



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**January 7, 2014**

**PERIOD OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION ENDS:**  
**January 30, 2014**

The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission (hereafter “the Commission”) invites submission of proposals to provide a one-time unclassified report assessing weaknesses of China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The report will identify and assess weaknesses in the PLA’s organization and human capital; the PLA’s combat capabilities in the land, air, maritime, space, and electromagnetic domains; and China’s defense industries (research and development and production). The report will assess how these weaknesses impact the PLA’s combat capabilities and its ability to achieve its missions. The report also will make recommendations for how an opponent could exploit these weaknesses.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION. The Commission was established by Congress in 2000 to monitor and report to Congress on the economic and national security dimensions of the United States’ trade and economic ties with the People’s Republic of China. Further details about the Commission are available on its website at: [www.uscc.gov](http://www.uscc.gov).

The Commission solicits this research pursuant to its Congressional mandate (contained in 22 U.S.C. 7002), which states that “The Commission...shall investigate and report ... on...

“REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND SECURITY IMPACTS—The triangular economic and security relationship among the United States, Taiwan, and the People’s Republic of China (including the military modernization and force deployments of the People’s Republic of China aimed at Taiwan), the national budget of the People’s Republic of China, and the fiscal strength of the People’s Republic of China in relation to internal instability in the People’s Republic of China and the likelihood of the externalization of problems arising from such internal instability...”

ABOUT PROPOSALS. The Commission solicits proposals from organizations and individuals capable of providing a one-time unclassified report assessing weaknesses of the PLA. The report will identify and assess the weaknesses in the PLA’s organization and human capital; the PLA’s combat capabilities in the land, air, maritime, space, and electromagnetic domains; and China’s defense industries (research and development and production). The report will assess how these weaknesses impact the PLA’s combat capabilities and its ability to achieve its missions. The report also will make recommendations for how an opponent could exploit these weaknesses.

This report’s key research requirements are:

- 1) **A description the overall scope and scale of PLA modernization since the mid-1990s and an assessment of its trajectory through 2025.** Include a brief discussion of what internal and external events might alter the direction of the PLA’s modernization.  
*Approximate emphasis: 5 percent*

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\* For example, these events could include a sharp economic downturn, peaceful reunification with Taiwan, or North Korea’s collapse.

- 2) A **description of the missions Beijing has assigned to the PLA.**<sup>†</sup> Address each mission in a separate section. For each mission, explain the relevant PLA campaigns and capabilities, as well as the desired operational effects. For each mission, assess the PLA's overall ability to conduct the missions through 2025.

*Approximate emphasis: 10 percent*

- 3) Detailed **assessments of weaknesses in the PLA's organization and human capital**, including (but not necessarily limited to) the PLA's obsolete national command structure, lack of combat experience, and insufficient education levels among its officer corps. Address each weakness in a separate section. Include the following elements and content for each weakness:

- a. A description of the sources and the analytic methodology used for the assessment.
- b. An explanation of remaining knowledge gaps and the quality and reliability of the sources used for the assessment.
- c. A description of the critical assumptions on which the assessment is based and an explanation of the implications for the assessment if those assumptions are incorrect.
- d. An assessment of which factors contribute to the weakness.<sup>‡</sup>
- e. An assessment of the weakness' potential impact on the PLA's ability to achieve its missions through 2025.
- f. If applicable, a detailed description of how the PLA is attempting to address the weakness and an assessment of how successful the PLA is or will be.
- g. If applicable, recommendations for how an opponent could exploit the weakness.

*Approximate emphasis: 20 percent*

- 4) Detailed **assessments of weaknesses in the PLA's combat capabilities in the land, air, maritime, space, and electromagnetic domains**. Address each weakness in a separate section. Include the following elements and content for each weakness:

- a. A brief description of sources and analytic methodology used for the assessment.
- b. A brief explanation of knowledge gaps and the quality and reliability of the sources used for the assessment.
- c. A brief description of the critical assumptions on which the assessment is based and an explanation of the implications for the assessment if those assumptions are incorrect.
- d. An assessment of which factors – including deficiencies in China's defense industry – contribute to the weakness.
- e. A detailed assessment of the weakness' potential impact on the PLA's ability to achieve its missions through 2025.
- f. If applicable, a detailed description of how the PLA is attempting to address the weakness and an assessment of how successful the PLA is or will be.
- g. If applicable, recommendations for how an opponent could exploit the weakness.

*Approximate emphasis: 45 percent*

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<sup>†</sup> At a minimum, address missions applicable to conflict scenarios involving Taiwan, the East China Sea, and the South China Sea; antiaccess/area denial; and nuclear deterrence. Also address missions beyond China's immediate periphery, such as humanitarian assistance, defense of distant maritime trade routes, and combat abroad.

<sup>‡</sup> Potential factors could include growing PLA service empowerment or the PLA's status as a "party army."

- 5) Detailed **assessments of weaknesses in China's defense industries (research and development and production)**. Address each sector in a separate section. Include the following elements and content for each weakness:
- a. A brief description of sources and analytic methodology used for the assessment.
  - b. A brief explanation of knowledge gaps and the quality and reliability of the sources used for the assessment.
  - c. A brief description of the critical assumptions on which the assessment is based and an explanation of the implications for the assessment if those assumptions are incorrect.
  - d. An assessment of which factors contribute to the weakness.<sup>§</sup>
  - e. A detailed assessment of the weakness' potential impact on the PLA's ability to achieve its missions through 2025.
  - f. A detailed assessment of the weakness' potential impact on the PLA's combat capabilities through 2025.
  - g. If applicable, a detailed description of how the PLA is attempting to address the weakness and an assessment of how successful the PLA is or will be.
  - h. If applicable, recommendations for how an opponent could exploit the weakness.

*Approximate emphasis: 20 percent*

The report also should include an **executive summary** of the report's key findings; a **brief overview of the sources and analytic methodology used for the report**; and a **brief explanation of the scope and limitations of the report**.

Additional Requirements of the Commission:

1. Prior to the award of any contract, the contractor must be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM).
2. Once a contractor has been selected for this project by the Commission and a contract signed, public notice of this will be made on the Commission's website.
3. The Commission's goal is to have a report prepared for review in a timely fashion. In ordinary circumstances, once a contractor has been selected by the Commission and a contract signed, a draft of the report must be submitted to the Commission for review no later than 120 days from the date of issuance of the contract. The Commission will then endeavor to provide comments and requests for adjustments within 30 days; subsequently, the final report must be submitted within 30 days of formal receipt of the Commission's comments. The Commission recognizes that, under certain circumstances, a contractor may wish to have more time to prepare the first draft of the report under the contract. The contractor, in their initial submission, should stipulate the time frame for submissions of the initial review draft. It is to be understood, however, that time is of the essence in completing research contracts for the Commission.
4. As work on the report progresses, the Commission's Research Coordinator shall act as a representative of the Commission in monitoring the progress, quality, and responsiveness of the report to the major issues of concern identified in the Request for Proposals (RFP). The Research Coordinator shall, on request to the contractor, be entitled to informal briefings on the status of the research work and to readings of the draft in progress.

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<sup>§</sup> Potential factors might include limited civil-military integration or lack of innovation.

5. The report shall conform to the Chicago Manual of Style. Upon receipt of all drafts, the Commission will inspect the document for typographical errors or other deviations from the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines. At the discretion of the Commission, if a draft contains excessive deficiencies, the Commission will return the draft to the contractor with notice that the draft does not conform to the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, and request the contractor cure the draft of deficiencies within five (5) working days (not counting weekends and Federal holidays). Upon resubmission of the draft by the contractor to the Commission, should deficiencies remain, the Commission, at its discretion, will submit the draft to its technical editor for correction, the cost of which (\$55 per hour for text, \$65 per hour for endnotes) will be deducted from the final cost of the contract. The contract shall be subject to termination if the Commission deems that the work is of unsatisfactory quality.
6. At the Commission's discretion, the report procured via this RFP may be posted on the Commission's website.
7. Each organization or individual responding to this request must warrant that they will perform this work solely for the Commission, and that the resulting report will not be shared with other parties without the prior written consent of the Commission.
8. The Commission expects contractors to identify all personnel working on the contract, and that there will not be any delegation of responsibilities to other parties without prior written approval of the Commission.
9. After completion of the report, the Commission staff, in consultation with the Contractor, will prepare a short summary of the research for posting on the Commission's web site and other media. The Commission staff shall consult with the contractor in preparing said document.
10. At the discretion and request of the Commission, the contractor shall agree to participate in up for four (4) separate briefings, and up to one (1) public hearing, held by the Commission, of up to two (2) hours each in the Washington, D.C. area, supported by at least one (1) individual affiliated with the Contractor identified as "key personnel." This could include, but not necessarily be limited to, briefing the content of the research to Commissioners and Commission staff, appearing as witnesses at a public hearing held by the Commission, and briefing the content of the research to Members of Congress and/or their staff. No additional remuneration will be provided to the Contractor for these briefings or a hearing. The Commission will make a good faith effort to schedule briefings and a hearing at times that are subject to mutual agreement.

Primary Selection Criteria:

1. The Commission will determine which organization or individual responding to this request will be awarded the contract based on a comprehensive "best value" analysis of the proposals received, to include costs, technical value, and ability to complete the work satisfactorily and on time, and past performance with the Commission, if applicable.
2. The primary weighting criterion in selection shall be the assessed qualifications and ability of an organization or individual to address the fundamental research points enunciated above ("key research requirements").
3. The cost and amount of time necessary to complete the report will also be considered as criteria in the selection process.

Proposal submissions should include:

1. A statement of the applicant's relevant qualifications to satisfy the terms of this RFP, to include curricula vitae for personnel intended for work on the project.
2. Identification of the principal researchers who will be responsible for the preparation of the report. It is understood that the designation of the researchers is a critical element of the proposal, and any changes regarding which individuals will be involved in the report's preparation must be approved by the Commission in advance and in writing.
3. A description of the research methodology the applicant proposes to employ. In describing methodology, the submission should provide detailed descriptions of the sources and methods that will be used to research the report's topic and the extent to which Chinese language sources, if any, and other primary materials will be used.
4. An estimate of the time the applicant will need to complete the required work.
5. The price the applicant will charge to the Commission to complete the work set forth in this RFP.

Organizations and individuals wishing to submit a proposal in response to this RFP must ensure that the response arrives at the location noted below by **5:30PM (EST) on January 30, 2014**, or it will not be accepted or considered.

Electronic submissions are acceptable.

Proposals, as well as inquiries or any other correspondence related to this matter, should be directed to:

Caitlin Campbell  
Research Coordinator  
U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission  
Hall of the States, Suite 602  
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
phone: 202-624-1480  
e-mail: [ccampbell@uscc.gov](mailto:ccampbell@uscc.gov)