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# *China and the U.S.: Cooperation, Competition and/or Conflict*

## An Experimental Assessment

### PART FIVE: KEY AREAS OF U.S. MILITARY FOCUS

Working Draft  
Revised October 1, 2019

Photo: GOH CHAI HIN/AFP/ Getty Images

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# Key Areas of U.S. Military Focus

The previous sections have already shown that China's present and future ability to cooperate, compete and fight a conflict can be seen from many different perspectives – and that China's present strategy is focused more on economic growth and the development of fully competitive modern forces than any form of conflict. At the same time, it is clear that the U.S. now sees China as its key peer in both civil and military terms, and that its strategy focuses on competition and possible conflict, rather than cooperation.

China's white papers do not yet directly address these aspects of U.S. strategy, but it is clear from the military charts and data that follow that Chinese military developments have focused on the U.S. as a competitor and potential threat in similar ways for well over a decade. It is also clear that China is shaping the rises in its military expenditures — and its plans to acquire parity or superiority in military technology — around its assessments of U.S. plans and capabilities. Once again, in the real world, grand strategy does not consist of what nations say, but rather of what they actually do.

Accordingly, this section of the report introduces the analysis of China's perception of its strategic goals, possible threats, and the development of its military forces by outlining U.S. perceptions of China's expanding role in the Pacific, the developments in U.S. strategy and forces, and how the U.S. is shaping its forces in the present military balance. It does not attempt a full net assessment, but it does attempt to provide the context necessary for a paper that focuses on U.S. and Chinese strategic competition.

It is important to note, however, that the following sections focus on China's regional concerns as well as U.S. and Chinese strategic competition, and how its rising power affects its military capabilities relative to Asian states and its ability to protect its status as a major economic and trading power.

It also concludes by providing an overview of open source data on the developments in each key aspect of Chinese military forces – many of which are driven by the need to deter and potentially fight U.S. forces, but many of which are also driven by China's need to deal with regional powers and by unique Chinese approaches to grand strategy, strategy, and tactics.

**U.S. Military Forces Affecting  
(and Affected By)  
China, the Pacific, the South  
China Sea, and Indian Ocean**

# **U.S. Military Forces Affecting China, the Pacific, the South China Sea, and Indian Ocean**

The previous charts and tables showing the comparative size of Chinese, Russian, and USA forces have focused on the total global strength of each power. In practice, deterrence, hybrid operations, asymmetric warfare, conventional warfare, and nuclear warfare all have one thing in common. There is virtually no chance that a scenario will arrive where global or major regional power use all of their forces, and the total military balance determines the outcome.

This is particularly true of the United States. It works closely with strategic partners. It has major deployments in the U.S. that would take time to bring to readiness and deploy, and major deployments in most regions of the world that it must sustain in part in most conflicts that involve other regions. Accordingly, any comparison of U.S. and Chinese military power must focus initially on the forces the U.S. already has in Asia and the Pacific and the role a given strategic partner would play in a given scenario, plus the power projection forces the U.S. might deploy from the Continental U.S. and other regions.

There is no clear way to show the full range of U.S. forces that might be involved in a confrontation or conflict with China, but the U.S. does have a set of forces that are clearly focused on Asia and the Pacific called the United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM). The charts in this section that display unclassified estimates of these forces by the U.S. command and the IISS provide a broad picture of the military capabilities the U.S. would draw upon in anything short of a general war, although the U.S. would probably deploy significant elements of its forces stationed in the U.S. to meet the needs of a given crisis or conflict. The following tables and charts describe these forces, their size, and their deployments. They also describe some near-term priorities for force improvement which provide useful insights into how the U.S. is reacting to China's military progress.

The final graphics show the location and function of key U.S. bases and a sample year of U.S. military exercises. These graphics both provide a picture of U.S. regional capabilities and of some of the reasons that China sees the U.S. position in the Pacific as being a potential threat.

It should be noted that the U.S. has never provided exact details on its efforts to build up its forces in the Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) — and related power projection forces based in the U.S. — since it first announced a “pivot to East Asia” and then a “rebalancing to Asia” in 2012. It has, however, been increasing selected aspects of its forces in Asia since 2015 — initially as a reaction to the collapse of the FSU and Warsaw Pact and then to the rise of China. The U.S. FY2018, FY2019, and FY2020 do not describe such a force building and increases in readiness in detail, but many elements of these annual budget requests do reflect increasing U.S. forces, force modernization, and improvements in global U.S. power projection capability.

The maps showing U.S. bases do not include every local deployment, but are accurate pictures of the location of major bases. Here, it should be stressed that the Pacific covers a vast area, and forward basing is critical to sustaining any major joint force U.S. deployment in a given area.

# U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) AOR

USINDOPACOM,  
<http://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/>,  
11.18



# United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM)

The United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR) encompasses about half the earth's surface, stretching from the waters off the west coast of the U.S. to the western border of India, and from Antarctica to the North Pole. There are few regions as culturally, socially, economically, and geo-politically diverse as the Asia-Pacific. The 36 nations that comprising the Asia-Pacific region are home to more than 50% of the world's population, 3,000 different languages, several of the world's largest militaries, and five nations allied with the U.S. through mutual defense treaties. Two of the three largest economies are located in the Asia-Pacific along with 10 of the 14th smallest. The AOR includes the most populous nation in the world, the largest democracy, and the largest Muslim-majority nation. More than one third of Asia-Pacific nations are smaller, island nations that include the smallest republic in the world and the smallest nation in Asia.

USINDOPACOM is one of six geographic [Unified Combatant Commands](#) of the United States Armed Forces. Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (CDRUSINDOPACOM) is the senior U.S. military authority in the Indo-Pacific Command AOR. CDRUSINDOPACOM reports to the President of the United States through the Secretary of Defense and is supported by four component commands: [U.S. Pacific Fleet](#), [U.S. Pacific Air Forces](#), [U.S. Army Pacific](#) and [U.S. Marine Forces, Pacific](#). These commands are headquartered in Hawai'i and have forces stationed and deployed throughout the region.

USINDOPACOM protects and defends, in concert with other U.S. Government agencies, the territory of the United States, its people, and its interests. With allies and partners, USINDOPACOM is committed to enhancing stability in the Asia-Pacific region by promoting security cooperation, encouraging peaceful development, responding to contingencies, deterring aggression, and, when necessary, fighting to win. This approach is based on partnership, presence, and military readiness.

USINDOPACOM recognizes the global significance of the Asia-Pacific region and understands that challenges are best met together. Consequently, USINDOPACOM will remain an engaged and trusted partner committed to preserving the security, stability, and freedom upon which enduring prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region depends.

**VISION:** USINDOPACOM ensures a Free and Open Indo-Pacific alongside a constellation of like-minded Allies and Partners, united by mutual security, interests, and values in order to deter adversary aggression, protect the Homeland, and be ready to fight and win in armed conflict.

**MISSION:** U.S. Indo-Pacific Command will implement a combat credible deterrence strategy capable of denying our adversaries sustained air and sea dominance by focusing on posturing the Joint Force to win before fighting while being ready to fight and win, if required.

## FOCUS AREAS:

1. Joint Force Lethality - We must continue to develop and field capabilities necessary to deter aggression and prevail in armed conflict should deterrence fail.
2. Design & Posture - We will adapt from our historical service-centric focus in Northeast Asia to a new more integrated joint forces blueprint which is informed by the changing threat environment and challenges of the 21st Century across the entire Indo-Pacific.
3. Exercises, Experimentation, & Innovation - Targeted innovation and experimentation investments will evolve the joint force while developing asymmetrical capability to counter adversary capabilities.
4. Allies & Partners - Through increased interoperability, information-sharing, and expanded access across the region, we present a compatible and interoperable coalition to the adversary in crisis and armed conflict. USINDOPACOM headquarters is located in the Nimitz-MacArthur Building on Camp H.M. Smith just outside of Honolulu, Hawaii.

Source: <http://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/>, June 19, 2019.

# U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Strategy: Summary of U.S. Forces and Force Improvement Efforts - I

USINDOPACOM currently has more than 2,000 aircraft; 200 ships and submarines; and more than 370,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, DoD civilians, and contractors assigned within its area of responsibility. The largest concentration of forces in the region are in Japan and the ROK. A sizable contingent of forces (more than 5,000 on a day-to-day basis) are also based in the U.S. territory of Guam, which serves as a strategic hub supporting crucial operations and logistics for all U.S. forces operating in the Indo-Pacific region. Other allies and partners that routinely host U.S. forces on a smaller scale include the Philippines, Australia, Singapore, and the United Kingdom through the island of Diego Garcia.

In order to overcome the tyranny of distance, posture that supports and enables inter- and intra-theater logistics must be flexible and resilient, and the pre-positioning of equipment is critical. Specifically, we are exploring expeditionary capabilities; dynamic basing of maritime and air forces; special operations forces capable of irregular and unconventional warfare; anti-submarine capabilities; cyber and space teams equipped for multi-domain operations; and, unique intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities – among other investments. From leveraging existing access in the Compact States, to pursuing co-development with our most capable allies and partners, we will continue to forward-station leading edge technologies, such as 5th generation fighters in the Indo-Pacific.

DoD is also developing new operating concepts to increase our lethality, agility, and resilience that will be further implemented through our evolving posture. For example, as part of the Multi-Domain Operations concept, the U.S. Army will test Multi-Domain Task Forces intended to create temporary windows of superiority across multiple domains, and allow the Joint Force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative. The U.S. Army will test the Multi-Domain Task Forces through the Pacific Pathways program to determine the right capability mix and locations. Furthermore, the Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations is an emerging U.S. Navy and Marine Corps operating concept to provide resilience and support to maritime operations inside contested environments. It is intended to deny adversary freedom of action; control key maritime terrain; and support Joint Force air and maritime requirements by operating from austere locations at a tempo that complicates adversary targeting. In addition, DoD will continue to ensure a force posture that enables the United States to undertake a spectrum of missions including security cooperation, building partner capacity, collaboration on transnational threats, and joint and combined training.

The Department is undertaking a range of efforts to enhance Joint Force preparedness for the most pressing scenarios. Examples of DoD initiatives include:

- Investments in Advanced Training Facilities at the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex to present a more realistic and representative training environment;
- Investments in unit and depot maintenance across Air Force and Naval Aviation to achieve an 80 percent fighter readiness goal by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2019; and,
- Investments in advanced missile defense systems interoperable with allied systems in Japan and Australia.

# U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Strategy: Summary of U.S. Forces and Force Improvement Efforts - II

The Department is also modernizing the force to meet the demands of high-end competition. Illustrative examples of key investments include:

- Acceleration of the development and forward presence of U.S. land forces' Multi-Domain Task Force, utilizing Security Force Assistance Brigades to build partner capacity and strengthen multinational teams, and expanding Pacific Pathways to deepen relationships with U.S. allies and partners;
- Strategic deterrence enhancements associated with investments in the new Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine;
- Purchase of 110 4th- and 5th-generation aircraft which will result in both capability and capacity improvements;
- Purchase of approximately 400 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles;
- Purchase of more than 400 Joint Air-Surface Missiles – Extended Range;
- Investments in two Unmanned Surface Vehicles, additional Long Range Anti-Ship Missiles, and additional Maritime Strike Tactical Tomahawks;
- Increased capacity in Anti-Surface Warfare, Anti-Submarine Warfare, and Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) by purchasing 10 more destroyers within the FY 2020-2024 Future Years Defense Program;
- Investment in resources to support offensive and defensive cyberspace operations; and,
- Efforts to unify, focus, and accelerate the development of space doctrine, capabilities, and expertise to outpace future threats, institutionalize advocacy of space priorities, and further build space warfighting culture



# U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Deployments and Forces in 2018

**AUSTRALIA:** US Pacific Command • 1,500; 1 SEWS at Pine Gap; 1 comms facility at Pine Gap; 1 SIGINT stn at Pine Gap; US Strategic Command • 1 detection and tracking radar at Naval Communication Station Harold E Holt

**BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY:** US Strategic Command • 300; 1 Spacetrack Optical Tracker at Diego Garcia; 1 ground-based electro-optical deep space surveillance system (GEODSS) at Diego Garcia

**US Pacific Command** • 1 MPS sqn (MPS-2 with equipment for one MEB) at Diego Garcia with 2 AKRH; 3 AKR; 1 AKEH; 1 ESD; 1 naval air base at Diego Garcia, 1 support facility at Diego Garcia

**GUAM:** US Pacific Command • 6,000; 4 SSGN; 1 MPS sqn (MPS-3 with equipment for one MEB) with 2 AKRH; 4 AKR; 1 ESD; 1 AKEH; 1 bbr sqn with 6 B-52H *Stratofortress*; 1 tkr sqn with 12 KC-135R *Stratotanker*; 1 tpt hel sqn with MH-60S; 1 SAM bty with THAAD; 1 air base; 1 naval base

**JAPAN:** US Pacific Command • 53,900  
US Army 2,700; 1 corps HQ (fwd); 1 SF gp; 1 avn bn; 1 SAM bn  
US Navy 20,250; 1 HQ (7th Fleet) at Yokosuka; 1 base at Sasebo; 1 base at Yokosuka

## FORCES BY ROLE

3 FGA sqn at Iwakuni with 10 F/A-18E *Super Hornet*; 1 FGA sqn at Iwakuni with 10 F/A-18F *Super Hornet*; 2 EW sqn at Iwakuni/Misawa with 5 EA-18G *Growler*; 1 AEW&C sqn at Iwakuni with 5 E-2D *Hawkeye*; 2 ASW hel sqn at Atsugi with 12 MH-60R; 1 tpt hel sqn at Atsugi with 12 MH-60S

## EQUIPMENT BY TYPE

1 CVN; 3 CGHM; 2 DDGHM; 8 DDGM (2 non-op); 1 LCC; 4 MCO; 1 LHD; 1 LPD; 2 LSD  
USAF 12,150

## FORCES BY ROLE

1 HQ (5th Air Force) at Okinawa – Kadena AB; 1 ftr wg at Misawa AB with (2 ftr sqn with 22 F-16C/D *Fighting Falcon*); 1 wg at Okinawa – Kadena AB with (2 ftr sqn with 27 F-15C/D *Eagle*; 1 ftr sqn with 14 F-22A *Raptor*; 1 tkr sqn with 15 KC-135R *Stratotanker*; 1 AEW&C sqn with 2 E-3B/C *Sentry*; 1 CSAR sqn with 10 HH-60G *Pave Hawk*); 1 tpt wg at Yokota AB with 10 C-130J-30 *Hercules*; 3 Beech 1900C (C-12J); 1 Spec Ops gp at Okinawa – Kadena AB with (1 sqn with 5 MC-130H *Combat Talon*; 1 sqn with 5 MC-130J *Commando II*; 1 unit with 5 CV-22 *Osprey*); 1 ISR sqn with RC-135 *Rivet Joint*; 1 ISR UAV flt with 5 RQ-4A *Global Hawk*  
JSMC 18,800

## FORCES BY ROLE

1 mne div; 1 mne regt HQ; 1 arty regt HQ; 1 recce bn; 1 mne bn; 1 amph aslt bn; 1 arty bn; 1 FGA sqn with 12 F/A-18C *Hornet*; 1 FGA sqn with 12 F/A-18D *Hornet*; 1 FGA sqn with 12 F-35B *Lightning II*; 1 tkr sqn with 15 KC-130J *Hercules*; 2 tpt sqn with 12 MV-22B *Osprey*  
US Strategic Command • 1 AN/TPY-2 X-band radar at Shariki; 1 AN/TPY-2 X-Band radar at Kyogamisaki

**KOREA, REPUBLIC OF:** US Pacific Command • 28,500  
US Army 19,200

## FORCES BY ROLE

1 HQ (8th Army) at Seoul; 1 div HQ (2nd Inf) located at Tongduchon; 1 armd bde; 1 (cvt avn) hel bde; 1 MRL bde; 1 AD bde; 1 SAM bty with THAAD

## EQUIPMENT BY TYPE

M1A2 SEPv2 *Abrams*; M2A2/M3A3 *Bradley*; M109A6; M270A1 MLRS; AH-64D *Apache*; CH-47F *Chinook*; UH-60L/M *Black Hawk*; MIM-104 *Patriot*; FIM-92A *Avenger*; 1 (APS) armd bde eqpt set  
US Navy 250

USAF 8,800

## FORCES BY ROLE

1 (AF) HQ (7th Air Force) at Osan AB; 1 ftr wg at Osan AB with (1 ftr sqn with 20 F-16C/D *Fighting Falcon*; 1 atk sqn with 24 A-10C *Thunderbolt II*); 1 ftr wg at Kunsan AB with (2 ftr sqn with 20 F-16C/D *Fighting Falcon*); 1 ISR sqn at Osan AB with U-2S  
USMC 250

**MARSHALL ISLANDS:** US Strategic Command • 1 detection and tracking radar at Kwajalein Atoll

**PACIFIC OCEAN:** US Pacific Command • US Navy • 3rd Fleet: 8 SSBN; 21 SSGN; 4 SSN; 4 CVN; 10 CGHM; 21 DDGHM; 6 DDGM; 9 FFHM; 3 MCO; 1 LHA; 3 LHD; 5 LPD; 3 LSD

**PHILIPPINES:** US Pacific Command • *Operation Pacific Eagle* - Philippines 250

**SINGAPORE:** US Pacific Command • 200; 1 log spt sqn; 1 spt facility

**THAILAND:** US Pacific Command • 300

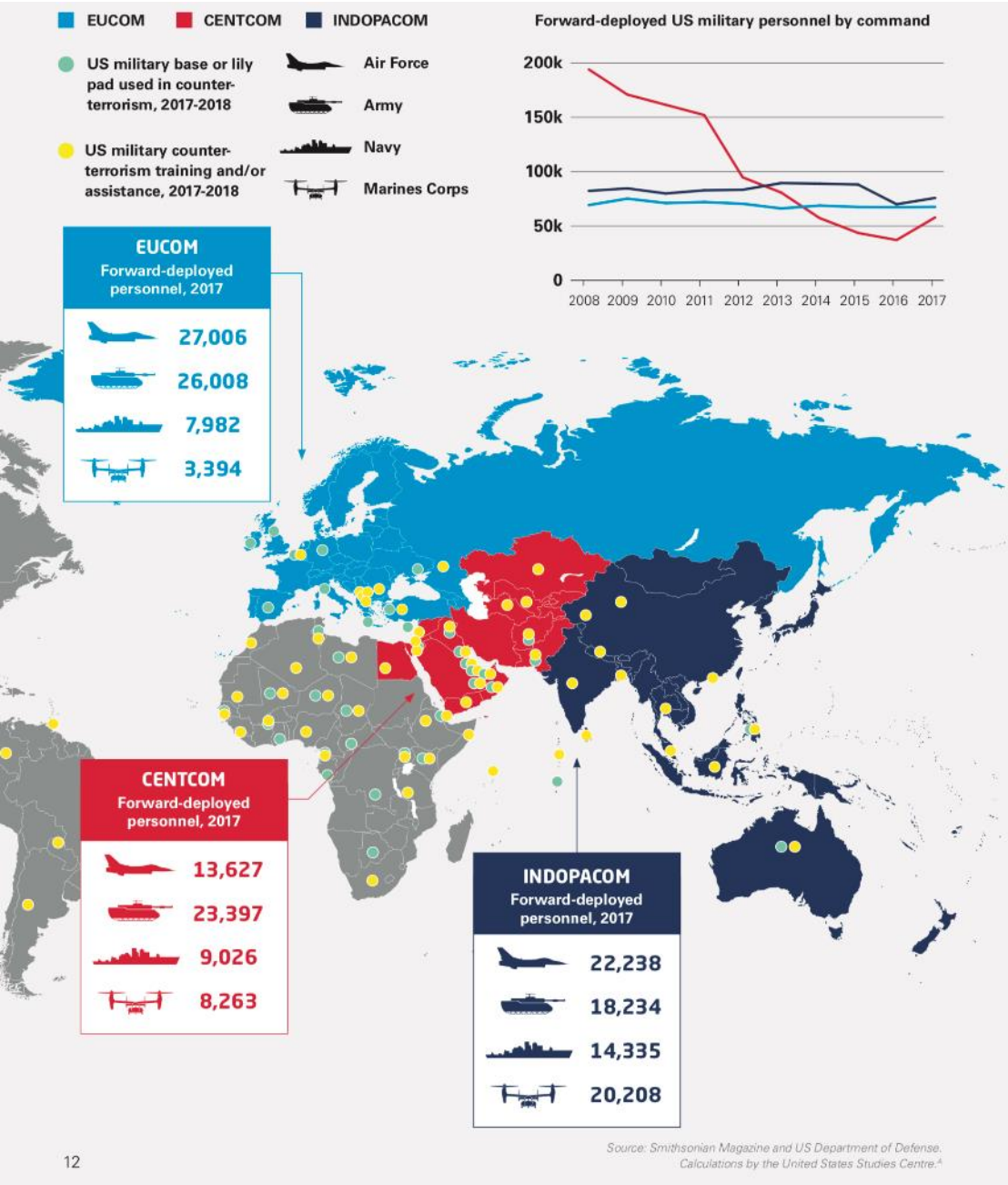
## U.S. Forces in USINDOPACOM in 2019

Approximately 375,000 U.S. military and civilian personnel are assigned to USINDOPACOM and its different components across the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. According to USINDOPACOM, those assignments are broken out as follows:

- **Approximately 28,500 U.S. service members and their families are stationed in the Republic of Korea**, while U.S. Forces Japan consists of approximately 54,000 military personnel and their dependents. As of September 2016, approximately 5,000 service members and their families were stationed in Guam.
- U.S. Pacific Fleet consists of approximately **200 ships** (including five aircraft carrier strike groups), nearly **1,100 aircraft**, and more than **130,000** sailors and civilians.
- Marine Corps Forces, Pacific includes **two Marine Expeditionary Forces** and about 86,000 personnel and **640 aircraft**.
- U.S. Pacific Air Forces comprises approximately **46,000** airmen and civilians and more than **420** aircraft.
- U.S. Army Pacific has approximately **106,000** personnel from one corps and two divisions, plus over **300** aircraft assigned throughout the AOR.
- These component command personnel figures also include more than **1,200** Special Operations personnel. Department of Defense civilian employees in the Pacific Command AOR number about **38,000**.

University of  
Sydney  
Estimate of  
Trends in  
US Power  
Projection of  
Forward  
Deployed  
Personnel by  
Major U.S.  
Command

Source: Ashley Townshend and  
Brendan Thomas-Noone and  
Matilda Steward with Matilda  
Steward, *Averting Crisis: American  
Strategy*, United States Studies  
Centre, University of Sydney, August  
2019, p. 12



## U.S. Allies and Bases in Region

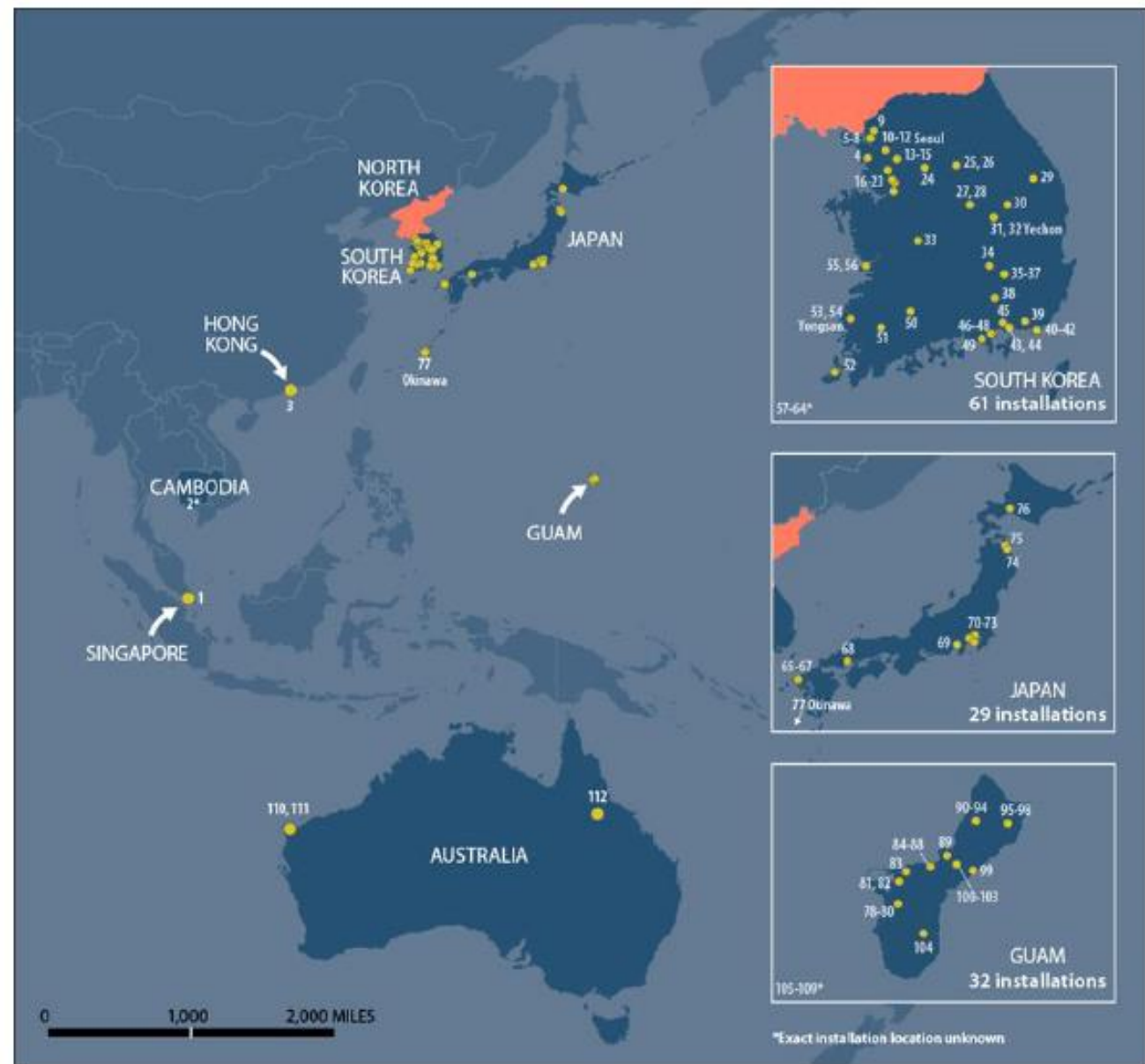


Light blue denotes a treaty ally or an actual part of the United States. | (CSIS)



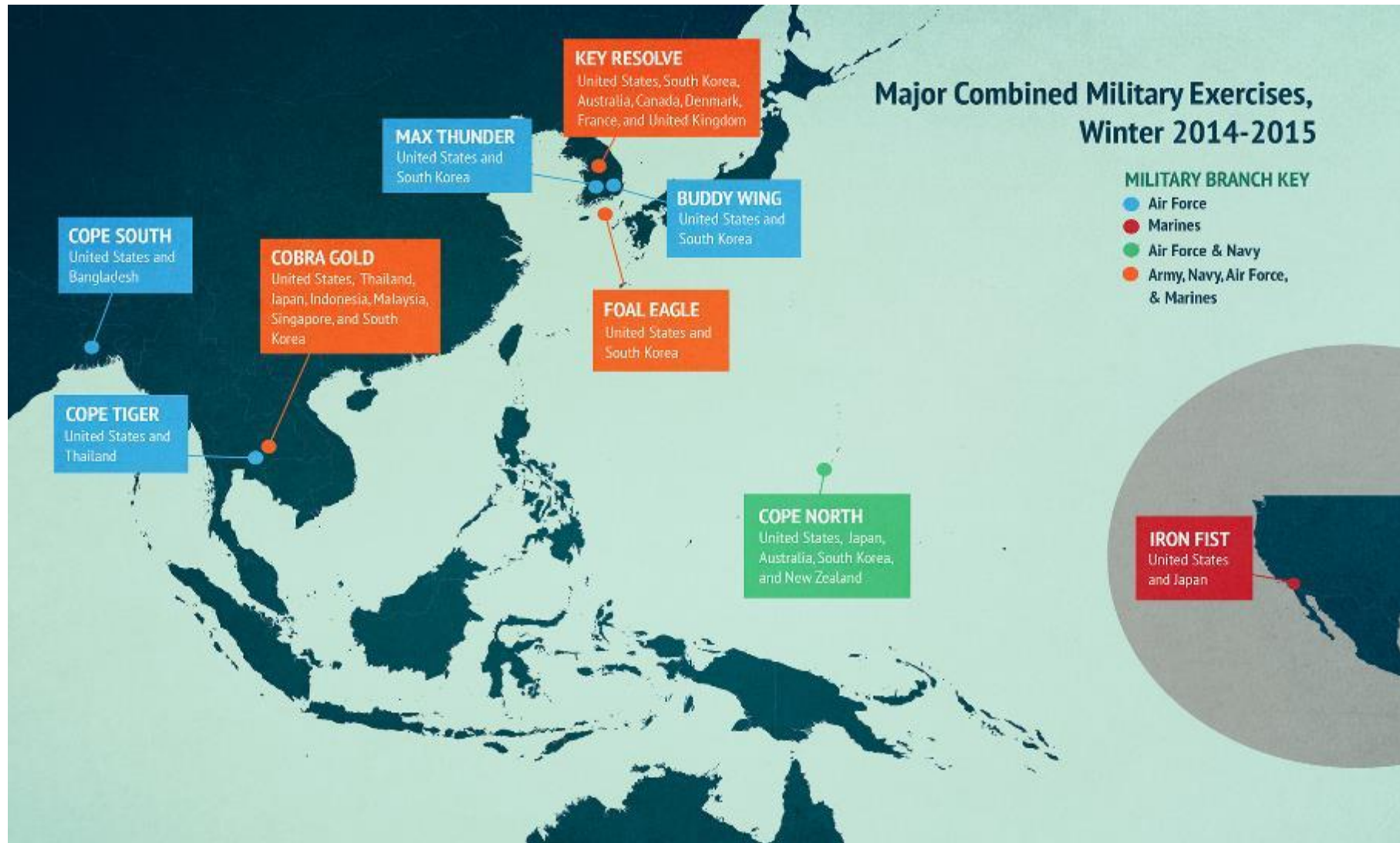
## U.S. Bases in Pacific

Kathleen J. McInnis and others, "The North Korean Nuclear Challenge: Military Options and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, [www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov), R44994, November 6, 2017.



**Sources:** Graphic created by CRS. Information generated by Hannah Fischer using data from the Department of Defense Base Structure Report, FY2015, available at <https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/Downloads/BSI/Base%20Structure%20Report%20FY15.pdf>; Department of State (2015); Esri (2016).

## U.S. Joint Pacific Exercises in 2014-2015



Source: <https://amti.csis.org/the-evolving-role-of-military-exercises-in-asia/>

# **The U.S. Side of the Shifting Asia-Pacific Regional Balance**

## **U.S. Military Forces Affecting China, the Pacific, the South China Sea, and Indian Ocean**

The charts and tables in this section provide Japanese and Korean assessments of the regional balance between U.S., Chinese, and other military forces. There are no open source estimates by the U.S. government that provide unclassified official estimates, but the numbers shown in each estimate seem to be reasonable broad estimates of the force totals involved.

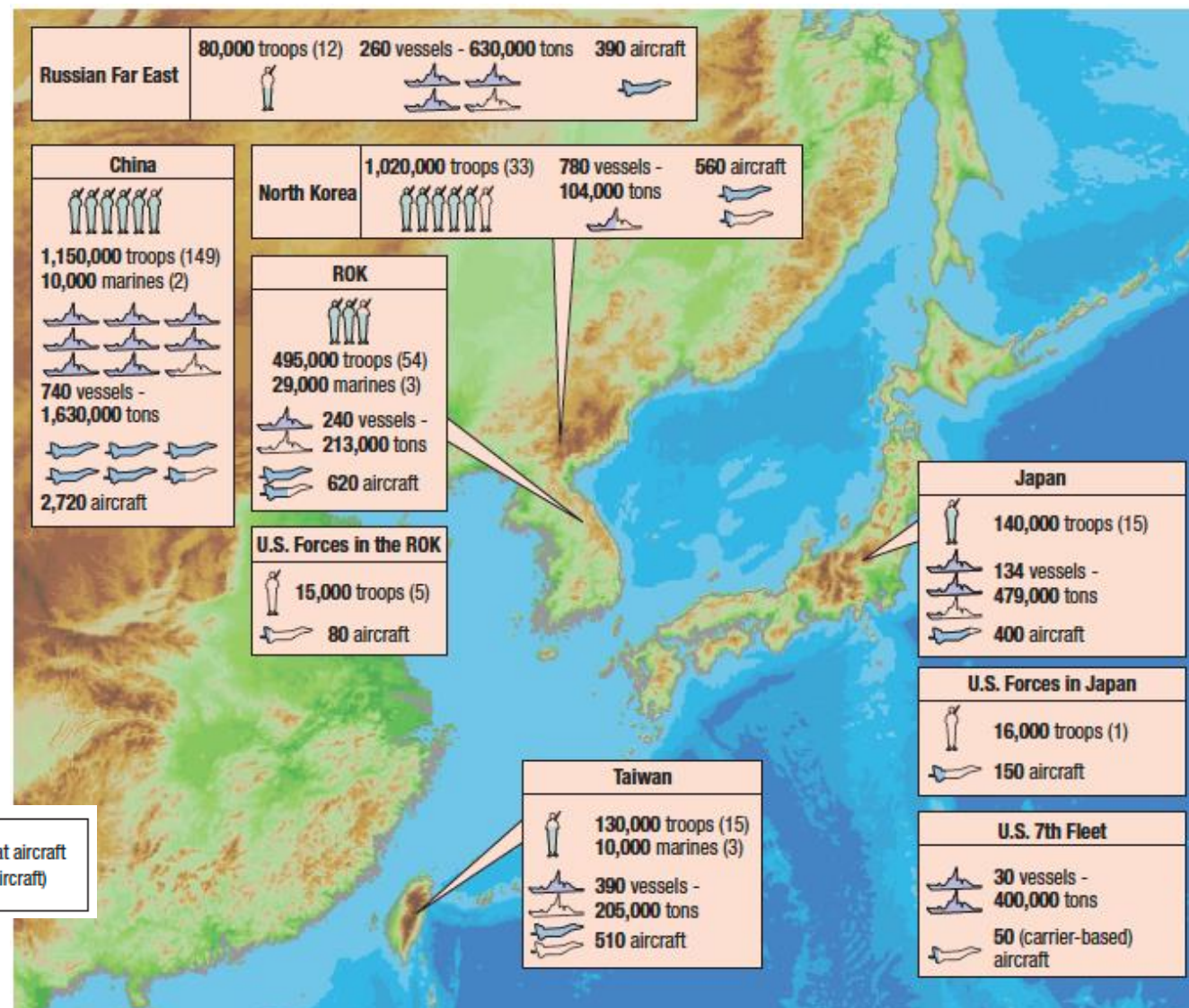
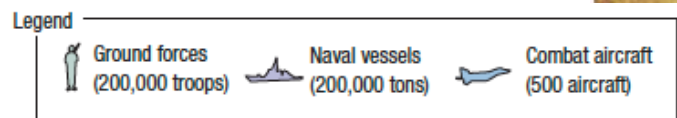
Such totals do not, however, reflect levels of readiness, modernization, and military experience. They do not reflect the forces likely to be allocated to any given scenarios, and are relevant largely to scenarios involving theater-wide conventional wars. Such conflicts seem much less likely than political-economic tensions, competitions, and conflicts — including hybrid operations that do not actually involve military clashes. All of the major powers have strong strategic, economic, and military incentives to avoid major clashes or conflicts or terminate them as soon as possible — given the immense cost of any major conventional conflict and its aftermath, and the risk of nuclear war.

Accordingly, the capability of any given side to use force to exert influence — passively or in limited conflicts — may be just as important in the real world as the capability to deter, fight, and successfully terminate major conflicts. The ability to preemptively or suddenly use limited forces successfully in hybrid or asymmetric operations in limited regional conflicts may also dominate the competition between China, the U.S. and other major powers. Similarly the ability to deter the escalation of limited clashes or conflicts on favorable terms may be as critical as the ability to deter and successfully fight large-scale conflicts.

The public statements of Chinese national strategy may not recognize these realities, but they are logical extensions of Chinese strategy since at least the days of Sun Tzu, and Chinese staff colleges and writing clearly emphasize such options. The same recognition is increasingly part of official U.S. military education, although U.S. policymakers often do emphasize the risk or possibility of large-scale conflicts.



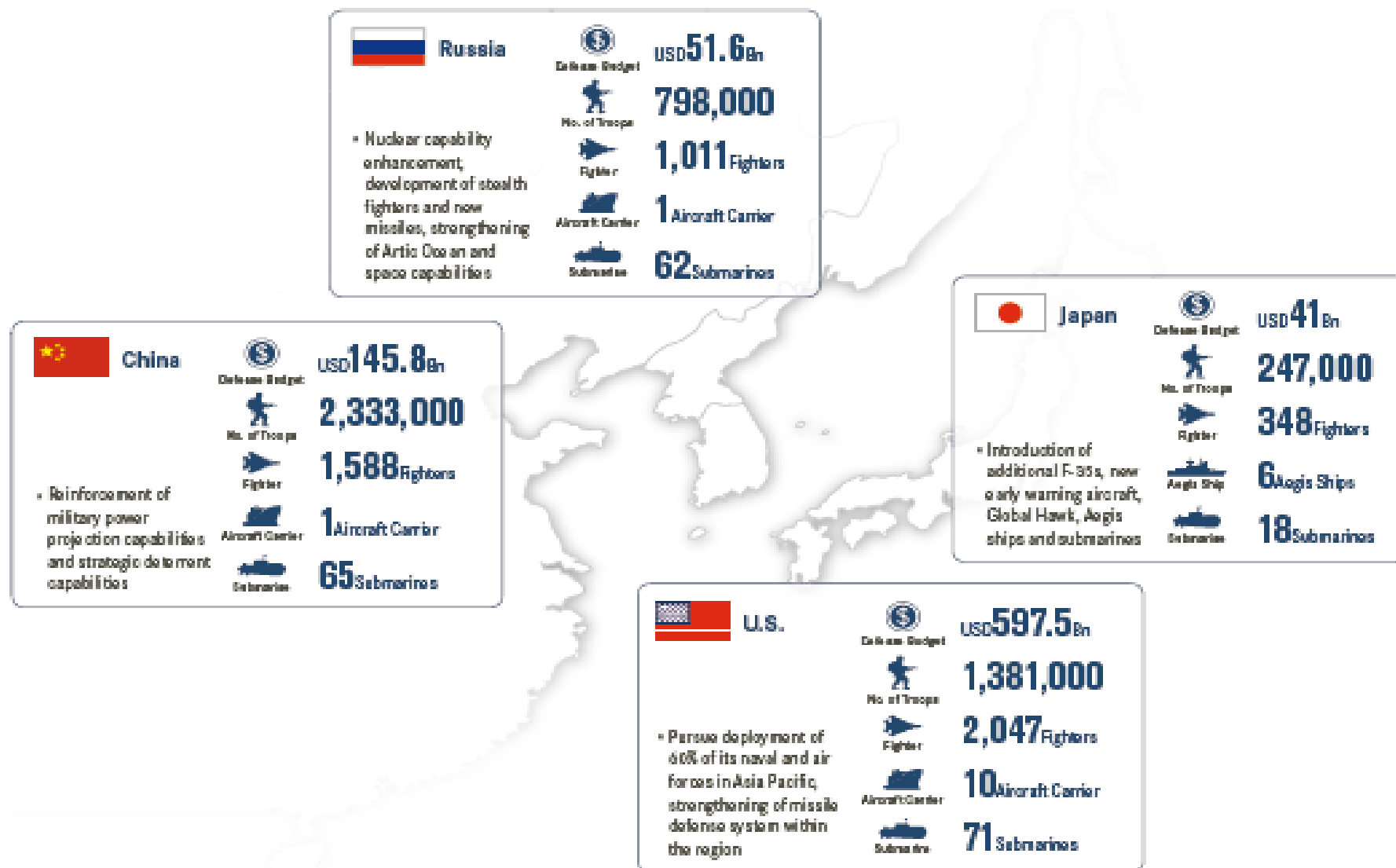
# Japanese Estimate of Regional Military Balance: 2017



1. Source: "The Military Balance 2017," documents published by the U.S. DoD, etc.
2. Figures for Japan indicate the strength of each SDF as of the end of 2016; the number of combat aircraft is the sum of ASDF aircraft (excluding transport aircraft) and MSDF aircraft (fixed-wing aircraft only).
3. Figures for the U.S. ground forces in Japan and the ROK are those of the Army and Marine Corps personnel combined.
4. Combat aircraft include Navy and Marine aircraft.
5. Figures in parentheses show the total number of central units, such as divisions and brigades. That of North Korea shows only divisions. That of Taiwan includes military police as well.
6. The number of U.S. 7th Fleet vessels and aircraft indicates those which are forward-deployed in Japan and Guam.
7. Figures of combat aircraft of the U.S. Forces, Japan and the U.S. 7th Fleet include only fighters.

Adapted from Defense of Japan  
2017 (Annual White Paper) Digest,  
[http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_pape  
r/2017.html/](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_pape_r/2017.html/) p. 47.

# South Korean Estimate of Regional Military Balance: 2016 - I



\* Sources: *The Military Balance 2016* (International Institute for Strategic Studies, Feb. 2016.), *Defense of Japan 2016*, etc.

# South Korean Estimate of Regional Military Balance: 2016 - II

## Number of Troops

Unit: persons

Category	U.S.	Russia	China	Japan
Total	1,381,250	798,000	2,333,000	247,150
Army	509,450	240,000	1,600,000	151,000
Navy	326,800	148,000	235,000	45,500
Air Force	319,950	145,000	398,000	47,100
Others	Marine Corps 185,050 Coast Guard 40,000	Airborne 34,000 Strategic 80,000 Command/support 151,000	Rocket Forces 100,000	Joint Staff Office 3,550

## Army

Category	U.S.	Russia	China	Japan
Divisions/Brigades	10/45	4/89	23/128	9/6
Tanks	5,884	20,200	6,540	687
Infantry combat vehicles	6,559	13,900	3,950	68
Reconnaissance vehicles	1,900	2,200	650(light tanks)	162
Armored vehicles	24,377	12,000	4,150	792
Towed artillery	1,242	13,165	6,140	422
Self-propelled guns	1,469	6,120	2,280	166
Multiple launch rocket systems	1,205	4,070	1,872	99
Mortar	2,483	4,130	2,586	1,103
Anti-tank guided weapons	SP 1,512	SP N/A	SP 480	SP 37
Ground-to-air missiles	1,207	1,520	312	700
Helicopters	4,200	1,278	760	412
Aircraft	222	-	8	8

Adapted from South Korea, *Defense White Paper*, 2016, p. 264.

# South Korean Estimate of Regional Military Balance: 2016 - III

## Navy

Category		U.S.	Russia	China	Japan
Submarines		57	49	61	18
Strategic nuclear submarines		14	13	4	-
Aircraft carriers		10	1	1	-
Cruisers		22	6	-	-
Destroyers		62	18	19	38
Frigates		4	10	54	9
Patrol and coastal combatants		57	89	199	6
Mine sweepers		11	45	49	27
Amphibious vessels		30	19	50	3
Landing craft		245	30	73	8
Auxiliary ships		71	625	171	28
Fighters		956	72	346	-
Helicopters		720	195	111	131
Marine Corps	Marine division	3	3 brigades	2 brigades	-
	Tanks	447	250	73	-
	Reconnaissance vehicles	252	60	-	-
	Amphibious assault APC	1,311	1,000	-	-
	Personnel transport APC	2,467	400	152	-
	Cannons	1,506	365	40	-
	Anti-tank missiles	95	-	-	-
	UAV/ISRs	139	-	-	-
	Aircraft	445	-	-	-
	Helicopters	455	-	-	-

## Air Force

Category		U.S.	Russia	China	Japan
Strategic bombers		157	139	-	-
Bombers		-	-	120	-
Reconnaissance aircraft		ISR-UAV-CISR 454	85	51	17
Command and control aircraft		4	8	5	-
Fighters		FTR-FGR-ATK 1,890	872	1,468	348
Transport aircraft		686	432	325	61
Tankers		461	15	11	5
AWACS		AWE&C-EW 45	18	8	17
Trainers		1,128	204	950	245
Helicopters		161	669	53	46
Civil Reserve Air Fleet		553	-	-	-
EW aircraft		ELINT 33	32	13	3

\* Source: The Military Balance 2016 (International Institute for Strategic Studies, February 2016) and Defense of Japan 2016 (Annual White Paper) (August 2016)



# **U.S. Views of China's Strategic Posture in the Pacific**

# U.S. Views of China's Strategic Posture in the Pacific

As the following sections show, China's strategic posture focuses on all of China's coasts, borders, and neighbors. Like its economy and trade, China's military posture focuses as much on its claims to territory claimed by other Asian states like Japan and South Korea, Russia, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and South Asia as it does on competition with the United States. Moreover, China cannot separate its strategy and military development in Asia from its focus on the U.S. The U.S. is the strategic partner of many Asian states, and has considerable political, economic, and military influence over many others.

As these later sections also show, these same claims alter China's strategic relations with virtually all its neighbors, including ones as far away as the Philippines. They are helping to drive fundamental shifts in China's force posture from a reliance on massive land forces to the creation of modern air and naval forces, modern ground forces designs for joint warfare, and increased power projection and "blue water" naval-air-missile forces.

The Western Pacific, and Chinese forces in its Eastern mainland and the South China Sea are, however, the areas that are now of particular strategic concern to the United States, and the key focus of U.S. and Chinese strategic competition. China has steadily modernized its forces in the areas which allow it to operate in the Eastern Pacific, South China Sea, and in the areas extending to which is called the Second Island Chain – an areas roughly equivalent to the claims that the Chiang Kai Shek regime made to the "Nine Dashed Line" in 1947 — after end of World War II. China associates these lines with the historical claims it can make tracing back to the height of the Chinese Empire, and its current regime modified them slightly in 2009 to better define its claims in the South China Sea and make its claims in the areas north of Taiwan less clear.

The maps that following in this section show U.S. views of China's expanding military forces in these areas – as well as other parts of the Pacific, and their possible role in air, missile, and naval operations. They also show maps of China's efforts to expand its military role and control over the two island chains in the Pacific that are now called the "First and Second Island Chains." This expansion of the military forces China deploys on these island chains — particularly in the South China Sea — are key areas of U.S. concern, although the U.S. is also concerned with Chinese operations in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) throughout the world and China's steadily expanding exercises and military presence in other areas.

China, in turn, is reacting to the U.S. build-up and modernization of its forces in the Pacific. The next series of maps shows what Liddell Hart called the "other side of the hill." It provides a Chinese think tank view of the potential threat posed by U.S. forces in the Pacific, outer Island zone, and South China Sea issues in English by a Chinese research center. It is clear that China's focus on the U.S. is in many ways the mirror image of the U.S. focus on China.

Finally, the last chart in this section provides a summary of a Rand net assessment of the trends in U.S. and Chinese warfighting capability in two key zones shown in the previous maps: Taiwan and the Spratly Islands. Such a net assessment of possible conflict capabilities is highly scenario and time dependent, and its conclusions go well beyond the scope of this analysis. However, it is important to point out that military power is ultimately determined by the ability to deter, limit, win, and successfully terminate a given conflict – and not by static measures of force strength.

# China's Eastern Theater- 2018

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military and Security Developments Involving the Republic of China, Annual Report to Congress*, May 16, 2018, Department of Defense. China Military Power 2018, p.98.



# China's Southern Theater



Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military and Security Developments Involving the Republic of China, Annual Report to Congress*, May 16, 2018, Department of Defense. China Military Power 2018, p. 99.

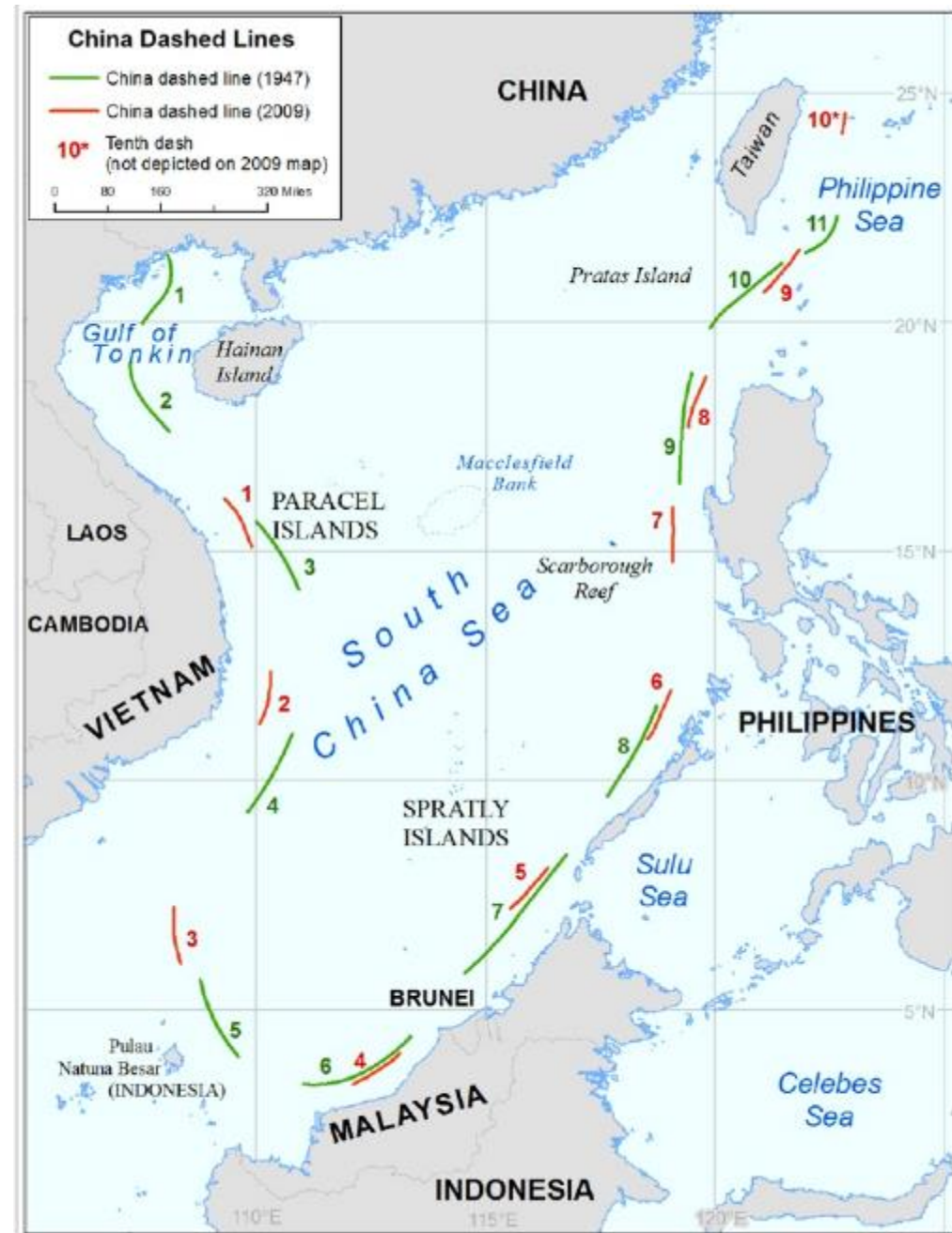


## Chinese Claims in the Eastern Pacific – The Nine (1947) and Ten (2009) Dashed Lines

The Nine-Dash Line – shown in red – has its origins in demarcation claims made by the the Republic of China that were described in broad terms in 1947 – before the regime of Chiang Kai Shek was defeated by Maoist forces. Since that time, both the People’s Republic of China (Mainland) and the Republic of China (Taiwan) Have made claims to a "10-dash line" (2009 and 2011) and "11-dash line.

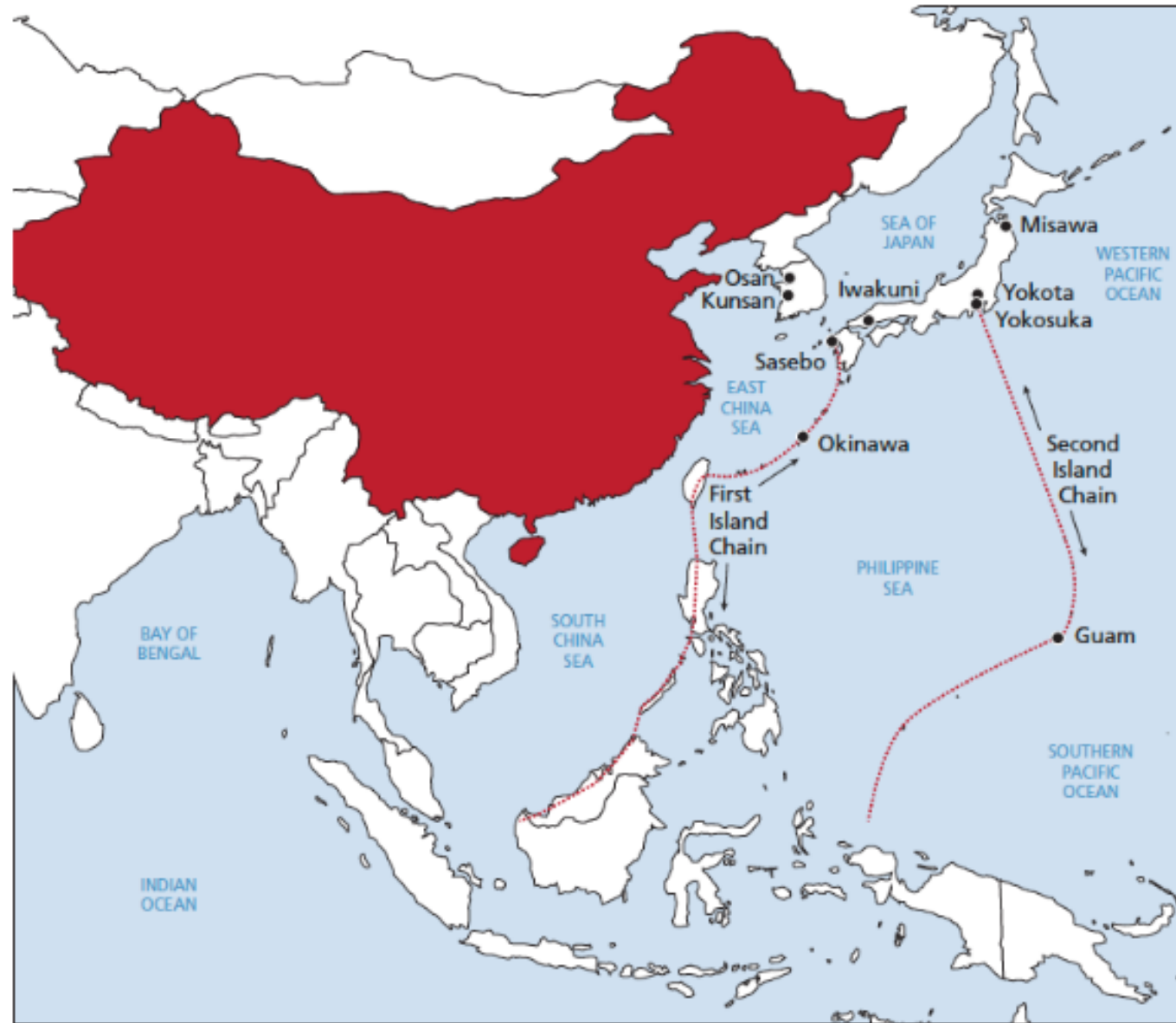
The full range of Chinese claims is shown in the following major section of this report, and it is important to note that China has not filed a formal claim based on specific position for each dash or the connecting lines between them. They do not cover Chinese claims in the North Western Pacific, cover all of Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait, or define specific EEZs and air defense zones.

As such, they define China’s broad strategic claims while giving China considerable flexibility in defining and negotiating specific lines with specific countries.



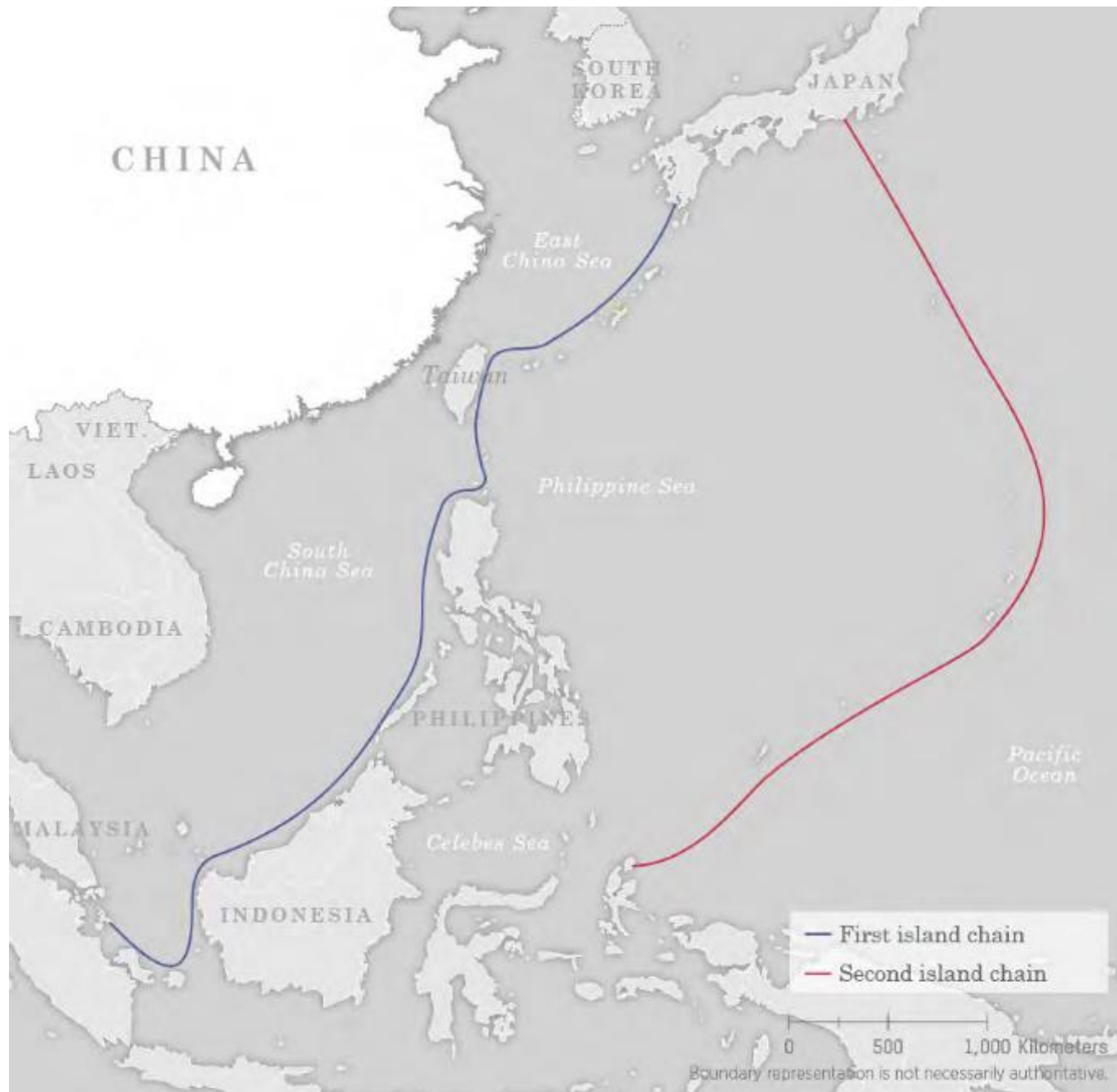
A map of China's shifting definition of the so-called Nine-Dash Line. US State Dept. Image

# PLA Demarcation of First and Second Island Chains



Source: RAND, *US Military Forces and Capabilities for a Dangerous World*, RR1782, 2017, p. 9.

## DIA Estimate of First and Second Island Chain Boundaries: 2019



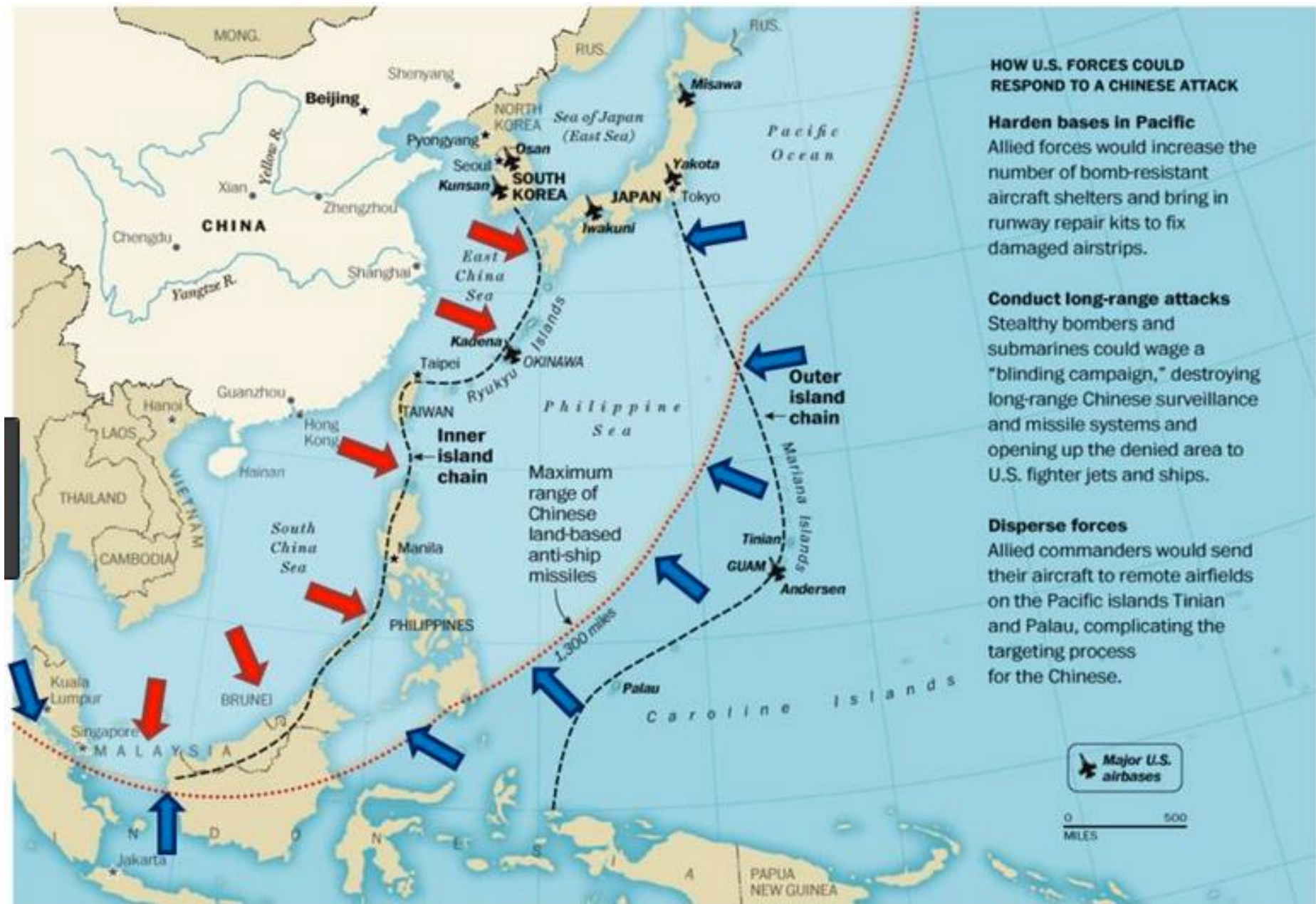
Source: DIA, *China Military Power, Modernizing a Force to Win - 2019*, Department of Defense, 2019, p. 32

## ONI Chinese (~~Defensive~~) Military Layers

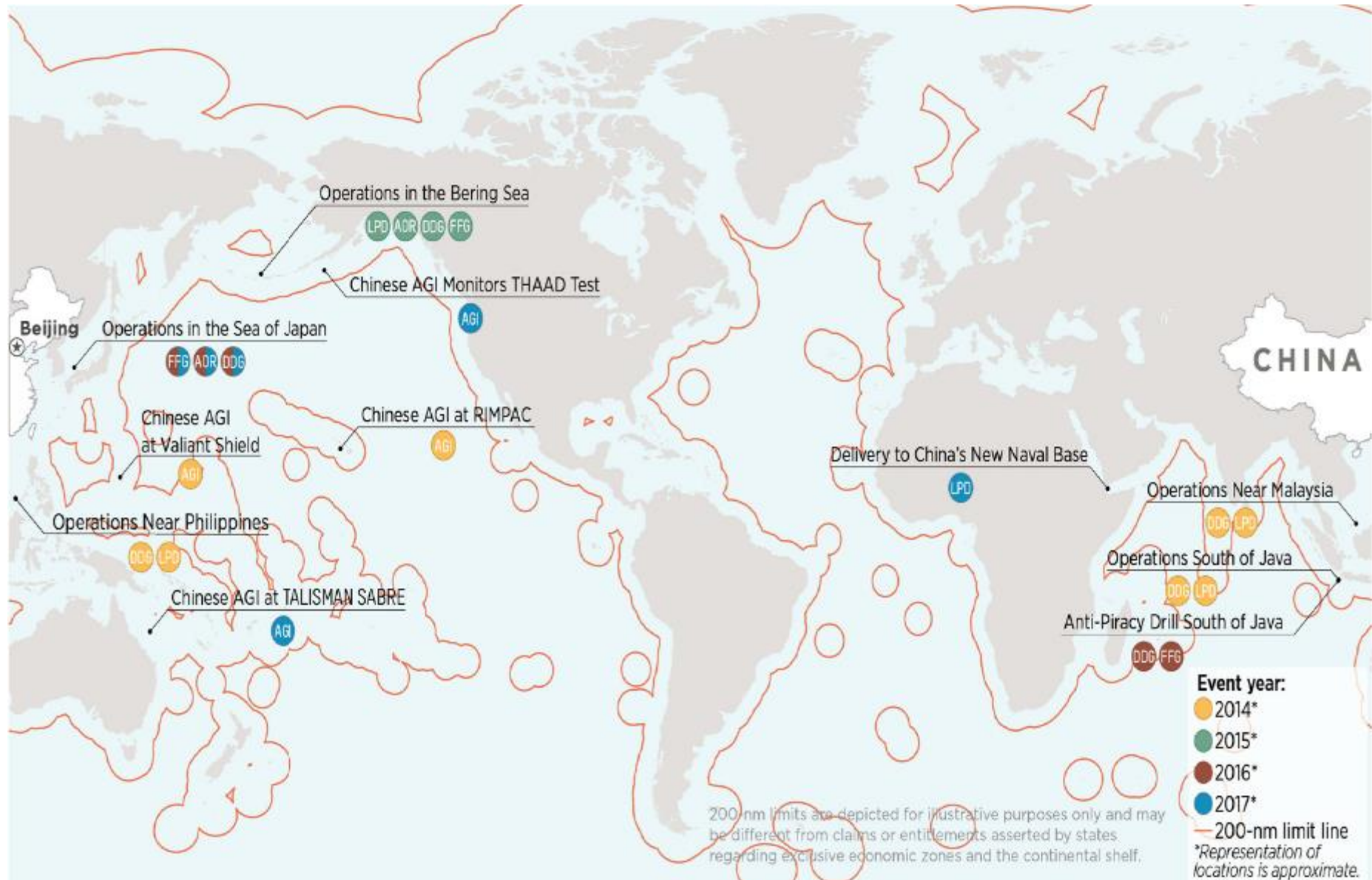


*China's anti-access area denial defensive layers. Office of Naval Intelligence Image*



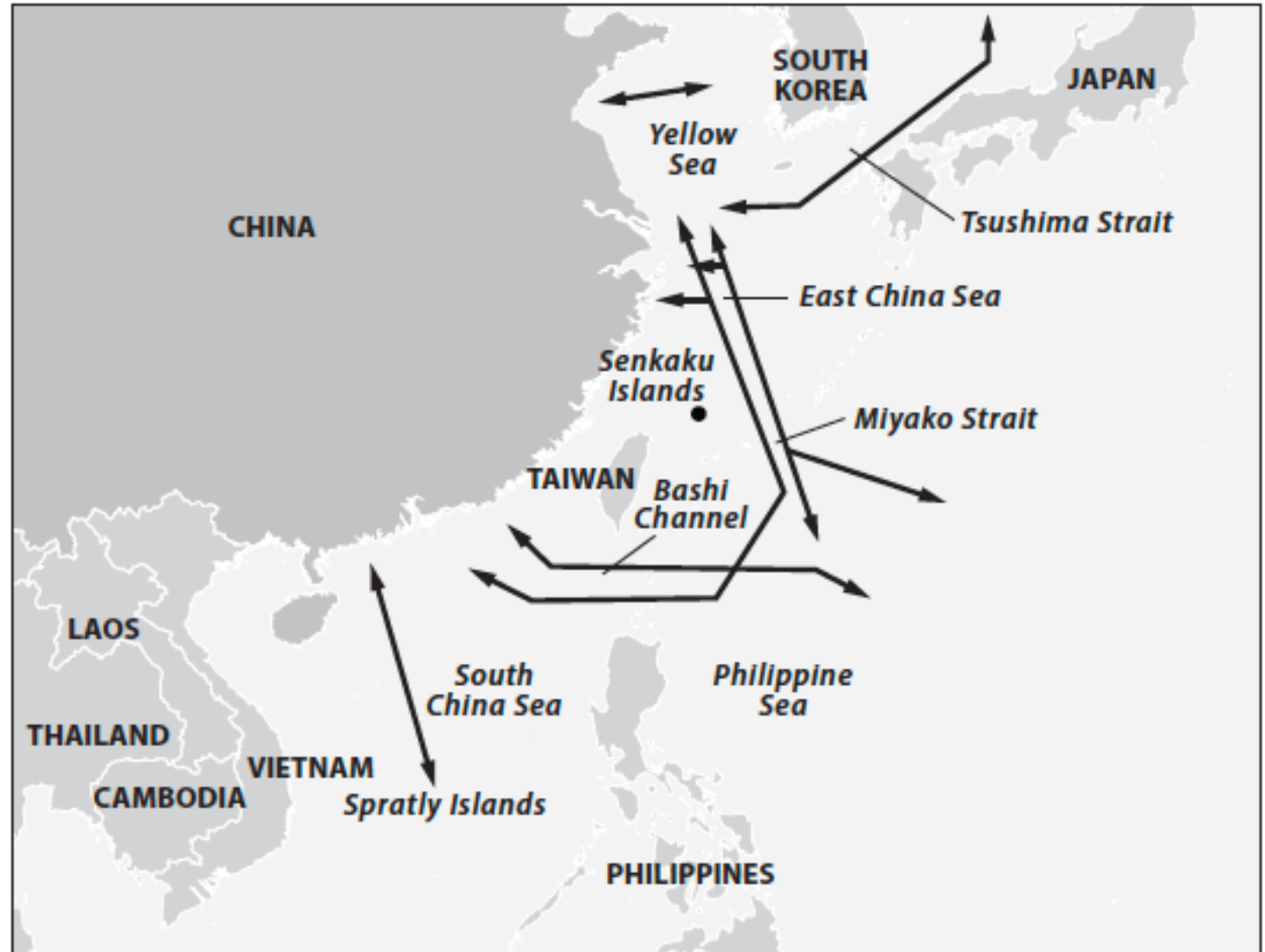


# Uninvited Operations in Foreign EEZs



Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military and Security Developments Involving the Republic of China, Annual Report to Congress*, May 16, 2018, Department of Defense. China Military Power 2018, p. 69.

## PLA Air Force and Navy Long Range Training Flights Over Water



2018 Report to Congress of  
the U.S. and China Security  
Review Commission  
Congress, 115th  
Session, 2nd  
November 2018, p. 173



# Locations of 2001, 2002, and 2009 U.S.-Chinese Incidents at Sea and In Air

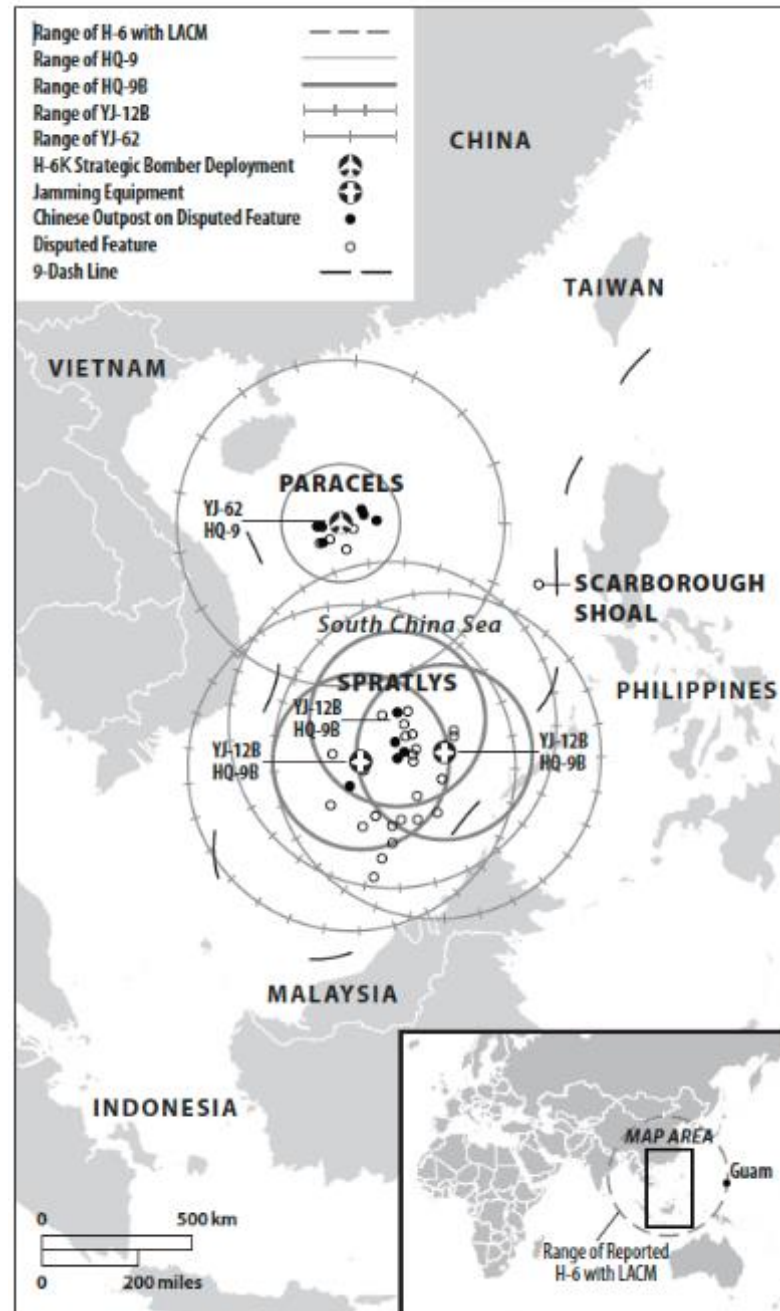
An incident occurred on September 30, 2018, between the U.S. Navy destroyer *Decatur* (DDG-73) and a Chinese destroyer, as the *Decatur* was conducting a freedom of navigation (FON) operation near Gaven Reef in the Spratly Islands. In the incident, the Chinese destroyer overtook the U.S. destroyer close by on the U.S. destroyer's port (i.e., left) side.

Source: Mark E. Redden and Phillip C. Saunders, *Managing Sino-U.S. Air and Naval Interactions: Cold War Lessons and New Avenues of Approach*, Washington, Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, September 2012. Detail of map shown on p. 6. and China's Actions in South and East China Seas: Implications for U.S. Interests—Background and Issues for Congress, Congressional Research Service, R42784 / Updated January 31, 2019 <https://crsreports.congress.gov>, p. 11.





# Location and Range of PLA South China Sea Deployments



Source: 2018 Report to Congress of the U.S. and China Security Review Commission 115th Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, November 2018, p. 170.

# Rebalancing in Asia and the “60% solution”

## A Chinese Perception of U.S. Presence in the Pacific

Source: National Institute for South China Sea Studies, *Report on the Military Presence of the United States of America in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 2016, Current Affairs Press, Hainan, 2016, p. 47.



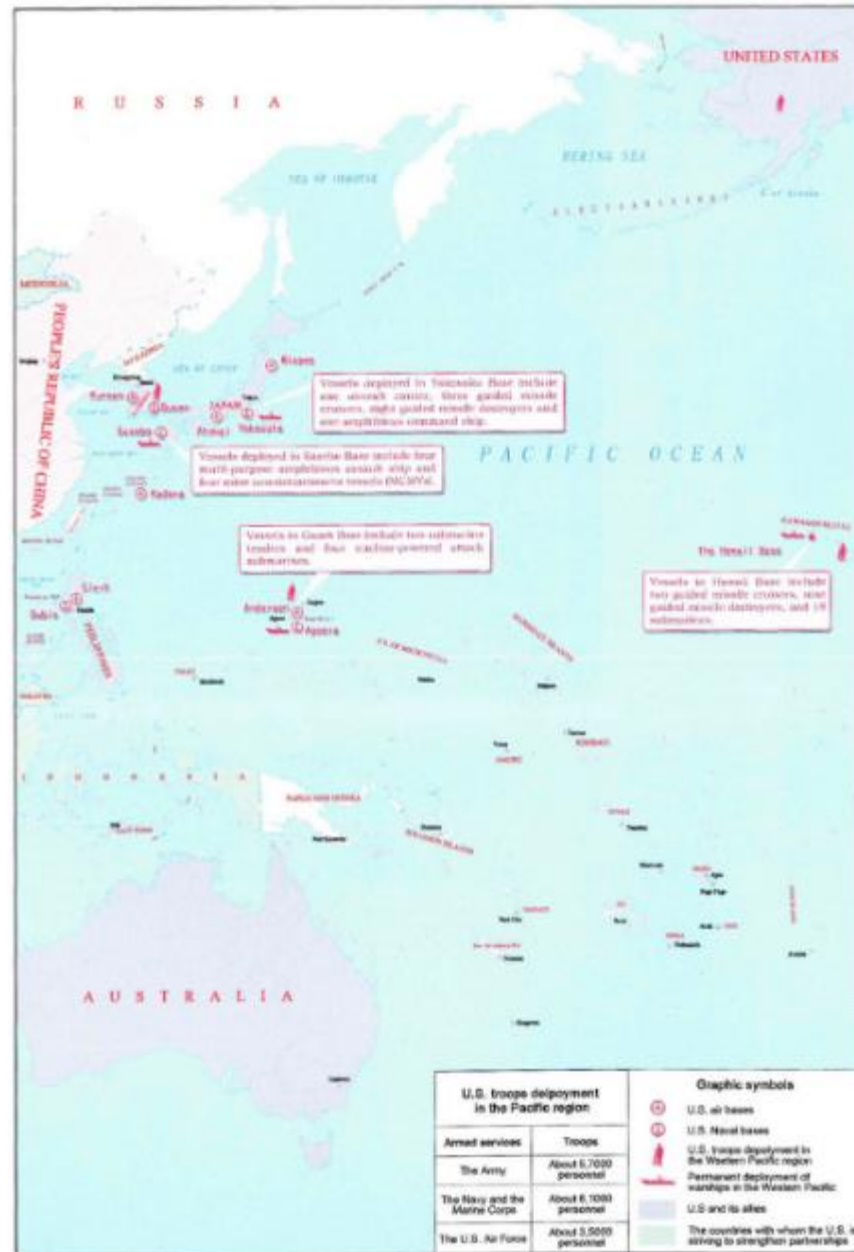
# A Chinese Perception of U.S. Presence in the Outer Island Chain

Source: National Institute for South China Sea Studies, *Report on the Military Presence of the United States of America in the Asia-Pacific Region, 2016*, Current affairs Press, Hainan, 2016, p. 47.



# A Chinese Perception of U.S. Presence in the Southern Pacific and South China Sea

Source: National Institute for South China Sea Studies, *Report on the Military Presence of the United States of America in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 2016, Current affairs Press, Hainan, 2016, p. 47





# The RAND Score Card: 1996-2017

Scorecard	Taiwan Conflict				Spratly Islands Conflict			
	1996	2003	2010	2017	1996	2003	2010	2017
1. Chinese attacks on air bases								
2. U.S. vs. Chinese air superiority								
3. U.S. airspace penetration								
4. U.S. attacks on air bases								
5. Chinese anti-surface warfare								
6. U.S. anti-surface warfare								
7. U.S. counterspace								
8. Chinese counterspace								
9. U.S. vs. China cyberwar								

10. Nuclear stability (confidence in secure second-strike capability)	Country	1996, 2003, and 2010	2017
	China	Low confidence	Medium confidence
	U.S.	High confidence	

Source: RAND, The US-China Military Scorecard, 1996-2017, RAND [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR392.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR392.html). RR-392-AF, 2015.