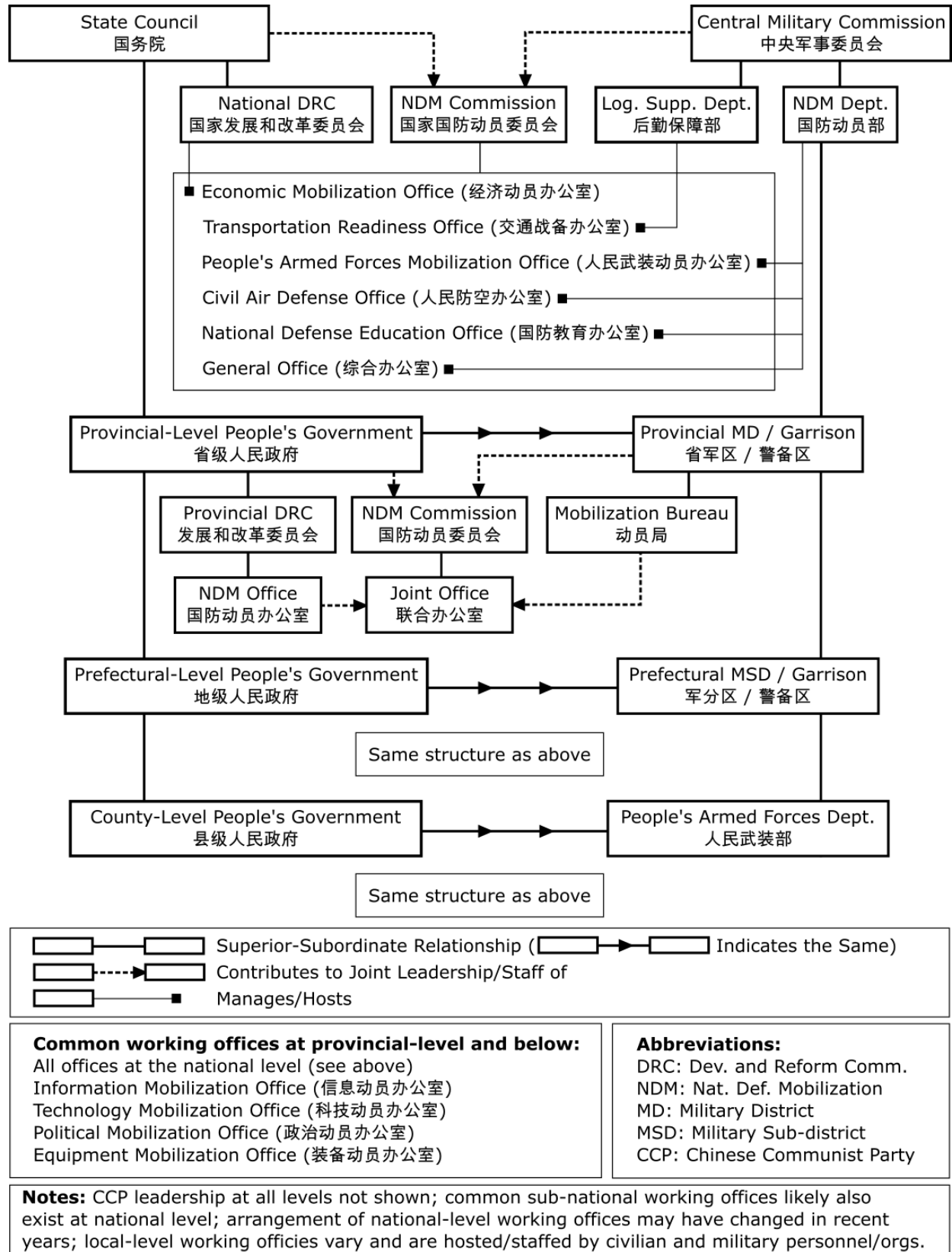
Line of Effort	Related Tasks Include:
<p>Political Mobilization (政治动员) — the chief task</p>	<p>Creating a political environment conducive to engaging in a conflict or responding to an emergency; igniting patriotic fervor and inspiring the military; attracting foreign support for the PRC's goals</p>
<p>Armed Forces Mobilization (武装力量动员) — the core task</p>	<p>Shifting PLA and other armed forces from a peacetime to a wartime footing and organizational structure; expanding active-duty PLA units and transitioning reserve forces to active duty; mobilizing troops, equipment, and materiel</p>
<p>National Economic Mobilization (国民经济动员) — the foundational task</p>	<p>Transitioning economic resources from peacetime to wartime production; unifying leadership to coordinate industry, agriculture, natural resources, transportation, finance, and other sectors to promote national defense</p>
<p>Equipment Mobilization (装备动员) — the key task</p>	<p>Drawing on equipment and resource stockpiles; requisitioning government and commercial civilian equipment, facilities, and other assets; redirecting production and research capabilities for wartime requirements</p>
<p>Civil Air Defense Mobilization (人民防空动员) — the shield task</p>	<p>Constructing air-raid shelters and other protective facilities; establishing warning and command systems; stockpiling repair equipment; educating the public regarding evacuation routes and other measures; creating air defense units for rescue and repair operations</p>
<p>Transportation Readiness Mobilization (交通战备动员) — the support task</p>	<p>Activating railways, highways, waterways, and airways for wartime requirements; organizing units to repair and defend transportation assets and lines; cutting off access to specific regions if needed; requisitioning and modifying civilian transportation tools (e.g., trucks or ships)</p>
<p>Science and Technology Mobilization (科技动员) — the critical task</p>	<p>Organizing government and commercial civilian research institutions for military-related research; incorporating scholars, engineers, and technical personnel into military technical operations; achieving technological advantages to support the war effort (or other crisis)</p>

	response)
Information Mobilization (信息动员) — the support task	Ensuring the information collection, storage, transmission, and management needs of the military (incl. along the electromagnetic spectrum); employing civilian resources and personnel in network (cyber) offense and defense; expanding production of information equipment; creating units for securing and repairing communication networks

Sources: Dean Cheng, "Converting the Potential to the Actual: Chinese Mobilization Policies and Planning," in Andrew Scobell et al. (eds.), *The People's Liberation Army and Contingency Planning in China* (National Defense University Press, 2015), p. 109-113, <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/portals/68/Documents/Books/PLA-contingency/PLA-Contingency-Planning-China.pdf>; 理论研讨 | 弯弓搭箭射天狼——浅谈国防动员的八张“弓” ["Theory Discussion | Draw the Bow and Shoot the Wolf: A Brief Discussion of the Eight "Bows" of National Defense Mobilization"], 衡阳市国防动员办公室 衡阳市人民防空办公室 [Hengyang Municipal National Defense Mobilization Office Hengyang Municipal Civil Air Defense Office], January 30, 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240512204843/https://www.hengyang.gov.cn/ccad/rfdt/mts/20230130/i2919801.html>.

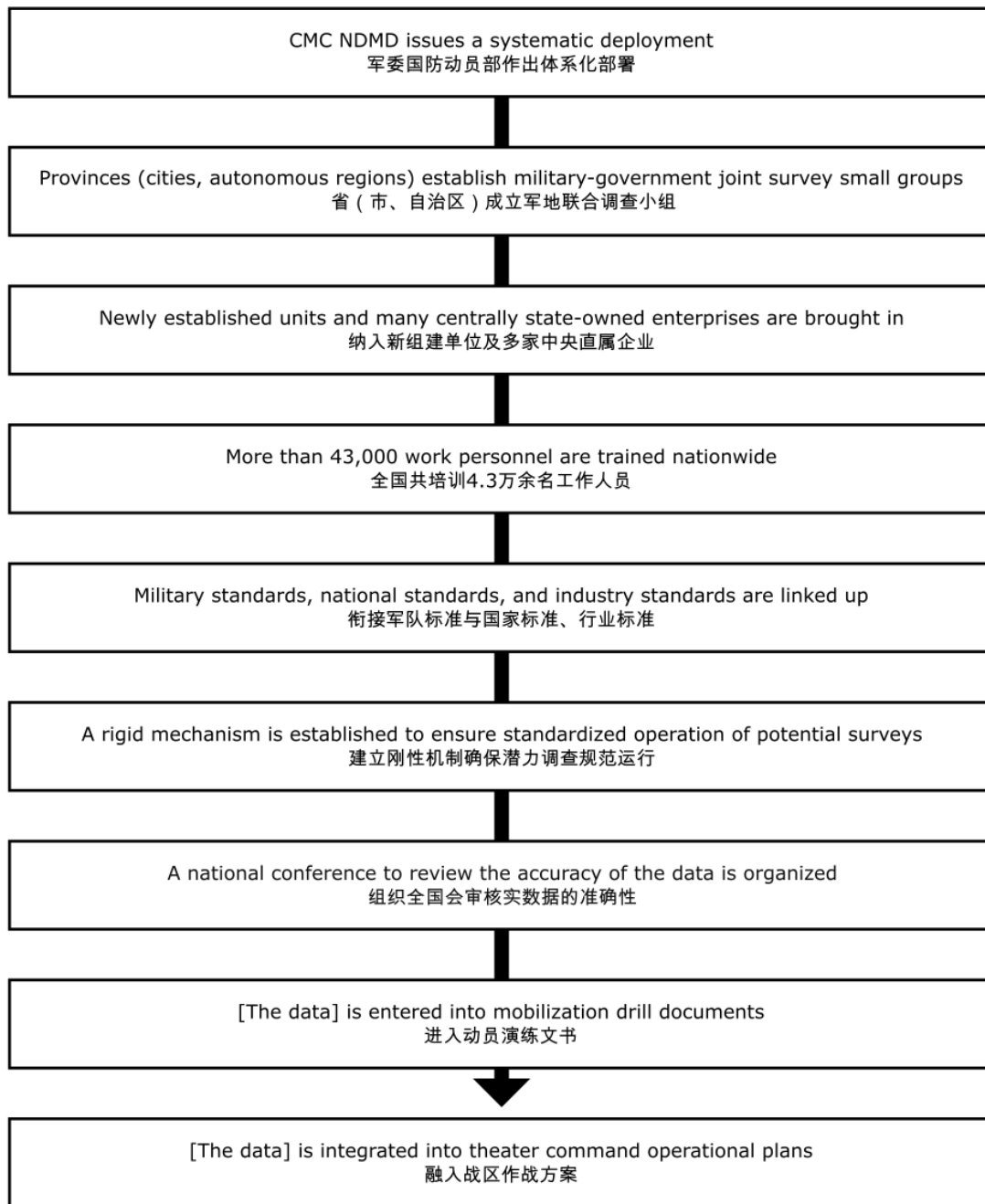
Additionally, although it is not a type of mobilization, national defense education is an important peacetime process supported by the NDM system to promote patriotism; strengthen society's concern for, support for, and willing participation in national defense construction; and ensure that all people know their obligations as defined in PRC law.³²³

Appendix B: Organizational Chart of the PRC National Defense Mobilization System



Sources: Author's research; Richter and Rosen, "China's National Defense Mobilization System," p. 40.

Appendix C: General Steps in the Annual National Defense Potential Survey



Source: Adapted from 丁文渊 [Ding Wenyuan] and 贾勇 [Jia Yong], 提升“第一用户”体验, 国防动员部这些措施有心了 ["To Improve the 'First User' Experience, the National Defense Mobilization Department has Taken These Measures"], 中华人民共和国国防部 [People's Republic of China Ministry of National Defense], November 14, 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20240511020553/http://www.mod.gov.cn/gfbw/gfdy/4854988.html>.

Appendix D: National Defense Potential Resources by Class and Subclass

<p align="center">Overall/General Class 综合类</p>	<p align="center">Reserve Force Class 后备力量类</p>	<p align="center">National Economy Class 国民经济类</p>
<p>4 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National Defense Mobilization Committee Administrative Institutions ● Grassroots People’s Armed Forces Departments ● Population, Economic, and Agricultural Resources ● Extractive Resources 	<p>4 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retired Military Personnel ● Active Reserve Force Personnel (现役部队预编预备役人员) ● Registered Reserve Force Personnel (编入预备役部队预备役人员) ● Militia Forces 	<p>12 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Major and Supplemental Foodstuffs ● Fuel Logistics Resources ● Medicine and Healthcare Resources ● Nuclear and Chemical Disaster Emergency Response Resources ● Delivery Instruments Repair and Manufacture Resources ● Engineering and Construction Resources ● Equipment and Material ● Meteorological and Hydrological Charting Resources ● Civilian-Use Explosive Resources ● Emergency Supply Reserves ● Safe Production and Emergency Rescue Resources ● National and Local Economic Mobilization Centers
<p align="center">Civil Air Defense Class 人民防空类</p> <p>6 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Civil Air Defense Key Shelter Cities ● Civil Air Defense Command Posts ● Civil Air Defense Engineering Projects ● Civil Air Defense Evacuation Zones (Bases) ● Civil Air Defense Alarm Installations ● Civil Air Defense Specialist 	<p align="center">Transportation Class 交通运输类</p> <p>5 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transportation Infrastructure ● Transport Delivery and Hauling Capacity ● War Preparation Material Transportation Resources ● Transportation Specialist Teams ● Maritime Search and Rescue Forces 	<p align="center">Political Mobilization Class 政治动员类</p> <p>7 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State Security Research Institutions ● Internet Supervision and Public Sentiment Guidance Institutions ● Internet and Information Services Enterprises ● Radio and Television Institutions ● Legal Services Institutions ● Psychological Consulting Institutions

Teams		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Human Resources (e.g., Language Translation/Interpretation Personnel)
<p>Weapons/Equipment Class 武器装备类</p> <p>4 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weapons and Equipment Research and Development Institutions ● Weapons and Equipment Production Enterprises ● Weapons and Equipment Maintenance Enterprises ● Weapons and Equipment Specialist Support Teams 	<p>Emerging Domains Class 新兴领域类</p> <p>7 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maritime Resources ● Space Resources ● Network Space Resources (i.e., Cyberspace and Communications) ● Biological Resources ● New Energy Resources ● Artificial Intelligence Resources ● Scientific Research, Universities and Academies, and Scientific Research Results 	<p>Overseas Resources Class 海外资源类</p> <p>3 Subclasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overseas Embassies and Consulates ● Overseas Enterprises ● Overseas Chinese Organizations

Source: Thorne, "Inside China's National Defense Mobilization," p. 7.

Appendix E: Process for Civilian Ship Mobilization and Retrofit

This case study is based on Chinese academic sources from 2004 and 2015, with specific points supplemented by more recent sources. Although dated, the process outlined here is likely still relevant to understanding how the PLA would mobilize a civilian ship unequipped for national defense requirements and the types of organizations involved.

The process for mobilizing and modifying civilian ships involves three supporting activities:³²⁴

1. Maintaining up-to-date information on available ships, their type, size, personnel quality, and physical location
2. Managing a given ship's status through "daily contact," port records, and personnel files; this relies on county-level maritime affairs departments and PAFDs
3. Coordinating military-local government efforts, including pre-preparing resource resupply points at major ports, signing reserve agreements (such as for fuel and water), and establishing other reserves and support teams³²⁵

Once the requirement to requisition and modify a civilian ship is identified, the theater command (or other military authority) transmits a requisition request to the relevant PMD.³²⁶ The request is routed to the local NDMC, which, likely with input from the offices for economic mobilization, transportation readiness, and armed forces mobilization, formulates a plan for requisition and modification. The NDMC then distributes orders to relevant enterprises, working units, and managing departments in the name of the local government.³²⁷
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According to a 2004 source, the relevant economic mobilization offices and military authorities, together with personnel from transportation readiness, shipyard, ship inspection, ship unit, and other units establish a "civilian ship installation (modification) command organization" (民船加(改)装指挥机构) to coordinate, organize, and implement the ship modification work.³²⁹ The 2019 civilian transportation regulations affirm the roles of the transportation readiness office, economic mobilization office, and other organizations in transportation modification.³³⁰ Military representative offices are likely involved in this process as well.^{g 331 332}

A 2015 source indicates the involvement of two other specific entities in the ship modification process: "civilian ship installation (modification) mobilization centers" (民船加(改)装动员中心) and "civilian ship installation (modification) units" (民船加(改)装分队),³³³ with the latter likely being composed of engineers from shipyards or ship design companies with the help of NDM working offices or the PMD system.³³⁴ Demonstrating consistency between 2015 and earlier processes, "civilian ship mobilization modification bases" (民船动员改装基地) began to be created within shipping enterprises at least as early as 2006, in accordance with the 2003 version of the aforementioned civilian transportation regulations.³³⁵

^g Military representative offices are established by CMC departments and PLA services in cities, enterprises, and factories. These offices advocate for the military's interests in relation to matters such as weapons production and implementation of national defense requirements. For ship modification and other work related to transportation mobilization, it is likely that the relevant military representative offices will be those associated with the JLSF or their JLSCs. For examples, see Du, Gao, and Hao, "National Defense Transportation Law;" Peng and Zhou, "Retain Unused Railway Links for Military Transport."

Required modifications may include, depending on the circumstances and specific ship, the addition of military communications, medical, firefighting, and rescue equipment and facilities; changes to accommodate living areas for military personnel; and improvements to the ship's "structure and performance such as reinforcing decks or preparing helicopter landing sites."³³⁶

After the modified ship is no longer needed, the civilian ship installation (modification) command organization formulates and implements a plan to return the ship to its original state (e.g., removing sensitive equipment and repairing damage). The government pays for this repair work, as well as the work of modifying the ship.³³⁷

Appendix F: “New-Type” Militia Units

The following tables are based on a draft version of the CMC NDMD’s 2021 national defense potential statistical survey indexing system. That system identifies 20 types of militia organizations, such as those for emergency response, stability maintenance, civil air defense, and transportation protection. For the seven militia organization types described below, “new-type” or “new-quality” units account for more than 50% of all units conceived of within each type of militia organization. Note that the indexing system is likely aspirational and generalized. It likely reveals the PLA’s thinking with regard to the types of missions that PRC militias should be able to support during future wars or other crises, not the exact composition of militia organizations in any specific locality. There are other types of “new-type” or “new-quality” units not accounted for in the tables below.

Maritime Militia (海上民兵)	
% New-Quality (类型 = 新质)	New-Quality Units (分队) Responsibilities Include:
65% (26 out of 40 unit categories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maritime Special Reconnaissance (海上特种侦察) ● Maritime Remote Sensor and Monitoring (海上遥感监测) ● Maritime Undersea Target Detection (水下目标探测) ● Maritime Environment Monitoring (海洋环境监测) ● Maritime Meteorology and Hydrology (海上气象水文) ● Maritime Information Assistance and Support (海上信息支援保障) ● Maritime Transport Type 3 (海上运输(三)) (Maritime Transport Type 1 and 2 are not labeled new-quality) ● Maritime Search and Rescue Type 2 (海上搜救(二)) ● Maritime Search and Rescue Type 1 (海上搜救(一)) ● Maritime Air Search and Rescue (海上空中搜救) ● Maritime Special Rescue (海上特种救援) ● Maritime Salvage (海上蛙人打捞) ● Maritime Ship Repair (海上船舶维修) ● Ship Equipment Repair (船舶装备维修) ● Maritime Engineering Rapid Repair and Construction Support (海上工程抢修抢建保障) ● Far Seas Defense (远海防卫) ● Deep Ocean Assistance and Support (深海支援保障) ● Maritime Overall Support (海上综合保障) ● Maritime Channel Opening (海上航道开辟)

Intelligence and Information (情报信息)	
% New-Quality (类型 = 新质)	New-Quality Units (分队) Responsibilities Include:
90% (9 out of 10 unit categories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Escort and Translation/Interpretation (向导翻译) ● Special Languages (特种语言) ● Big Data (大数据) ● Data and Information (数据信息) ● Information Support (Service) (信息保障(服务)) ● Smart Voice (智能语音) ● Information Countermeasures (信息对抗)

Special Assistance and Support (特种支援保障)	
% New-Quality (类型 = 新质)	New-Quality Units (分队) Responsibilities Include:
92% (23 out of 25 unit categories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special Sabotage Assistance and Support (特种破袭支援保障) ● Amphibious Operations Assistance and Support (两栖作战支援保障) ● Long-Range Attack Assistance and Support (远程打击支援保障) ● Airborne Operations Assistance and Support (空降作战支援保障) ● Intelligentized Operations Assistance and Support (智能化作战支援保障) ● Biological Assistance and Support (生物支援保障) ● Polar Assistance and Support (极地支援保障) ● Space Assistance and Support (太空支援保障) ● Cognitive Assistance and Support (认知支援保障) ● Unmanned Operations Assistance and Support (无人作战支援保障) ● Aviation Assistance and Support (航空支援保障)

Equipment Support (装备保障)	
% New-Quality (类型 = 新质)	New-Quality Units (分队) Responsibilities Include:
93% (25 out of 27 unit categories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mid-Air Fuel Support (空中油料保障) ● Engineering and Machinery Maintenance (工程机械维修) ● Special Vehicle Maintenance (特种车辆维修) ● (High) Artillery Equipment Maintenance (火(高)炮装备维修) ● Wheeled Armored (Vehicle) Equipment Maintenance (轮式装甲装备维修) ● Tracked Armored (Vehicle) Equipment Maintenance (履带式装甲装备维修) ● Radar Equipment Maintenance (雷达装备维修) ● Photoelectric Interference Equipment Maintenance (光电干扰装备维修)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chemical Defense Equipment Maintenance ((防化装备维修) ● Missile Maintenance (导弹维修) ● At-Sea Mobile Ship Repair (舰船海上机动修理) ● Ship Maintenance (船舶维修) ● Special Equipment Maintenance (特种装备维修) ● Special Equipment and Technology Support (特种装备技术保障) ● Special Electronic Installations Maintenance (特种电力设备维修) ● Airplane Equipment Maintenance (飞机装备维修) ● Military Motorboat Maintenance (军用汽艇维修) ● Roll-On/Roll-Off Ship Modification (滚装船改装) ● Tank Artillery Noise Reduction (坦克火炮降噪) ● Electronic Warfare Equipment Maintenance (电子战装备维修) ● Other High/New (Advanced) Equipment Maintenance (其他高新装备维修) ● Military Aerospace Equipment Maintenance (军事航天装备维修) ● Optical Instrument Equipment Repair (光学仪器装备修理)
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Network (Cyber) (网络)	
% New-Quality (类型 = 新质)	New-Quality Units (分队) Responsibilities Include:
100% (22 out of 22 unit categories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Network Attack (网络攻击) ● Network Security and Defense (网络安全防护) ● Public Opinion Propaganda (舆论宣传) ● Network Public Sentiment Monitoring and Guidance (网络舆情监控引导) ● Psychological Treatment (心理治疗) ● Network Maintenance (网络维管) ● Network Information Reconnaissance (网络信息侦察) ● Network Status Awareness (网络态势感知) ● Network Attack and Defense 网络攻防) ● Psychological Attack and Defense (心理攻防) ● Legal Struggle (法理斗争)

Reconnaissance and Intelligence Support (侦察情报保障)	
% New-Quality (类型 = 新质)	New-Quality Units (分队) Responsibilities Include:
100% (26 out of 26 unit categories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Reconnaissance (无人机侦察) ● Rotorcraft Reconnaissance (旋翼机侦察) ● Helicopter Aerial Reconnaissance (直升机空中侦察) ● Radio Detection (无线电侦测) ● Electromagnetic Spectrum Detection (电磁频谱侦测)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Electronic Countermeasures Reconnaissance (电子对抗侦察)● Charting and Navigation (测绘导航)● Meteorological and Hydrological (Information) Support (气象水文保障)● Target Posture Guidance (目标态势引导)● Escort and Translation/Interpretation (向导翻译)● Satellite Telemetry (卫星遥测)● Multi-Spectral Night Vision Equipment Support (多光谱夜视装备保障)● Special Intelligence and Reconnaissance (特种情报侦察)● Strategic Early Warning Assistance and Support (战略预警支援保障)● Military Aviation Assistance and Support (军事航天支援保障)● Fixed-Wing Aircraft Reconnaissance (固定翼飞机侦察)● Information Collection (信息侦搜)
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Source: *Thorne, "Inside China's National Defense Mobilization," p. 17-21.*

Appendix G: Summary of Key Findings Aligned with the Commission's Questions

Please provide an overview of China's national defense mobilization system.

- The PRC national defense mobilization system consists of national defense mobilization commissions (NDMC) at the national, provincial, prefectural, and county levels that are jointly led by civilian government and military authorities under the leadership of the CCP. At the national-level, for example, the NDMC is directed by the state premier and deputy directors are drawn from the Central Military Commission. NDMCs are supported by national defense mobilization working offices that perform work related to specific elements of national defense mobilization (e.g., an office for transportation mobilization will provide guidance, develop capacity, and align military requirements with available resources in that area of specialization). These offices are variably hosted and staffed by different civilian and military organizations and are not uniform across China. Since reforms in late 2022, new “national defense mobilization offices” have been created from the provincial to the county level to remove general administrative responsibilities from the military and place these responsibilities under development and reform commissions at the same level.

How has the Chinese leadership's view of the national defense mobilization system evolved over time? What problems have they previously identified with the system, what progress do they feel they have made in improving the system, and what obstacles do they believe still remain?

- Authoritative PRC government and military sources published since 2013 demonstrate recognition of significant organizational, procedural, and legal problems impeding the ideal functioning of the national defense mobilization system. Problems include 1) a confusing bureaucracy; 2) insufficient staffing and limited implementation, including inadequate adherence to legal obligations among officials and private citizens; 3) administrative overreliance on the military; 4) unreliable data on national resources; and 5) impediments to an effective militia force. Still, as early as 2016, Xi Jinping expressed confidence in the system. Authorities recognize continuing challenges in each of these areas, but likely assess that various reform efforts since approximately 2015 have strengthened the system. Authorities likely have moderate and increasing confidence in the system's ability to perform during a conflict.

How do civilian resources “fit in” to China's national defense mobilization system? Why do Chinese leaders not plan to solely rely on military organizations and resources in a conflict?

- The PRC's vast economic and industrial base offers significant civilian resources that authorities consider elements of PRC comprehensive national power. Through the national defense mobilization system, authorities plan for — and requisition civilian resources during — contingencies that military stockpiles and national strategic reserves are unable to manage (e.g., major conflicts or nation-wide emergencies). Additionally, the PLA assesses that integrating civilian capabilities into military logistics can “maximize combat capabilities, ensure peacetime efficiencies, and guarantee a constant state of combat readiness” as well as achieve “greater efficiency, flexibility, and timeliness.”

What types of civilian personnel and resources does China plan to leverage in a crisis or a conflict? How does it keep track of where these resources are and what organizations or intermediaries will be used to mobilize them?

- There are more than 4,000 different civilian resources that military authorities identify as relevant to national defense requirements. These include resources such as foodstuffs, medical equipment, construction materials, engineering equipment, transportation support specialists, legal services, broadcast infrastructure, cyberspace and artificial intelligence technologies, and overseas ports. To track these civilian resources, the national defense mobilization system conducts both regular and ad hoc surveys that draw data from local government departments, enterprises, working units, and social organizations. Mobilization of resources during a conflict involves the military requesting resources from the government and the government coordinating across many specialized offices to identify available resources and issue requisition orders to property owners. Where possible, authorities engage with enterprises, industrial parks, and other entities to prepare them for potential mobilization tasks ahead of a crisis.

Please discuss the role of “new-type militia forces” in China’s national defense mobilization. What tasks are they intended to carry out? What kind of professionals do they recruit? What industries do these militias exist in, and how many are there? How do these new-type militias interface with China’s military-civil fusion (MCF) framework?

- “New-type” or “new-quality” militia forces are intended to be capable of supporting the PLA in all domains, meeting the requirements of high-speed and high-tech modern warfare. They are created from high-skill professionals — including those from the private sector — in the information technology, communications, cybersecurity, software, electronics, robotics, aerial and undersea unmanned systems, “big data,” artificial intelligence, and other industries. During a conflict, they are most likely to be called to contribute to logistics, area defense, intelligence, and other support operations and offensive operations (such as in cyberspace) that can be carried out within PRC territory. Like the entire national defense mobilization endeavor, militias are an outcome of the MCF strategy that seeks to locate and make use of military-relevant resources and skills within the PRC’s civilian economic and social base. The total number of “new-type” militia forces nationwide is unknown.

Please address the extent to which the Chinese government can leverage its civilian transportation infrastructure—including high-speed rail lines, highways, and ports—for military purposes? What is the 2017 National Defense Transportation Law, and how have various levels of government within China worked to incorporate defense transport needs into their plans and activities after its passage?

- PRC government and military authorities likely have unlimited access and authority to use civilian transportation infrastructure for their purposes in a crisis or conflict. The only limits are likely physical and technical, such as the high-speed rail system’s likely inadequacy (which the PLA is likely working to remedy) for transporting heavy military cargo and weapons systems in some scenarios. The 2017 National Defense Transportation Law sought to strengthen the legal basis for authorities’ (especially the military’s) use of civilian infrastructure, including by further mandating that national defense requirements be considered during infrastructure construction. A wholistic assessment of how

authorities have incorporated defense transportation requirements into their plans requires more research, but lines of effort include preparing international cargo airports to support military needs, pre-enlisting and pre-modifying civilian vehicles like heavy truck cranes, and aligning train car design with military requirements. The law likely improved the ease with which the military can require civilian entities to accommodate military needs (e.g., design considerations and training), though implementation is not perfect.

What sorts of modifications would need to be made to civilian transportation networks to become suitable for military use, and to what extent would these modifications be observable to the U.S. government? Would civilian operators be compensated for the requisitioning and potential destruction of this infrastructure in wartime?

- Examples of modifications to PRC transportation networks since the 2017 National Defense Transportation Law include the creation of new dual-use terminals at ports, retention of out-of-use railways due to their military value, and addition of military-use infrastructure (e.g., stations and platforms) along railways and (likely) at airports. To a certain extent, these kinds of modifications may be visible to the U.S. government either through open-source reporting or satellite imagery. However, discerning military use from civilian use may be difficult, as many projects are inherently intended to be dual-use in accordance with the MCF strategy. Further research is required to understand the broader range of possible modifications to PRC transportation networks. Legal right to compensation covers transportation infrastructure, including damage to ports, airports, and train stations and (likely) the salaries of personnel required to operate such infrastructure.

How might transportation activity change in the lead up to a potential conflict scenario?

- Transportation mobilization for a large-scale joint operation, such as an invasion of Taiwan, would likely involve 3,000 train trips, 1 million vehicle trips, 2,100 aircraft sorties, and more than 8,000 ship voyages. Activity at this scale would likely generate detectable changes in transportation patterns and other activities within the PRC. The challenge is that most of the clearest signals of imminent threat in this sector will likely occur in relatively close temporal proximity to the onset of aggression (likely a matter of months). Signals outside of the transportation sector may be clearer or available on a longer timeline.

What role could China's private sector play in a potential conflict scenario? How might the Chinese government incorporate these firms and their activities into their military operations?

- PRC private enterprises are an important part of national defense mobilization, especially in relation to the production of advanced technology and related skilled labor. Private enterprises are likely to be mobilized to shift production or provide their staff to support logistics, maintenance, technology deployment, and other activities. Enterprises in fields such as equipment manufacturing; information communications; medicine; nuclear, biological and chemical surveillance; fire and disaster relief; “unmanned intelligence” (likely meaning drones); biomedicine; logistics; and warehousing are targets for the preparation of mobilization requirements in major cities. It is also possible for private sector

technical talent to be mobilized to support network (cyber) operations, though the command and control of civilians for this activity is unclear.

What are the implications of China's construction of civil air defense projects (such as air raid shelters) in recent years?

- PRC authorities are focused on maintaining, improving, and building new civil air defense infrastructure, including in Fujian province across the strait from Taiwan. This aligns with the national leadership's very likely assessment that the possibility of an armed conflict in coming years is increasing. However, many construction projects primarily related to economic or social development (e.g., schools or industry parks) are likely to include a civil air defense component (principally a basement that can be used for shelter) due to PRC law. This reduces the usefulness of civil air defense project construction as a signpost of an imminent threat. Civil air defense projects in Fujian province likely represent ongoing, long-term efforts to strengthen civil air defense infrastructure incrementally and improve NDM readiness broadly, rather than representing an urgent effort to brace for conflict in the short-term. In particular, authorities continue to focus on the dual defensive and commercial purposes of civil air defense projects (such as defensive facilities that are also developed for tourism), which is likely not indicative of construction motivated by an immediate threat.

The Commission is mandated to make policy recommendations to Congress based on its hearings and other research. What are your recommendations for Congressional action related to the topic of your testimony?

- Congress should consider directing or funding public research into understudied areas of the PRC national defense mobilization system revealed by the Commission's questions. See **Section VII** for a list of such topics. Greater attention to the subject would be beneficial to furthering the U.S. government and public's understanding of MCF, potential signposts of a looming conflict, and the forces the PRC will be able to bring to bear in a conflict. Congress should also consider passing (with amendments if needed) the Open Translation Center Act of 2024 (H.R.7942/S.4118) to help maintain and expand foreign access to key materials from the PRC government and broader PRC information space.

Appendix H: Civil Air Defense Projects in Fujian Province

The term “civil air defense project” (人防工程) refers to any underground protective structure used to ensure the wartime shelter of personnel and materials, civil air defense command, or medical rescue resources.³³⁸ Specific types of civil air defense projects include air raid shelters, tunnel engineering, command communications infrastructure, and underground hospitals. Since at least late 2020, Fujian provincial authorities and the authorities in cities such as Fuzhou, Xiamen, and Quanzhou have inspected, maintained, upgraded, and approved the building of new, civil air defense facilities; improved regulations and processes related to their construction, management, and supervision; and made efforts to improve civil air defense workforces and public education, including through the introduction of modern technologies.

Civil air defense projects in Fujian province likely represent ongoing, long-term efforts to strengthen civil air defense infrastructure incrementally and improve NDM readiness broadly, rather than representing an urgent effort to brace for conflict in the short-term. In cases of new construction, many projects are likely the by-product of national laws governing major construction in cities. The PRC’s Civil Air Defense Law and other regulations require that many civilian-use construction projects in urban areas include underground facilities (i.e., basements) that can be used as air raid shelters.^{339 340} Thus, many construction projects primarily related to economic or social development are likely to include a civil air defense component, which reduces the usefulness of civil air defense project construction as a signpost of an imminent threat. Further, as seen in the list below, part of recent civil air defense work in Fujian province has included continuing focus on converting existing infrastructure to serve dual defensive and commercial purposes, an element of MCF.

Still, PRC authorities are focused on improving civil air defense readiness.³⁴¹ This aligns with the national leadership’s very likely assessment that the possibility of an armed conflict in coming years is increasing. The following list of civil air defense projects in Fujian province is not exhaustive.

- March 2024 — The Xiamen National Defense Mobilization Office inspected more than 30 “early-stage civil air defense projects” (i.e., those originally built in the 1960s and 70s³⁴²) for their safety, potential for development, and other factors, with the goal likely being to ensure both continued use for civil air defense and commercial endeavors.³⁴³
- March 2024 — The Fuzhou National Defense Mobilization Office inspected civil air defense infrastructure in Yantai Mountain and discussed plans for converting it for commercial purposes (this would not preclude it continuing to function as a civil air defense facility).³⁴⁴
- June 2023 — Fuzhou completed phase one of a project to install “folding camouflage doors” (折叠伪装门) on line four of the city’s metro system, which is reportedly an important element of the city’s civil air defense infrastructure.³⁴⁵
- March 2023 — Fujian province published a description of “smart civil air defense,” suggesting this is a priority; “smart civil air defense” refers to incorporating civil air defense into smart city planning, leveraging data, cloud computing, and other technology for civil air defense purposes, and promoting

peacetime uses of civil air defense infrastructure to support development (such as by using shelters as parking garages).³⁴⁶

- January 2023 — Fujian provincial authorities issued a press release highlighting Xiamen’s success in civil air defense management reform to decrease administrative burdens (such as project approval times) and impact on people’s lives.³⁴⁷
- March 2023 — A Quanzhou district issued a list of eighteen construction projects with a likely civil air defense component that authorities approved in 2022; the projects include middle schools, health service areas, residential communities, industry parks, and other facilities. Each project was approved under regulations for the “construction of civil air defense underground rooms in new urban civilian-use buildings” (城市新建民用建筑修建防空地下室) or regulations related to “relocating” air defense facilities, both of which likely relate to provisions of the Civil Air Defense Law and other PRC regulations.³⁴⁸
- December 2022 — Fujian provincial authorities included a Fuzhou-based school construction project on a list of “prefabricated construction model project cases”; the school includes a civil air defense component, likely in accordance with the Civil Air Defense Law.³⁴⁹
- December 2022 — A Xiamen-based news outlet highlighted the city’s efforts to improve civil air defense, including through a new "Civil Air Defense Navigation" platform to aid citizens’ discovery of evacuation routes, upgrades to emergency broadcast systems and command infrastructure, renovations to “early-stage civil air defense projects,” and educational programs.³⁵⁰
- October 2022 — Quanzhou issued a call for civil air defense volunteers as part of efforts to address weaknesses related to civil air defense project ownership, maintenance management, and professional and technical strength.³⁵¹
- December 2021 — Fujian provincial authorities conducted “double random” inspections of ten operational or under-construction civil air defense sites according to policies implemented in November of the same year, finding faults in all but two sites; the faults ranged from mandatory personnel not being on-site, to administrative failures like missing paperwork, to failure to adhere to civil air defense construction standards.³⁵²
- September 2020 — Fujian provincial authorities visited Xiamen, Quanzhou, and Zhangzhou to investigate project statuses and management practices, emphasizing the need for strict management and quality supervision but also the importance of not allowing approval processes to cause delays.³⁵³

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