China's National Defense Mobilization System: Foundation for Military Logistics

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The People's Republic of China's (PRC's) national defense mobilization system is a vital component of its national defense strategy. The national defense mobilization system touches almost all aspects of the organizational infrastructure that supports the People's Liberation Army (PLA). This paper provides an overview of this system at the national and provincial levels, details how the system is expressed in the economic mobilization and transportation mobilization sectors that are critical to PLA logistics support, and recent changes to national defense mobilization laws. Finally, this paper discusses information systems that the PRC has built and is building to keep track of its mobilized and mobilizable resources and the improvements to the national defense mobilization system that are anticipated to result from these changes.

China's National Defense Mobilization System

Mobilization of civilian resources is critical to PLA logistics and to the sustainment of military operations. The PRC's national defense mobilization (国防动员) system is a centrally-planned, systematic effort to leverage the nation's entire resource potential to prepare for, support, and sustain national defense operations in war or emergencies. It is an extension of Mao Zedong's foundational concept of the "People's War"(人民战争), whereby the strength of the whole people is used to fight against the invaders and defend the nation. National defense mobilization involves mobilization of China's manpower, material, financial, infrastructure, industrial, science, and technology resources for wartime or other emergency requirements. It also involves generating necessary political and popular support for mobilization.

National Defense Mobilization Authorities

Responsibility for national defense mobilization formulation and implementation activities is divided between the State Council and Central Military Commission (CMC). According to the 2020 National Defense Law of China (中华人民共和国国防法), the State is required to incorporate national defense mobilization readiness into its overall development programs and plans in order to increase its potential and capacity for national defense." ⁴ The National Defense Law stipulates that on issues related to national defense mobilization, the State Council shall:

• Lead and administer national defense development, including planning, administration, budgeting, research, and production.

- Jointly with the CMC, lead the development of militias, conscription work, and administration of border defense, maritime defense, air defense, and defense of other critical security domains (for example, cybersecurity).
- Lead and administer economic mobilization and the development, organization, and implementation of civil air defense, national defense transportation, and other matters.
- Lead and administer the work of supporting the military, providing preferential treatment to the families of servicepersons and martyrs, and ensuring veterans benefits and services.⁵

The National Defense Law directs the CMC to lead the armed forces of the PRC, including management of armed forces mobilization and reserve work.⁶

To implement the actions stipulated under the National Defense Law, the State Council and the CMC are required to establish a mechanism for coordinating the resolution of major national defense issues. The 2010 National Defense Mobilization Law of the PRC indicates that for national defense mobilization, this coordination mechanism shall be the National Defense Mobilization Commission (NDMC) (国家国防动员委员会). The NDMC was initially established in 1994 under the leadership of the State Council and CMC to formulate defense mobilization policies, organize, direct, and coordinate national defense mobilization work for the PRC. Under the guidance of the NDMC, governments down to the county level form their own NDMCs to incorporate national defense mobilization requirements into their economic, social development, and combat readiness plans.

National Defense Mobilization Commission

As of early 2022, Premier of the State Council (中华人民共和国国务院) Li Keqiang (李克强) serves as the National NDMC Director, Secretary-General of the State Council Xiao Jie (**肖捷**) and Minister of National Defense Wei Fenghe (魏风和) serve as its Deputy Directors, and CMC National Defense Mobilization Department (NDMD) Director Lieutenant General Sheng Bin (盛斌) serves as the NDMC Secretary-General. The Secretary-General is responsible for assisting the NDMC leadership in planning, organization, and comprehensive coordination of national defense mobilization. In his capacity as NDMC Secretary-General, the CMC NDMD Director also leads the NDMC General Office which is responsible for national defense mobilization planning, policy formulation, regulatory research, organization and coordination, and secretarial services. As of 2018, the NDMC likely included the following organizations: 15

Table 1. 2017-2018 Composition of the NDMC

Relevant Departments of the Central Military	Central Organization Department (中国共产党中央委	
Commission	员会组织部)	
Central Propaganda Department(中国共产党中央委	State Commission Office for Public Sector Reform (中	
员会宣传部) ¹⁸	央机构编制委员会办公室)	
National Development and Reform Commission (国家	Ministry of Education (教育部)	
发展和改革委员会)		
TI W. LL. D. John	Ministry of Industry and Information Technology ($oxdot$	
Ministry of Science and Technology (科学技术部)	业和信息化部)	
Ministry of Public Security (公安部)	Ministry of Civil Affairs (民政部)	
Ministry of Justice (司法部)	Ministry of Finance (财政部)	
Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (人	Ministry of Natural Resources (中华人民共和国自然	
力资源和社会保障部)	资源部) ¹⁹	
Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development	Ministry of Transport (交通运输部)	
(住房和城乡建设部)		
Ministry of Commerce (商务部)	Ministry of Culture and Tourism (中华人民共和国文	
Willistry of Collinerce (Fig. 37 Fib.)	化和旅游部) ²⁰	
National Health Commission (国家卫生健康委员会) ²¹	State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration	
	Commission (国务院国有资产监督管理委员会)	
Ministry of Veterans Affairs (中华人民共和国退役军	N.C. ID (C.C.C. /国宗依法尺)	
人事务部)	National Bureau of Statistics (国家统计局)	
All-China Federation of Trade Unions (中华全国总工	Central Committee of the Communist Youth League	
会)	(中国共产主义青年团)	
All-China Women's Federation (中华全国妇女联合	Ministry of Emergency Management (中华人民共和	
会)	国应急管理部)22	

National defense mobilization work under the NDMC is organized along functional lines of effort which include:

- People's Armed Forces Mobilization (人民武装动员) Reserve and militia force construction, training, and combat readiness.²³
- Civil Air Defense Mobilization (人民防空) Mobilization and command of forces to protect critical facilities and respond to natural disasters, industrial accidents, epidemics, and attacks. Includes supervision of civil air defense engineering and construction,

including construction of hardened government command facilities and shelters to safeguard the population and critical materials.²⁴

- Transportation Mobilization (交通战备) Construction and use of transportation resources to support national defense requirements, including dual military-civilian use infrastructure and equipment; the security of national defense transportation routes and resources; and mobilization of transportation manpower and equipment resources. ²⁵
- National Economic Mobilization (国民经济动员) Transfer of the State's economic capacity from a peacetime to wartime state to meet the demands of a war, sudden incident, or emergency. Includes mobilization of industrial, agricultural, medical, information, science and technology, financial, industrial, material reserves, and associated manpower resources. ²⁶
- Information Mobilization (信息动员) Regulation of information resources, technology development, personnel training, infrastructure construction, and information management to support national defense requirements. Includes the appropriation and allocation of information resources, electromagnetic spectrum management, information security, and information networks. ^{27 28 29} Managed by the NDMC Information Mobilization Office (信息动员办公室)
- Political Mobilization (政治动员) Activities to mobilize the people and the army to participate in and support national defense mobilization. Includes use of mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet to carry out extensive propaganda campaigns to "arouse the patriotic enthusiasm of the army and civilians and create a strong atmosphere for participating in the war." Includes National Defense Education activities. 31

The NDMC has a number of working offices responsible for coordinating activities along each mobilization line of effort. The working offices are managed by standing military and civilian government organizations. The directors or deputy directors of these organizations are responsible for overseeing the operations of their assigned organization in addition to their mobilization duties. The each NDMC office likely has a small permanent staff to manage the military-civilian coordination activities associated with defense mobilization. These activities include mobilization planning and data collection, pairing military mobilization requirements with mobilization potential, inspecting defense mobilization work, drafting regulations and guiding documents, and collaborating with relevant institutions on improvements to defense mobilization systems.

Table 2. NDMC Working Offices

NDMC Office	Corresponding Military Managing Organization	
NDMC General Office (国家国防动员委员会综	CMC National Defense Mobilization Department General	
合办公室)	Office (中央军委国防动员部办公厅) 35	
National People's Armed Forces Mobilization	CMC National Defense Mobilization Department General	
Office (国家人民武装动员办公室)	Office (中央军委国防动员部办公厅) 36	
National Civil Air Defense Office (国家人民防	CMC National Defense Mobilization Department Civil Air	
空办公室)	Defense Bureau (中央军委国防动员部人防局) 37 38	
National Transportation War Readiness Office	CMC Logistics Support Department Transportation and	
(国家交通战备办公室)	Delivery Bureau (中央军委后勤保障部运输投送局)39	
National Economic Mobilization Office (国家经	National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC)	
济动员办公室)	Economic and Defense Coordinated Development	
,	Department (国家发展和改革委员会经济与国防协调发展	
	司) (Also known as NDRC National Defense Office (NDO)	
	(国家发改委国防司)40	
National Defense Education Office (国家国防教	CMC National Defense Mobilization Department Political	
育办公室)	Work Bureau (中央军委国防动员部政治工作局)41	

National Defense Mobilization Department

The CMC NDMD (中央军事委员会国防动员部), one of 15 organizations directly subordinate to the CMC, is responsible for national defense mobilization planning, coordination, reserve and militia force management, civil air defense and border defense operations, and command of provincial Military Districts (MDs) (省军区). 42 43 Established in 2015, the NDMD succeeded the former General Staff Department Mobilization Department, The NDMD leads the majority of national defense mobilization work, in coordination with the NDRC NDO. The NDMD includes the following organizations:

- General Office (中央军委国防动员部办公厅) Assists the NDMC in handling matters related to national defense mobilization, and manages the comprehensive planning, organization and coordination, theoretical research, and secretarial services for the NDMD. 44
- Political Work Bureau (政治工作局) Responsible for NDMD political work, including ensuring political reliability of NDMD personnel, human resource assignments, and political education. ⁴⁵ The director of the Political Work Department is concurrently the director of the NDMC National Defense Education Office. ⁴⁶
- Mobilization Recruitment Bureau (动员征集局) Responsible for military conscription and recruitment in collaboration with various PLA and State Council organs through the Joint Conference System of the National Recruitment Work.^{47 48} The director of the Mobilization Recruitment Department also holds the position of director of the Ministry of National Defense-subordinated Recruitment Office (征兵办公室).⁴⁹

- Militia Reserve Bureau (民兵预备役局) Manages militia and reserve force policy formulation, organization, and training. ⁵⁰ PLA militia and reserves were formerly controlled by the provincial Military Districts (省军区, MDs) but transitioned to the control of the NDMD in 2016. ⁵¹
- Border Defense Bureau (边防局) Responsible for national border and coastal defense work. ⁵² The Border Defense Department leads the National Border and Coastal Defense Committee (国家边海防委员会) in developing and promulgating policies relevant to border and coastal defense units of the PLA and the Ministry of Public Security. ⁵³ ⁵⁴ The NDMD Border Defense Department also likely collaborates with the NDRC to develop and deploy smart border and coastal defense systems. ⁵⁵
- Civil Air Defense Bureau (人防局) Responsible for coordination of civil defense tasks. The director of the Civil Air Defense Bureau serves concurrently as the director of the National Civil Air Defense Office (国家人民防空办公室), the administrative department responsible for organizing the masses to take protective measures for preventing or minimizing damage caused by air raids. These organizations are responsible for formulating civil defense policies, organizing and managing national civil air defense construction, and organizing and carrying out civil defense and related rescue operations. The second related rescue operations are responsible for organizing and carrying out civil defense and related rescue operations.

Theater, Provincial and Local Defense Mobilization

While the national-level NDMC and NDMD develop mobilization policies and plans, most mobilization activities occur at the theater level and below. Each Theater Command (TC) Joint Operations Command Center (战区联合作战指挥中心 JOCC) has a Theater Mobilization Bureau (战区动员局) in charge of reviewing mobilization needs within the Theater, as well as tracking mobilization activities conducted in the provincial MDs within the Theater. ⁵⁹

Below the TCs, mobilization activities are supervised by provincial NDMCs and MDs. NDMCs are established at every level of government down to the county-level to coordinate military-civilian national defense mobilization activities. Most national defense mobilization work is managed by provincial-level governments and associated NDMCs as well as through the provincial MD system. According to the commander of the Ningxia MD, the provincial NDMC is the highest executive-level organization responsible for the implementation of national and theater mobilization orders.

Provincial and below governments work collaboratively with provincial-MDs, through NDMCs, to match mobilization resource potential with military requirements, direct military-civilian dual use production and infrastructure construction activities, mobilize and deploy resources to support the military, and actively support joint operations. While provincial-level and below NDMC organizational structures resemble the national-NDMC, they vary across jurisdictions based on operational demands and a jurisdiction's distinct geographic, industrial, infrastructure,

and social characteristics.⁶³ Provincial-level NDMCs are led by the provincial party committee, with the General Secretary serving as director and the provincial governor and MD commander serving as NDMC deputy directors. ^{64 65} According to the commander of the Ningxia MD, provincial MD deputy commanders, the provincial government secretary general, and leaders of People's Armed Police (PAP) command in each province also participate in NDMC decision-making. These officials are responsible for determining national defense mobilization tasks, reviewing action plans, and organizing and directing national defense mobilization operations. ⁶⁶ Leaders from provincial party committees and government functional departments are included in NDMC deliberations as necessary to provide advise related to specific mobilization tasks. ⁶⁷

Provincial-level NDMC working offices include People's Armed Forces, Economic, Transportation War Readiness, Civil Air Defense, Information, Science and Technology, and National Defense Education Mobilization Offices. ⁶⁸ ⁶⁹ ⁷⁰ Provincial-level government offices are usually tasked to lead NDMC working offices, often with a deputy director assigned by the MD, to ensure effective military-civilian coordination. ⁷¹ For example, in Hubei Province the director of the provincial MD Combat Readiness Construction Bureau also serves as deputy director of the provincial Civil Air Defense Office to ensure mobilization activities support military requirements, and the military is appropriately leveraged to support local emergency response activities. ⁷²

Military Districts

Each MD headquarters is responsible for a single province or autonomous region and bears its province or region's name. MDs are responsible for military-civilian coordination within their jurisdiction, including mobilization planning, conscription, and management of militia units.^{73 74} MDs coordinate mobilization with provincial and below governments as directed by Theater Commands (TCs).⁷⁵ MDs are assessed by and receive policy guidance from the NDMD.⁷⁶ MD subordinate organizations include:⁷⁷

- General Office (办公室) supports the provincial-NDMC General Office, receives and aggregates mobilization requirements, quantifies and verifies mobilization capacity, formulates mobilization resource allocation and use plans, organizes and implements mobilization actions. May serve as the provincial NDMC General Office.
- Political Work Bureau (政治工作局) supports provincial political mobilization work, public opinion and legal struggle, cadre appointments, discipline inspection, propaganda, and national defense education work. The provincial MD political commissar acts as deputy to the provincial party chief in managing political mobilization.
- Combat Readiness Construction Bureau (战备建设局) organizes, training, and manages forces for mobilization operations, including security tasks by militia, public security, armed police, and counterterrorism organizations.

- National Defense Mobilization Bureau (国防动员局) manages mobilization requirements and collaborates with provincial offices to identify and assess local mobilization potential, to develop plans for mobilization of necessary resources.
- Support Bureau (保障局) organizes operational support, logistics support, and general support for national defense activities, including communications, cryptologic, hydrologic, meteorological, transportation, fuel, barracks, health services, and maintenance. 78

MDs command military subdistricts (MSD), aligned to prefectures, cities, and counties within the MD area of responsibility. MSD perform the same roles as MDs within their jurisdiction and supervise the activities of local People's Armed Forces Departments (PAFDs).⁷⁹ PAFDs are responsible for meeting local conscription quotas and formation of militias as directed by MDs and MSDs. PAFDs also assist in training and logistics support for units in their areas. Local PAFDs provide peacetime command for militia units in their areas of responsibility. County, city, and municipal PAFD headquarters are manned by active-duty PLA officers, while PAFD headquarters at township or subdistrict levels are led by local civilian cadres. ⁸⁰ 81

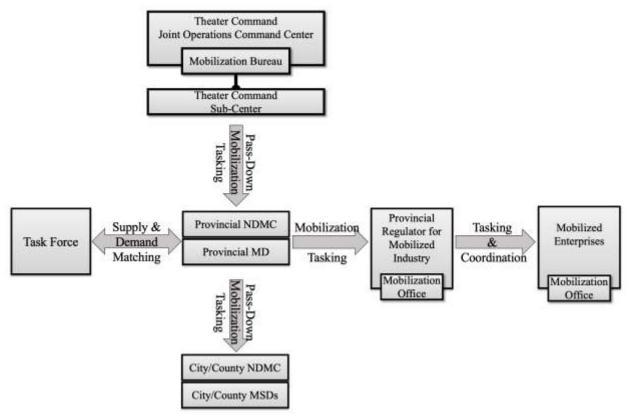


Figure 1: Provincial Mobilization and Command Flows⁸²

Mobilization Support to Military Logistics

The national defense mobilization system is a critical enabler of PRC military logistics operations. Through this system, the military can access necessary resources to support combat, emergency response, internal security, border and coastal defense, and other national defense activities. Military-civilian integrated development of support infrastructure and equipment, as well as civilian enterprise and professional technical support provide the military with logistics capacity without the expense of dedicated military investment. Dual-use programs and subsidized logistics related enterprises support national strategic goals of economic development while ensuring that national defense needs are met.

Economic Mobilization System

National economic mobilization is a series of activities that are implemented to meet the demand of war, sudden incident, or emergency, in which the state, in a planned and organized manner, converts national economic activity and corresponding systems from a peacetime to wartime state. ⁸³ Within China, economic mobilization is critical to supporting and sustaining PLA operations.

Economic Mobilization is led by the National Development and Reform Commission's (NDRC) Department of Economic and National Defense Coordinated Development (NDCD) (国家发展和改革委员会经济与国防协调发展司), often referred to as the National Defense Office (NDO) (国防司). The NDO is responsible for organizing the formulation of strategies and plans for promoting the coordinated development of the economy and of national defense construction (military-civilian fusion). ⁸⁴ The NDO also assumed the duties of the former NDRC national Economic Mobilization Office (EMO) in 2014, and the responsibility for leading economic mobilization work in the government system. ⁸⁵ The NDRC is the only NDMC leading body outside the PLA. ⁸⁶

Two NDRC Deputy Directors, Lian Weiliang (连维良) and Cong Liang (丛亮) are responsible for supervision of NDO activities as well as the activities of several other NDRC departments. ⁸⁷ Liu Ming (刘明) serves as NDO party secretary and is dual-hatted as director of the national EMO. ⁸⁸ ⁸⁹

The NDO is designed to serve as the central coordination mechanism for government ministries and institutions under the State Council. Development and Reform Commission (DRC) offices serve this function at provincial levels and below. These offices promulgate policies and standards for identifying the resources available for national defense mobilization and development of dual-use industries and infrastructure; prepare and implement economic mobilization plans; and coordinate economic mobilization drills, combat and emergency response activities. ⁹⁰ The NDO probably collaborates closely with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT), Ministry of Finance, National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Transportation, and State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) on economic mobilization issues. ⁹¹ ⁹² ⁹³ ⁹⁴ Provincial and below DRCs manage EMOs for their

jurisdiction and similarly coordinate with the provincial-level equivalents of these national-level institutions, as well as a number of other departments responsible for complementary functions. 95 96 97

Economic Mobilization Requirements Management Process

Economic mobilization requirements are submitted by the military both horizontally and vertically. Military units submit mobilization requirements to the MSD or MD in which the unit is garrisoned, is operating, or is transiting through. The MD is responsible for transmitting these requirements to the TC and for identifying those it is unable to support. TC will consolidate these requirements, attempt to balance resources across MDs to satisfy requirements, then transmit to the NDMD those requirements that cannot be satisfied. The NDMD, in collaboration with the CMC Logistics Support Department and Equipment Development Department, will identify unfulfilled mobilization requirements to the NDRC NDO, which will in turn coordinate across the government to mobilize the necessary resources. ⁹⁸

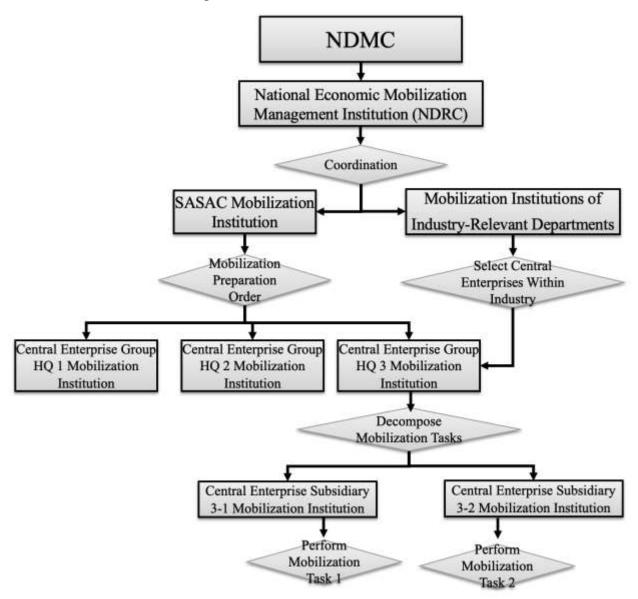


Figure 2: Central Enterprise National Peoples Economic Mobilization Procedures⁹⁹

Information and Industrial Mobilization

Information mobilization is a subset of economic mobilization and includes measures the state takes to mobilize civil information resources including production of dual use information technologies and equipment, mobilization of manpower resources to manage and protect the transmission of war-related information, and the mobilization of information technology products for wartime use. Similarly, industrial mobilization is the conversion of science and technology, chemical, energy, textile, food, medical equipment, and pharmaceutical manufacturing industries to a wartime state. In coordination with the NDRC, SASAC and MIIT are responsible for coordinating many of these mobilization activities.

State Owned Enterprises Mobilization

SASAC is responsible for supervising the state-owned assets of enterprises under the central government of the PRC (excluding financial enterprises) and for enhancing the management of state owned assets. ¹⁰³ The NDRC NDO coordinates with SASAC for the national defense mobilization work of 96 central State Owned Enterprises (SOEs), each of which operates dozens to hundreds of globally dispersed subsidiaries. ¹⁰⁴ ¹⁰⁵ According to an author affiliated with the Beijing Institute of Technology National Economic Mobilization Research Center, SASAC has established a mobilization agency to comprehensively lead and manage the economic mobilization work of the SASAC system. However, which SASAC organization has assumed these responsibilities remains unclear. ¹⁰⁶ ¹⁰⁷ Local SOEs also provide significant mobilization potential but are generally leveraged by provincial and below NDMCs.

SOEs form the core of the national economic mobilization system due to the CCP's ability to control their activities. SOEs also control a large market share of resources essential for national defense, including weapons production, petroleum, agricultural products, construction equipment, etc.; with a reliable product quality due to government oversight. In addition, many of these enterprises are involved in work that is directly related to national defense and national security. Therefore, effective oversight and military-civilian communications mechanisms have already been established. SOEs also have a relatively complete organizational system both to inform mobilization planning and to mobilize and deploy resources for contingencies. All central SOEs have Party Central Committees which serve as a conduit for the organization and direction of mobilization work. Most have emergency management regulations that outline emergency response procedures, organization, and responsibilities. These emergency response procedures can be easily used to coordinate mobilization to support wartime requirements. 109

In 2021, a researcher working for the NDRC's Economics and National Defense Coordination Development Research Center (经济与国防协调发展研究中心) laid out a rubric for how the NDRC classifies central SOEs based on economic mobilization potential according to the size and market-share. Beijing will prioritize economic mobilization, drawing resources from these enterprises first, as they have the greatest mobilization potential. 110 111

Table 3: Classification of central enterprises based on mobilization demand 112

Type	Coverage Process	Example	Field
Diamond- Level	Almost monopoly, completely covering mobilization needs	Various large military industry groups PetroChina, Sinopec, CNOOC China Telecom, China Mobile, China Unicom Aviation, Railway, China Communications Construction Corporation	Equipment Mobilization Refined Oil Mobilization Communications Mobilization Transportation Mobilization

Platinum-	Coverage of more than	1. COFCO	1. Food-Oil Mobilization
Level	50% of mobilization needs	2. Baowu and Anshan Iron and Steel	2. Steel Mobilization
		3. FAW, Dongfeng	3. Heavy Vehicle
			Mobilization
Gold-Level	Coverage of more than	1. Chinese Traditional Medicine	1. Medical Mobilization
30% of mobilization needs	2. China Resources Holdings Company	2. Foodstuffs, Drinking- water Mobilization	

Ministry of Industry and Information Technology

MIIT plays a significant role in regulating and managing China's telecommunications and software sectors, electronics and information technology manufacturing industries, and defense industries through its management of State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense (SASTIND) (国家国防科技工业局). The NDRC NDO coordinates with MIIT for economic mobilization of China's industries in a manner similar to SASAC's management of SOEs. The MIIT subordinate Operation Monitoring and Coordination Bureau (运行监测协调局) is responsible for monitoring and analysis of the industry and communications sectors, coordinating solutions for problems within these industries, managing emergencies, industrial security, and national defense mobilization work. MIIT's Information Communications Authority (信息通信管理局) is responsible for national defense communications information mobilization and readiness communications-related work. Which of these two offices is designated the national-level Information Mobilization Office (IMO) after the 2018 State Council reform is unclear.

IMOs are established by NDMCs at the provincial-level and below to draft information mobilization plans and regulations, coordinate mobilization resource potential surveys, manage information resource requisition, and coordinate wartime information support activities. IMOs are also responsible for the development, management, and security of national defense mobilization information systems and the telecommunications necessary for national defense mobilization and related military-civilian coordination. The provincial department assigned to collaterally serve as IMO is usually the Department of Industry and Information Technology (工业和信息化厅) 119 120 121 Communications support to mobilization activities is managed by the provincial Communications Administration (省通信管理局). 122

Economic Mobilization Centers

To rapidly mobilize critical material resources from the commercial sector to support wartime or domestic emergency response operations, Beijing has designated select SOE and commercial business units as Economic Mobilization Centers (EMCs). Most EMCs are designated large and medium-sized SOEs owned by local governments under SASAC oversight. This allows the state to fully leverage the products, personnel, technologies, processes, equipment, and facilities of these enterprises by requiring them to integrate national defense requirements into their business

framework. EMCs provide economic mobilization potential data to NDMCs and the PLA which form the backbone of mobilization potential databases.

EMCs are generally large enterprise groups that manage numerous subsidiaries at one or more locations. EMCs and their subsidiaries manufacture products that meet national defense material requirements, to support either military operations or domestic emergency response activities, and to maintain latent production capacity as well as the excess components, semi-finished products, and standard parts needed for rapidly surge production necessary to support contingency requirements. They maintain military-related technical data such as process diagrams in established databases and the information repositories needed to rapidly transition production from commercial to military-use. By registering and maintaining files on enterprise-affiliated technical and professional personnel, EMCs are also leveraged to identify personnel that may be mobilized to support wartime production, logistics, or front-line support activities. 124

This form of military-civilian fusion allows the government and military to optimize mobilization potential with reduced resource expenditures, and may benefit enterprises through government subsidies, preferential contracts, and endorsement. Further, EMCs enable efficient transfer of civilian high-technology resources, data, and expertise to the military as well as proliferation of military industrial technology into civilian enterprises. EMCs also facilitate collaboration and development of military-civilian dual-use technologies. ¹²⁵

An EMC may be designated as a "mobilization center" or "base" under the supervision of provincial, municipal, or city NDMCs that collaborate with local SASAC-affiliated officials through EMOs. For example, in 2009, SOE Taizhou Huaxin Pharmaceutical Investment Co., Ltd. (THPI), a subsidiary of Taizhou SASAC, and in partnership with the Taizhou municipal government and Jiangsu Province, built the Taizhou Medical High-Tech Industrial Development Zone (HTDZ) to serve as a national-pharmaceutical industry hub. ¹²⁶ ¹²⁷ The Zone was designated as a National Medical Mobilization Center (NMMC) (泰州国家医药动员中心) by the national EMO. ¹²⁸ Several dozen pharmaceutical companies, private enterprises and local SOEs, established production facilities within the Zone and were organized into a mobilization cluster consisting of "1 center, 4 departments, 5 bases, 24 enterprises." ¹²⁹ ¹³⁰ In September 2021, the Taizhou NDMC organized "Taidong-2021," to stand up the Taizhou Military and Civilian Joint Command and transition the Taizhou NMMC to a wartime state. ¹³¹ ¹³² ¹³³ During the exercise, the Taizhou NMMC organized affiliated pharmaceutical companies to deploy drugs and medical supplies to front line units using a business transaction platform developed by Jiangsu Huawei Pharmaceutical Logistics Co., Ltd., a SOE subsidiary of THPI. ¹³⁴ ¹³⁵

Transportation Mobilization System

The 2020 Science of Strategy describes the transportation requirements to support joint logistics support as "meeting the needs of joint operations transportation delivery, relying on the joint logistics support force itself or coordinating other military and local transportation forces, using roads, railways, water transportation, air transportation, pipelines and other means to complete various types in a timely manner." For the vast majority of these transportation delivery methods, the PLA relies on its ability to leverage civilian resources.

The NDMC's National Transportation War Readiness Office (TWRO) (国家交通战备办公室) is responsible for drafting guidelines and laws for national defense transportation work, planning defense transportation networks, and formulating defense transportation plans for major military operations and emergencies. The control of the CMC Logistic Support Department (LSD)'s Transportation and Delivery Bureau (中央军委后勤保障部运输投送局). The National TWRO coordinates with mobilization offices within the Ministry of Transportation and associated government ministries, and also transportation-associated state-owned enterprises. These organizations all have explicit national defense mobilization offices and responsibilities. These organizations all have explicit national defense mobilization offices and responsibilities. These organizations all have explicit national defense mobilization offices and responsibilities. These organizations all have explicit national defense mobilization offices and responsibilities. These organizations all have explicit national defense mobilization offices and responsibilities. These organizations all have explicit national defense mobilization offices and responsibilities. These organizations all have explicit national defense explicit national defense for civil transport to practice "dealing with the complex environment of wartime and non-wartime military operations." Similarly, the China Classification Society participated in drafting requirements for civil transport ships to be convertible to national defense purposes.

The 2019 Regulations on Civil Mobility National Defense Mobilization 144 and the 2016 National Defense Transportation Law set out the legal division-of-labor for national defense transportation mobilization. 145 Based on operational support requirements, the CMC LSD Transportation and Delivery Bureau in conjunction with the "National People's Economic Mobilization Authority" (presumably the NDMC Economic Mobilization Office) and the Ministry of Transportation collectively produce transportation mobilization requirements and submit them to the NDMC for approval. 146 147 These organizations also produce technical requirements for the production of civilian vehicles, rules for subsidizing their production, and requirements for vehicle inspection to confirm compliance. 148 The CMC LSD Transportation and Delivery Bureau produces the National Defense Mobilization Plan for Civil Transportation Capacity 149, and corollary plans are produced for each provincial MD and provincial government. 150 According to these plans, the CMC LSD Transportation and Delivery Bureau and the National People's Armed Forces Mobilization Office (国家人民武装动员办公室) prerequisition civilian transportation capacity to support future mobilization needs. 151

Theater and Provincial Transportation Mobilization

Many of the PLA's transportation and delivery operations happen within TCs. These operations are authorized by the TC JOCC. The JOCC directs military service-specific TC Sub-Centers (战 区作战分中心) to plan and supervise transportation and delivery operations, that in turn create a transportation Task Force specific to the operation. Task Forces apply for support from their TC's Joint Logistics Support Center (JLSC) (联勤保障中心) via their supervising TC Sub-Centers. The Each TC JLSC has Transportation and Delivery Dispatch Centers (运输投送调度中心), that command Military Representative Offices (MROs) (军代处) assigned to large transportation enterprises such as China Railways. Through these Transportation and Delivery Dispatch Centers, the transportation Task Force can utilize mobilized trains and other types of civil transport that are available to the Joint Logistics Support Force (JLSF). Through the service of the Joint Logistics Support Force (JLSF).

Transport tasks are managed by the TC Sub-Center using both military and civil communications channels to maintain C2. ¹⁵⁸ When using civil transport, in practice this means the TC Sub-Centers are often monitoring and controlling transport and delivery Task Forces using information provided by the JLSC Transportation and Delivery Dispatch Center, as well as the relevant provincial TWROs. ¹⁵⁹ ¹⁶⁰

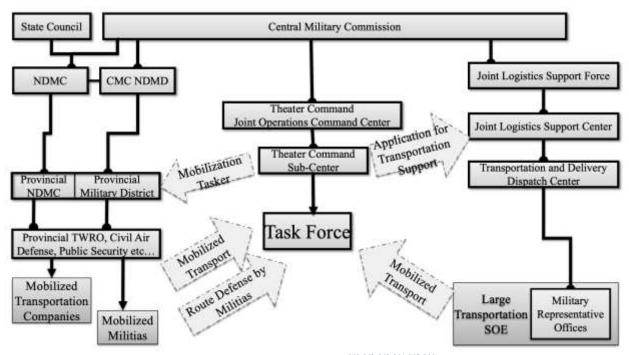


Figure 3: Chain of Command for Theater Transportation Mobilization 161 162 163 164 165 166

For example, ground transport Task Forces directed by one of the theaters' Ground Command Sub-Centers will include Theater JLSC MRO officers. The JLSC MRO officers will monitor rail traffic using existing China Railways-operated dispatching and operations networks. ¹⁶⁷ ¹⁶⁸ Such a Task Force could leverage mobilized militia and reserve units provided by the provincial MDs to guard railways and highways and manage traffic control. Civil Air Defense and construction teams may be dispatched to repair damaged transportation arteries as part of the Task Force. ¹⁶⁹

TCs also coordinate transportation and delivery operations with the provincial MDs within their jurisdiction and can requisition support from the provincial NDMCs in these districts. At the provincial level, responsibility for responding to requests from the TCs for transportation support are distributed among the provincial government NDRC, Department of Transportation, Civil Air Defense Office, Military-Civilian Integration Committee, and various other transportation departments. ¹⁷⁰ ¹⁷¹

In his analysis of provincial-level mobilization command, the commander of the Ningxia MD described the creation of special-purpose command organizations to support wartime transportation operations under the joint authority of the provincial Department of Transportation and the MD's Support Bureau Deputy Director. Such a group would include the provincial

NDMC's TWRO, Public Security Bureau, Civil Aviation Safety Supervision Management Bureau (民航安全监督管理局) and the provincial airport management group company, Railway MRO and Railway Bureau Group Company leadership, and the Highway Management Bureau. This group would be specifically responsible for the organization and command of transportation security and would coordinate the matching of requirements coming from the transportation operation Task Force to available resources. Lastly, it would coordinate with county or municipal NDMCs if local transportation or logistics resources are needed to support the transportation operation. 172

An example of this working in practice can be found in an article describing an JLSF transportation exercise conducted by the Northern TC in 2019. According to the article, the TC's JLSC supplemented its transportation security forces with non-uniformed local security forces provided by municipal Military-Civilian Integration Development Council Offices. (军民融合发展委员会办公室). In this article, the Deputy Director of the Northern TC's Transportation and Delivery Dispatch Center said that the JLSC's MROs have a role in coordination of local resources, presumably working through the Provincial NDMCs and their respective MDs. ¹⁷³

Transportation Mobilization Support for the PLA Air Force and Navy

Just as in the case of ground-based transportation and logistics, the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and PLA Navy (PLAN) utilize mobilized civil transportation resources. For example the PLAAF has a strategic projection support fleet of civil planes that have been mobilized to help organize emergency transportation missions, such as evacuation missions in Libya and Bali. Similarly, the PLA has established relationships with Chinese logistics firms such as SF Express Group (原丰速运), JD Logistics (京东物流), and Deppon Express (德邦物流). In 2017 SF Express Group signed an agreement with the PLAAF to support transport and logistic missions utilizing cargo aircraft affiliated with its subsidiary SF Airlines.

The PLA has similar agreements with Chinese shipping state owned enterprises. According to discussions in Party-affiliated newspapers, there had historically been a reluctance in the PLA to use maritime shipping, but over the past decade the PLA has regularly utilized civil shipping in emergency operations and military exercises. ¹⁷⁸ When using mobilized maritime transport, PLA transportation Task Forces and their supervising TC Sub-Centers use military C4 systems placed on-board mobilized civil vessels as well as civil ship tracking systems (such as AIS) to track and command seaborne transit. ¹⁸⁰ That said, PLA authors have publicly identified perceived weaknesses in the PLA's processes for mobilizing civil shipping. For example, PLA academics have argued for China to improve mechanisms for mobilizing state-owned merchant ships, even those with foreign flags-of-convenience, while at the same time building incentives for Chinese-owned shipping to operate under a Chinese flag. ¹⁸¹ Similarly, PLA academics have encouraged regularizing the supervision of mobilizable civil shipping, to include specialized training for ships and crews available to the PLA. ¹⁸²

Legal Reform and Enduring National Defense Mobilization Constraints

Despite recent military and State Council reforms, PLA academics have argued that China's national defense mobilization system remains hampered by unclear definition of powers and responsibilities for wartime mobilization, inefficient operational support linkages, and insufficient connections between the TC and mobilization offices. ¹⁸³ On October 24th 2021, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress announced that it planned to amend and improve provisions of the National Defense Mobilization Law, the Civil Air Defense Law, the National Defense Transportation Law and the National Defense Education Law. ¹⁸⁴ In the weeks following this announcement, the MD party committees of various provinces announced they had held their own meetings to discuss delegated guidance. ¹⁸⁵ ¹⁸⁶ ¹⁸⁷

Short of public release of the updated regulations, the most authoritative insights into the changes to the laws come from interviews of key leadership. For example, according to a recent interview of JLSF Deputy Director Bai Zhongbin, the National Defense Transportation Law was updated in 2021 in the following ways:¹⁸⁸

- 1. New rules related to national defense transportation planning and strategic delivery, rules related to the conversion from peacetime to wartime, and definitions of the organization and command structure in wartime. Enterprises and institutions operating overseas will provide transportation and strategic delivery support.
- 2. Improvements to the working mechanisms for "market-oriented policy support" and clarification of "responsibilities and rights, incentives and constraints." For example, "the increased cost of civil delivery vehicles due to the implementation of national defense requirements shall be borne by the state". ¹⁸⁹
- 3. Specified funding rules and determination of national defense transportation freight rates. "Expenses incurred by citizens and organizations in completing national defense transportation tasks shall be paid by the user-unit" at a rate not lower than market price. ¹⁹⁰

Though the specific amendments planned to the 2021 legal changes relevant to national defense mobilization have not been publicly released as of the writing of this report, discussion of the weaknesses of China's national defense mobilization system are fairly widespread in both Chinese state and PLA media sources. By investigating the mobilization system's perceived weaknesses, it is likely one can predict the direction of future legislative reforms and administrative changes.

Emphasis of Continued National Defense Mobilization Reforms

Chain of Command

One of the few specific goals of the 2021 adjustments to the defense mobilization laws is a review of the "military-local coordination link" (军地协调链路). 191 The existing legal framework does not establish a clear chain of command between military leaders and local

authorities. The 2010 National Defense Mobilization Law delegates the "organization, direction and coordination" (组织,指导,协调) of national defense mobilization activities to the MD and NDMCs, but the management (管理) of mobilization work is conducted by the provincial and local governments. According to PLA academics, in practice uncertain chains of command has led to bureaucratic infighting and has inhibited the development of organizational experience. 193

Uncertainty in the administration of mobilization can be seen in the divergent ways the chain of command for the defense mobilization system is described by PLA and party leadership. For example, according to the commander of the Ningxia MD, the MD and NDMCs set requirements for the government to deliver. However, he then goes on to say that the specific structure of the relationship should be flexible and responsive to the specific mission. ¹⁹⁴ In comparison, according to the Secretary of the Gansu Provincial Party Committee, the provincial party committee supervises the mobilization work within the provincial MD that the government is in charge of, with the PLA's role being largely one of coordination. ¹⁹⁵

Economic mobilization in particular, continues to lack institutional mechanisms necessary for efficient large-scale mobilization in crisis. No economic mobilization organization has been established under the CMC or NDMD to manage requirement submissions in a unified manner. The CMC LSD and Equipment Development Department are responsible for organizing logistics mobilization and equipment requirements for the entire military but also lack specialized mobilization organizations, awareness, and control over mobilization requirements levied at various levels. Further, mobilization offices throughout the system consist primarily of personnel working mobilization duties as a collateral assignment, with only a small number of full-time cadres struggling to carry out mobilization tasks in competition with other government priorities. ¹⁹⁶ ¹⁹⁷

NDMCs, and DRCs in particular, lack organizational consistency, with a great deal of variance in the offices assigned national defense mobilization responsibilities across the government. This restrains standard mobilization procedures across provinces and TCs. Further, the scope of responsibilities for military commands and government organizations at every level are unclear, as is an understanding of how those responsibilities alter in war or emergencies. This results in both overlaps and gaps in mobilization actions. ¹⁹⁸

Economic mobilization is also hindered by a lack of standards for mobilization requirements submissions and collection of national defense mobilization potential. Office responsibilities for the management of this information are not standard among levels of government and across TCs and provinces. The same is true of information systems used to support these activities. ¹⁹⁹ ²⁰⁰ Additionally, sources claim that existing military and civilian standards are not compatible. This leads to unrequited expectations by the military regarding the civil-sectors' ability to support wartime needs.

In an article in PLA Daily in 2020, the director of the Tianjin Garrison District Mobilization Bureau discussed recommended changes to the chain of command within the mobilization system (Autonomous cities like Shanghai Tianjin and Chongqing have Garrison Districts rather than Military Districts, but still directly report to the NDMD). He argued that the mobilization

law should establish clearer definitions of which aspects of the PLA organization or other parts of the State are responsible for identifying requirements for the mobilization system to fill. He also argued that the process for evaluating and enacting mobilization requirements should be clarified at the national level and improved by leveraging the expertise of national institutions in coordination with the NDMC.²⁰¹ Though it is difficult to gauge to what degree the author is giving voice to the "party line" as far as the trends of legal reform are concerned, the Tianjin Garrison District has been lauded for its promulgation of local regulations used to solve contractions in the defense mobilization system by at least one PLA academic.²⁰²

Public Awareness and Legal Enforcement

Arguably the most consistent theme in discussions of perceived weaknesses of the national defense mobilization system is lack of public awareness. PLA and national security academics have discussed this issue at length, as have publications from provincial MDs and municipal MSDs. ^{203 204 205 206} Public reports of inspections claim that officials frequently have a poor understanding of the contents of the National Defense Mobilization Law and the associated responsibilities. Even amongst mobilization workers, there are reported uncertainties regarding the extent of the system's powers compared to its responsibilities. ²⁰⁷ In this vein, PLA academics have expressed concerns that the enforcement mechanisms for defense mobilization work are too vague, and occasionally in conflict with existing law enforcement. ²⁰⁸

A report from the Changde municipal MD complains that many cadres interpret mobilization rules as applying only to military officials rather than to themselves. ²⁰⁹ It is likely for similar reasons that a public report of the Yunnan Provincial MD Party Committee spent a full paragraph emphasizing Provincial Party Chairman Wang Ning's (王宁) admonition of the committee, emphasizing that it is "a political requirement and a political responsibility for local party committees and governments at all levels to serve national defense and military construction." ²¹⁰ It is unlikely that concern over this perceived lack of commitment to defense mobilization would have been publicized were it not considered a serious issue by national defense mobilization leadership.

Discussions of perceived low public awareness in PLA media sources are frequently followed by requests to expand enforcement capacity. It is likely that the discussion of low public awareness is a cover for widespread avoidance or violation of mobilization requirements. There are many reasons why commercial firms, even state-owned ones, would be reluctant for their firms and resources to be available to the PLA, even with claims in the law that PLA units will pay market price for those resources. To help deal with this, it appears the mobilization system is stepping-up its enforcement activities. In recent years, provincial and local mobilization officials set up "comprehensive law enforcement brigades" (综合执法大队) to help both expand public awareness and clarify cadres legal responsibilities once society is mobilized. These brigades conduct joint military-civilian law enforcement inspections to ensure that relevant work units are complying with mobilization laws. Moreover, 2019's "Regulations on Civil Transportation National Defense Mobilization" laid out specific fines and vague criminal penalties for individuals found to violate mobilization regulations related to pre-requisitioned vehicles and related equipment. Similarly explicit penalties and processes are likely to be

found in regulations and laws related to other parts of the defense mobilization system. Future adjustments to the defense mobilization-associated laws will likely include expanded emphasis on propaganda and political work, and more explicit consequences for non-compliance across the defense mobilization system.

Information Systems to Enhance the Efficiency of National Defense Mobilization

Beijing is focused on enhancing national defense mobilization through the introduction of new information technologies. National defense mobilization offices at varying levels are exploring the use of technologies to dynamically acquire information on the location of mobilization resources and manage its distribution using cloud computing, "smart city" technologies, geospatial information system technologies, mobile digital platforms, and to use big-data analysis platforms to optimize mobilization requirements and assignments. Mobilization offices are also experimenting with methods for ensuring the secure transmission of mobilization plans and requirements from military information systems to government information systems. 216

Building Total Asset Visibility and Precision Logistics

NDMCs aspire to use information systems to rapidly identify and locate mobilization resources and direct their deployment to support national defense requirements through interconnected and secure military-civilian mobilization command systems. PLA authors have broadly discussed their perceived need to link the relevant data systems of the many organizations involved in logistics activities supporting PLA operations. Organizations like the Ministry of Transport's China Transportation & Telecommunication Information Center (CTTIC, 中国交通通信信息中心) have established agreements with the PAP and likely the PLA to provide emergency communications and monitoring information for China's transportation and logistics systems. That said, it is unlikely that the PLA has established a holistic nationwide system for mobilizing and dispatching China's logistic resources. Such a platform would permit JLSCs and TC SubCenters to have full visibility into transportation and logistics operations, even those being managed by civil enterprises and government organs. 219

At the provincial level, Chinese IT firms are adjusting GIS-based surveillance and dispatching systems for national defense mobilization purposes. One such company, the Geovis Technology Co., Ltd. (中科星图股份有限公司), has developed a National Defense Mobilization Platform that is reportedly in use by at least some provincial MDs. This system reportedly displays information related to military personnel mobilization, economic mobilization, civil air defense mobilization, transportation mobilization, and medical and health mobilization. ²²⁰ Shanxi Cloud Era Technology Co. Ltd. (山西云时代技术有限公司) reportedly has developed a similar platform, with similar functions that are used in Shanxi. Mobilization offices are also working to enhance real-time mobilization command through wired and wireless technologies, use of visualization platforms, and cloud-computing technologies. ²²²

National defense mobilization officials also seek to harness smart city technology to identify, mobilize, and dispatch mobilization resources. For example, the PLA has lauded the application

of 5G and smart city systems in Shenzhen for defense mobilization purposes. Shenzhen's smart-city operations centers collect and share national defense mobilization potential data, down to tracking locations of 18 year-olds for recruitment purposes. Similarly, data on party members and retired soldiers is collected and shared for militia formation purposes. ²²³

While pilot sites have been established, efforts continue to be constrained by poor mobilization data collection, generally due to offline data collection methods and disparate, stove-piped, non-standard local mobilization potential databases. There is a broad lack of interconnection between military and civilian sectors or interconnection vertically between responsible organizations at each echelon. Supporting information systems and supporting communications networks vary greatly by geographic area and functional sector, hindering data-integration initiatives. ²²⁴

In 2017 JD Logistics (京东物流) signed an agreement with the PLAAF to act as a logistics and procurement supply chain management platform. The firm built a logistics information platform for the PLAAF Logistics Department to provide real-time data access for its material provision services to the PLA.²²⁵ This platform is used to coordinate logistics for PLAAF bases across China.²²⁶ Similarly, Deppon Express (德邦物流) began working with China Ordinance Industry Group, China's primary ground-weapons development and production SOE, to update its supply chains and logistics systems.²²⁷ In effect, this agreement gives it a key role in ensuring that munitions and weapons-systems make it from factories to JLSF warehouses.

As in other aspects of governance in China, improvements to transportation mobilization are tested at the provincial level before being rolled out nationwide. Starting in 2013, the Guizhou Provincial TWRO began developing a dispatch command platform for mobilizing civilianowned trucks. Based on a similar Uber-for-truckers like platform produced by Huochebang Technology Co. Ltd. (货车帮科技有限公司), the Civil Mobility (Freight) Mobilization Resources Information Platform (民用运力(货车)动员资源信息平台) app and its associated data and command center are used by the provincial NDMC TWRO to select and dispatch trucks and drivers for national defense and emergency response tasks, then track their progress along their routes. ²²⁸ ²²⁹ The app appears to leverage data on trucks from Huochebang's commercial app to maintain a database of over 5 million drivers. Much like other mobilization potential databases, the platform maintains data on vehicle capabilities and on the drivers' political reliability (possibly from their Social Credit Score) and service histories. ²³⁰ In 2017 the platform was used to mobilize 4,706 drivers to help respond to an earthquake in Sichuan. ²³¹

Following its platform's perceived success in Guizhou, in 2017, the National TWRO contracted Huochebang to build out the program nationally, likely in collaboration with CTTIC. 232 233 If this expanded Transportation Warfare Readiness Civil Mobility (Truck) Mobilization Potential Real-time C2 Dispatching Platform (交通战备民用运力(货车)动员潜力实时掌控与指挥调度平台) is modeled after Huochebang's existing systems, it is likely hosted on Huochebang's systems using AliCloud Big Data Group (阿里云大数据团). 234 This system has reportedly been used over the past two years to deliver emergency supplies to areas quarantined due to the coronavirus. 235 Huochebang-associated researchers have suggested the system may eventually be

used the national Comprehensive Transportation Big Data Center (综合交通大数据中心) announced in 2019. ²³⁶ ²³⁷ ²³⁸

Harnessing Mobilization Potential Data

A key element of China's mobilization system is its collection of mobilization potential information. Starting with 2007's National Defense Mobilization Potential Statistical Survey Regulations (国防动员潜力统计调查规定), the NDMC, in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics, has conducted annual surveys to assess China's mobilization potential. NDMCs at all levels of government are responsible for these surveys. 239 240 241 However, since 2019, PLA authors have highlighted the need to further reform mobilization potential data collection processes. Data has historically been collected as a neglected collateral duty by cadres using out of date indices and without simple method of data audit. These faults have resulted in mobilization potential data collection that is not considered reliable by PLA leadership. 243

According to Sichuan Province NDMC officials, as of 2016 Sichuan Province's national defense mobilization potential data was mainly unstructured data composed of text, images, and report forms and lacked space attribute and location information. The database is two-dimensional, whereby various file types are linked with attribute records through commercial databases. This allows planners to understand the quantity and location of resources available for mobilization but does not enable them to visualize this data for rapid and dynamic planning. To geospatially view and interact with mobilization potential data, planners are working to include geographic information data and thematic data (such as traffic readiness, economic mobilization information, data transmission and exchange, social resource data, armed forces, equipment data). Data integration will be enhanced by implementation of standardized coordinate systems, naming rules, classification codes, and symbols. The data should be managed centrally through decentralized inputs and be compatible with a variety of data formats.

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Pursuant to the goal of improving data sharing and tracking of mobilization potential, calls have been made in PLA publications to establish a National Defense Mobilization Potential Big Data System (国防动员潜力大数据系统). This system would aggregate data from government and SOE databases at national and local levels allowing users access with differing authorities and would push data to PLA joint operations databases to facilitate potential-to-requirement matching. ²⁴⁷ ²⁴⁸

According to a data engineer working for the NDMD, one of the goals of this system is to simplify the previously error-prone manual data collection process used to aggregate mobilization potential data. According to this engineer, a pilot mobilization potential data system was established in the Anhui in 2018, collecting data from 30 unspecified provincial and national-level data systems. The engineer indicated that incompatible data standards among government agencies could slow the nationwide application of such a system and called for legal reform to enforce compliance with unified mobilization data standards and improved data sharing.²⁴⁹ These calls have been echoed elsewhere in PLA media, and by academics and PLA officers across the mobilization system. ²⁵⁰ ²⁵¹ ²⁵² ²⁵³

Leveraging Big Data for Mobilization

Chinese national defense researchers cite the need to examine big data mining and analysis technologies for the analysis of massive amounts of mobilization data and to build a hardware environment and software models for precise processing and analysis to needed to formulate the management of contingency plans. Researchers also cite the need to examine mobile video, satellite positioning, Internet-of-Things sensing technologies, and intelligent open-source analysis and prediction technologies to maintain situational awareness of resources throughout the mobilization process. ²⁵⁴ Per an article in Xinhua, data should be aggregated in a central National Defense Big Data Center (国防动员大数据中心), permitting advanced analytics of transnational data sets provided by SOEs and provincial and local governments. ²⁵⁵ Since the outset of the Covid-19 epidemic, China has been strengthening its emergency response data analytics capabilities, in part to better support it's zero-covid containment strategy, and in part to expand its capacity for defense mobilization in wartime. ²⁵⁶ That said, no evidence was found in the development of this paper that China has deployed a nationwide system for mobilization data aggregation that meets all PLA requirements.

Conclusions

China's national defense mobilization system remains a work-in-progress. In recent years, there have been significant reforms intended to ensure the mobilization system is capable of rapidly providing civil manpower and resources. Legal changes have put greater emphasis on the PLA's ability to dictate requirements to government agencies, SOEs and companies. In parallel, the national defense mobilization system at the provincial and municipal level has grown more experienced at supporting the PLA. Military exercises and emergencies including but not limited to Covid-19, have given much-needed experience to the economic and transportation mobilization organs of the system. And throughout, the system has grown to exploit the capabilities of China's commercial sector to improve the capabilities of its logistics systems.

PLA officers and academics discussing the mobilization system in detail almost uniformly highlighted the system's remaining deficiencies even as they laude its improvements. Though China continues to provide increasingly detailed laws and regulations that provide guidance on the mobilization system, it is not clear that this growing body of rules will successfully standardize and unify the various branches of the mobilization system. PLA authors envision a mobilization switch that can rapidly transition society to a wartime footing without significant hiccups. Massive bureaucracies would nimbly shift to answering to new chains of command. Mobilization C2 systems would provide MD commanders, TCs, and national commanders with full visibility into the PLA's requirements and society's capacity to supply those requirements. Realizing this will require its prioritization by ministries and enterprises currently occupied with responsibilities other than establishing smooth mobilization processes.

In general, China's national defense mobilization system is designed to support national defense mobilization activities within China and along its periphery, including the deployment and sustainment of forces along interior lines of communication. While national defense mobilization legislative reforms will likely include provisions to improve the PRC's ability to mobilize resources internationally to support external PLA operations, integrating those mechanisms with a still-troubled domestically-focused national defense mobilization system will likely experience significant challenges. The pilot programs to build dynamic mobilization information systems demonstrate the PLA's goal of building omniscience into the mobilization system are no less grand than the People's Bank of China's designs for digital-yuan financial omniscience or the Ministry of Public Security's goal of smart-city omniscient urban control. These goals will likely prove difficult to achieve in full, but even imperfect reform may lead to a stronger mobilization capacity to support the PLA.

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⁸ Article 12, "National Defense Mobilization Law of the People's Republic of China," 26 February 2010, accessed at http://www.chinanews.com.cn/gn/news/2010/02-26/2141912.shtml

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¹² '盛斌:首任国防动员部部长, 49 岁被授少将, 58 岁升中将,现今 63 岁 [Sheng Bin: First Director of National Defense Mobilization Department, was awarded major general at the age of 49, promoted to lieutenant general at the age of 58, and is now 63 years old]'; sunnews.cc/; 02 Dec 2021; https://sunnews.cc/military/231312.html accessed on 06 Jan 2022; (Source ID 123509)

^{13 &#}x27;军委国防动员部部长盛斌兼任国家国防动员委员会秘书长 [Sheng Bin, Director of the National Defense Mobilization Department of the Central Military Commission, also serves as the Secretary General of the National Defense Mobilization Committee]'; thepaper.cn; 06 Dec 2016;

¹⁴ Hua Hao 华昊; '改革开放以来我国国防动员法规建设的实践与启示 [Practice and Enlightenment of China's National Defense Mobilization Law Construction Since Reform and Opening Up]'; National Defense (国防); (Source ID 489268)

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