



Local Companies Provide Logistics Support During PLA Joint Exercise

OE Watch Commentary: China appears to be improving its use of civilian assets in joint exercises. An October 2018 exercise meant to test the PLA's interoperability and ability to maintain air superiority highlights the positive impact civilian transport and technical personnel can have on operations. Two examples of civilian support during the exercise mentioned in the accompanying excerpted article particularly deserve attention.

When a naval commander required an emergency support unit to be deployed to support PLA Naval Aviation operations on an island, a transportation unit was able to call on local civilian transportation companies' flatbed trucks as well as passenger and roll-on/roll-off ships to get the equipment and personnel where they needed to go. A second area where civilian resources played an important role during the exercise was "recovery" after a simulated air attack against an airbase. Responding to "various degrees of damage" to several fighter aircraft, a group of air force technicians, bolstered by eight civilian technicians from a local factory, were able to replace damaged components and get the aircraft back in the air after an hour.

The exercise also made use of modular "containerized" barracks and support buildings that were built and transported to deployment areas by local companies. The article mentioned that use of civilian contractors and materials made it easier to conceal the units' deployment. In many ways, this exercise represents the "nuts-and-bolts" of what China's Military-Civil Fusion strategy is all about—putting the procedures in place to allow full utilization of all available resources in a crisis. **End OE Watch Commentary (Wood)**



JH-7A of the PLANAF seen at Yantai Laishan International Airport.
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“At the assembly site, you could see that an airbase engineering technical service group coordinating quickly assembling the container-style living quarters produced by local companies.”

Source: “军民融合在‘战时’的威力有多大 (The Power of Military Civil Fusion During ‘Wartime’),” *China Youth Daily*, 16 November 2018. http://kj.81.cn/content/2018-11/16/content_9347122.htm

In late October, the PLA held a joint PLA Air Force and PLA Navy offense/defense combat exercise involving multiple branches and units in southern China. During the exercise, the “red” and “blue” forces competed fiercely for air supremacy. The air defense operations were in full swing, and the rear logistics support group codenamed “cavalry” [驰援, lit. gallop to the rescue] began operations.

In a break with past exercises, the 13 rear support elements [分队] of the Southern Theater Air Force Support Department were assigned six local [civilian] support forces for the first time, and were co-organized with the Navy and the Joint Logistics Support Force to for integrated and realistic field exercises.

“In order to ensure that none of the equipment or vehicles are left behind, we have established 16 core repair stations along the way with local auto repair manufacturers, ensuring that every 100 kilometers there are professional maintenance technicians and rapid-repair vehicles for all types of vehicles!” The Theater Command Air Force Ground Equipment Division leader explained that in recent years, the Logistics Support Department organizations have established communication and coordination with all of the various battlefield support resources such as local transportation facilities, airport terminals, oil storage facilities, warehouses, and maintenance and repair facilities. The emergency response mechanism can quickly resolve the question of what is available for logistics support.

After the emergency detachment completes the maneuver by means of motorized marching and railway transportation, it deploys in the deployment area, opens a command organization, and builds a field camping area. Before the departure of each detachment, all the field battle boxes and camping gears were uniformly distributed according to the standards of field support and operation, and the field self-protection was implemented throughout the entire process.

At the assembly site, you could see that an airbase engineering technical service group coordinating quickly assembling the container-style living quarters produced by local companies. Group leader Yang Fuli [杨夫礼] said that the container-style barracks are not only fast and convenient, but also easy to conceal. This is the first time they have explored the military-civilian field bivouac model in realistic conditions.

The leaders of the Southern Theater Air Force Support Department also explained that after local mobilization forces have fully deployed within the required time limit, all of them will be assigned to the emergency support unit for on-the-spot training, and cooperate with each other to carry out specialization and refinement, while providing support for the PLA forces.