

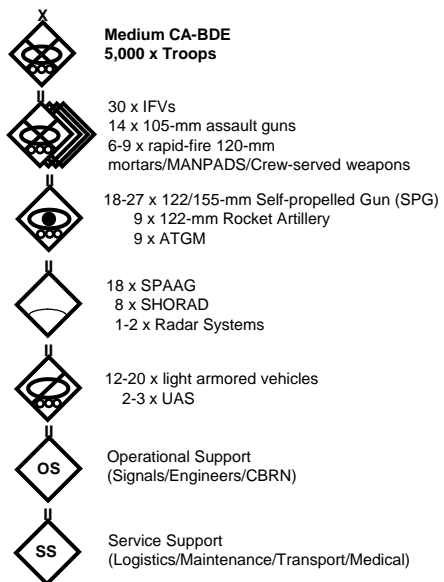


# (U) CHINA: PLAA COMBINED-ARMS BRIGADE'S RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS

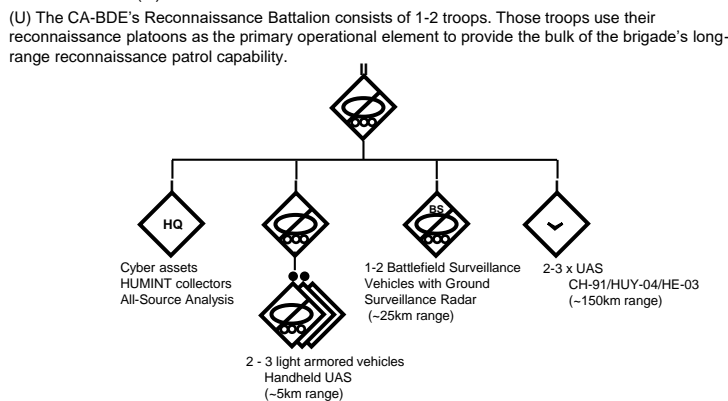
(U) This infographic describes and depicts PLA Army (PLAA) Combined Arms-Brigade (CA-BDE) reconnaissance operations. Reconnaissance and Counter-reconnaissance represent the most important aspects of PLAA operations. The PLAA frames reconnaissance in much the same way as the U.S. Army and considers reconnaissance an all-arms occupation.

(U) PLAA CA-BDE reconnaissance operations are fully integrated with operational and strategic intelligence efforts and organic artillery assets to provide the commander with the ability to deny, deceive, or destroy enemy collection efforts, and inform rapid decision making. Reconnaissance and security operations are continuous and vital for providing early and accurate warning of adversary actions and intent, information about enemy dispositions and mindset, and decision space for commanders at all echelons. The reconnaissance battalion provides multi-domain reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance, and target acquisition capabilities with a mixture of mounted, dismounted, UAS, human intelligence (HUMINT), ELINT, and cyber collection capabilities to support CA-BDE intelligence and targeting requirements.

## (U) PLAA COMBINED ARMS BRIGADE



## (U) PLAA MEDIUM CAB RECON BATTALION



## (U) CA-BDE RECON HVT



Ground Surveillance Radar can detect personnel at approximately 20km and vehicles up to 40km.



CH-91, also known as BZK-008, is a fixed-wing UAV with inverted v-tail and skids as landing gear. ~20km range.

(U) The CA-BDE's reconnaissance battalion and intelligence headquarters section form the core of the reconnaissance and intelligence group. The reconnaissance and intelligence group is responsible for developing the reconnaissance plan, conducting reconnaissance, and disseminating relevant intelligence. The reconnaissance battalion, along with SOF, reconnaissance systems, and national-level assets, provide a comprehensive suite of sensors that may support the CA-BDE.

(U) The CA-BDE employs electronic intelligence (ELINT) and SIGINT capabilities to support reconnaissance. PLAA tactical-level ELINT and SIGINT capabilities include radio direction finding, network surveillance, radar detection, and fire finding. The systems fielded may vary widely in capability. PLAA commanders also employ decoy systems, designed to spoof, jam, or deceive enemy collection systems.

(U) SOF and scout helicopters from the group army may support the CA-BDE's reconnaissance operations. SOF units are capable of conducting days-long patrols, are equipped with long-range communications capabilities, and may be tied directly to long-range weapons, including rocket artillery and ballistic missiles. SOF may also provide passive surveillance, direct action, or covert action. The CA-BDE may also be supported by an aviation brigade, which operates a scout helicopters with electro-optical and infrared payloads to enable reconnaissance.

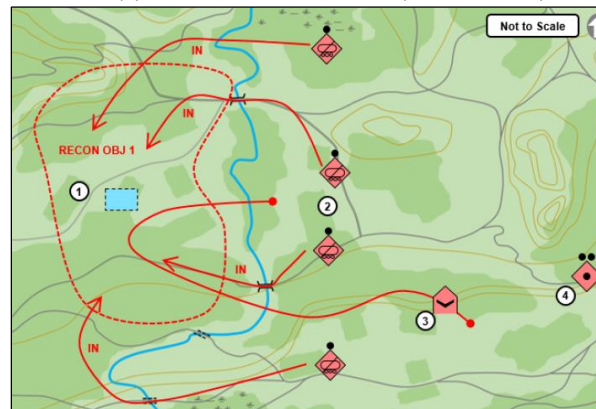
(U) Joint and national assets may support CA-BDE reconnaissance operations. These assets include highly capable ELINT and SIGINT platforms, satellite surveillance, and cyber capabilities. The degree to which these collection assets are available to the CA-BDE varies significantly. Other joint assets include manned reconnaissance and strike aircraft operated by air divisions in support of theater commands, national-level SOF, naval surface and subsurface vessels, and clandestine intelligence.

## (U) The PLAA recognizes two primary forms of tactical reconnaissance: combat reconnaissance and search.

(U) **Combat Reconnaissance:** the task of combat reconnaissance is to locate enemy forces during offensive operations. The purpose is to force the enemy to make a decision—usually related to whether or not to engage—in doing so, revealing its disposition, strength, and capabilities. Combat reconnaissance often involves direct action against the enemy and is the centerpiece of most PLAA reconnaissance activities.

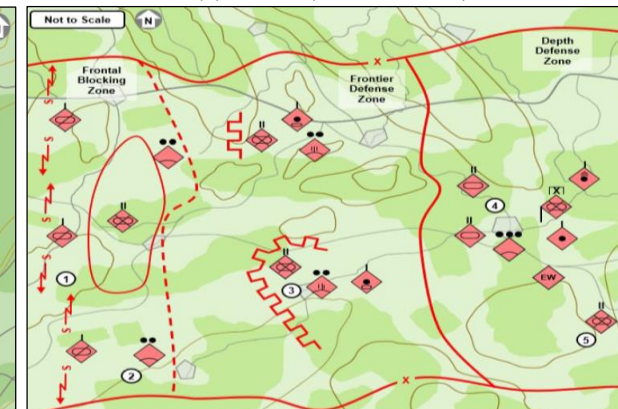
(U) **Search:** the tasks of search are to identify enemy high value targets and screen areas for enemy activity. The purpose is to assess the enemy, terrain, or other battlefield features without deliberate or direct action against enemy forces. Search activities are typically conducted during defensive operations. Search is recognized as a critical component of overall reconnaissance efforts on the informationized and future intelligentized battlefield.

## (U) COMBAT RECONNAISSANCE (IN THE ATTACK)



(U) This depiction shows reconnaissance operations in the offense. (1) A mounted reconnaissance platoon conducts an area search of RECON OBJ 1 in order to confirm or deny enemy presence. (2) Mounted reconnaissance squads conduct independent movements into RECON OBJ 1. Units avoid becoming decisively engaged by enemy forces. (3) An attached UAV system supports the operation with aerial reconnaissance. (4) They provide supporting artillery, typically 6-12km away, enemy coordinates that provide fire support or suppression to reconnaissance efforts.

## (U) SEARCH (IN THE DEFENSE)



(U) This depiction shows reconnaissance operations in the defense. In the defense, the frontal blocking zone is the forward-most area of the defensive zone, which is analogous to the Western security zone. This zone is typically 6-12km in front of the main body across a 10-15km front. The frontal blocking zone is occupied by reconnaissance units performing search, screen, or cover missions, and serves as the primary early warning and counter-reconnaissance zone for the main body.

## References:

[ATP 7-100.3 Chinese Tactics, August 2021](#)

[GTA 20-10-002 People's Liberation Army "Ground Forces" Quick Reference Guide](#)

[Red Diamond Volume 10, Issue 3](#)

[Worldwide Equipment Guide](#)