



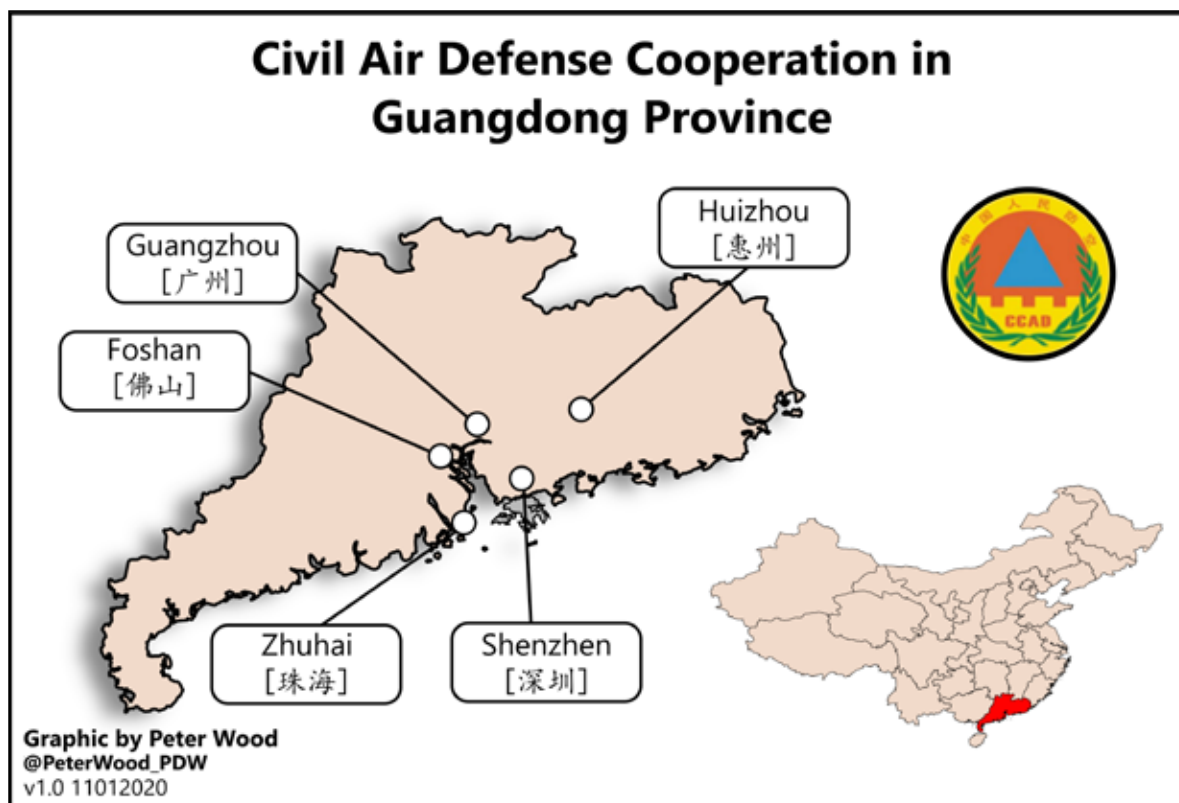
Civil Air Defense Organizations in South China Sign Cooperative Agreement

OE Watch Commentary: In early January, nine major cities in China's Pearl River Delta region signed an agreement to coordinate civil air defense. The Pearl River Delta region is located in Guangdong province, which has consistently ranked number one in China in terms of GDP since the 1980s. With over 113 million people, it is one of China's economic powerhouses. Recognizing this, China is attempting to further strengthen the region against air attacks beyond the major military forces stationed in the region using civilian resources. The agreement represents the culmination of several years of holding coordinated exercises with sister cities throughout the province. The accompanying passage from China's Ministry of Defense website discusses this agreement.

As part of China's National Defense, on 21 September, China's "Education Day", many cities throughout China hold civil air defense drills. The holiday, inaugurated in 2001, is meant to commemorate China being forced to sign unequal treaties by foreign powers. Guangzhou, the provincial capital of Guangdong, holds an annual civil air defense exercise called Guangzhou Sky Shield [羊城天盾]. A point of emphasis is expanded coordination at the provincial and municipal level between air defense and maritime security apparatuses. The most recent exercise included defense against a simulated combination of enemy air raids and Special Forces infiltration. The municipal government practiced coordinating with the maritime militia, coast guard and other related departments to repel the attacks.

On China's east coast, Anhui, Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces and district- and city-level organizations met in December to discuss coordination on what appears to be a similar scale. This second group represents the "Yangtze River Delta" area, which, like the Pearl River Delta is another economic powerhouse for China. The December meeting brought together civil air defense organization leaders with relevant experts to improve existing civil air defense practices.

The new agreement in Guangdong province and the efforts by other governments to improve coordination highlights the ways in which China is improving its air defenses and furthering Military-Civil Fusion, a national strategic program that seeks to achieve strategic effects through better linkages between civilian and military organizations across the full range of social, governmental and industrial organizations. **End OE Watch Commentary (Wood)**



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Source: “珠三角9个城市签订人防协同发展协议 (Nine Cities in the Pearl River Delta Sign Civil Air Defense Coordination Agreement),” China Ministry Of Defense, 3 January 2020. http://www.mod.gov.cn/mobilization/2020-01/03/content_4857955.htm

On New Year's Eve, nine cities in South-East China's Pearl River Delta, including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, and Huizhou, signed in Guangzhou the Framework Agreement of Pearl River Delta City Cluster on Coordinated Civil Air Defense Development [珠三角城市群人民防空协同发展框架协议]. The signing officially kicked off the coordinated construction of civil air defense facilities in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region.

With the development of air assault weapons, it's possible in future warfare that multiple locations will be attacked at the same time with one of them being the key target. In that case, resources have to be shared in civil air defense efforts in order to form a powerful synergy to protect the people.

Bearing this in mind, the Guangzhou Office of Civil Air Defense actively explored coordinated civil air defense training in the Pearl River Delta city cluster in recent years. It has carried out multiple joint training and trans-regional assistance operations with similar units in surrounding areas testing core capabilities such as establishing communication networks, protecting important economic targets and removing debris and recovering from air attacks. They have achieved the ability to support each other whenever any one party comes under air attack.

The signing of the civil air defense agreement is aimed to further intensify cooperation, achieve complementarity of civil air defense systems in the Pearl River Delta more quickly, and jointly build and share relevant resources in the region.

In the course of researching and later signing the agreement, the leaders of the People's Defense Offices of the nine cities of the Pearl River Delta reached a consensus: create an 'indestructible shield of the people' through rapid development of the Pearl River Delta area, focusing on scientific and technological defense and independent innovation, and constructing a resource sharing mechanism, a joint training mechanism, and a cross-regional support mechanism.